

Health and Social Care Secretary visits health and social care staff in the East of England

- Sajid Javid, the Secretary of State for the department for Health and Social Care, met with healthcare staff and local residents to outline his reform agenda.
- Community representatives, volunteers and medical experts views sought on a more joined up NHS and adult social care sector to better serve staff and patients in the region, and aid COVID-19 recovery.
- Visits are part of a week-long national tour focusing on COVID-19 recovery, tackling the backlog of people waiting for treatment, social care reform, integration and reducing health inequalities.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid today visited the East of England to see the amazing work being carried out by health and social care staff. While there, he met with local residents and set out how a more joined up health and care system will mean better care for everyone.

In total, he visited four sites across the region in the first day of his 'Road to Recovery' tour:

- Willows Care Home in Romford
- Essex Urgent Community Response Team in Rochford
- Clacton Diagnostic Centre
- Cambridge Biomedical Campus

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

It's been incredible to see first-hand the astonishing work being carried out by health and social care staff across the East of England, and I've enjoyed speaking to local residents and hearing what they would like from our healthcare services as we recover from COVID-19.

As we continue on the road to recovery, I want to thank everyone in Clacton, Romford, Rochford and the wider region who've shared their thoughts and experiences with me and who have given me the opportunity to talk about my mission to reform services so they better serve their needs.

We know integrated care can help boost recovery times, reduce waiting lists and level up the health of the nation and I was proud to see local services working together in the East of England to achieve this.

The tour began at Willows Care Home in Romford, where the Health and Social

Care Secretary met with staff, residents and leading figures in the care industry to discuss how working with other local services and the NHS can better serve them.

Joined up health and care systems which work together through shared records, earlier intervention and greater transparency will help deliver a world leading system. This will include using modern technology to monitor seizures, breathing and falls, for example.

It comes after the publication last week of the government's new Integration White Paper, setting out plans to bring the NHS and local government closer together to improve care for all and ensure greater value for money. It will mean people receiving the right support in the right place at the right time and follows the publication of a 10 year vision to reform adult social care, backed by an extra £5.4billion.

Following a collaborative partnership between three health trusts, the Urgent Community Response Team (UCRT) was formed which provides vital home care and equipment to support people remaining at home. Referrals are made by ambulance crews, GPs or other health professionals and the UCRT then provides medical treatment and support. The Health and Social Care Secretary was able to see a successful example of integration with action already taking place when he met with the team.

This visit was followed by one to Clacton's £22 million Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC), which will be one of the sites playing a crucial role in tackling the COVID-19 backlog by increasing access to services including x-rays, MRI and CT scans for local residents in the region.

Last week, the government and NHS set out the COVID Backlog Recovery Plan to help reduce waiting times and give patients more control over their care. With six million people waiting for treatment across England, a key part of the plan is opening over 100 Community Diagnostic Centres like the one in Clacton as part of plans to provide an extra eight million scans, checks and operations in the next three years.

These plans are part of the government's commitment to tackling health disparities and deprivation by levelling up communities. Tendring is a district identified as requiring more assistance including in the Health in Coastal Communities report by Chief Medical Officer Sir Professor Chris Whitty where he wrote about the specific challenges being faced by seaside towns. Furthermore, analysis by the Kings Fund shows people in deprived areas are almost twice as likely to experience a wait of over a year for treatment. By bringing diagnostic services closer to home, in one-stop-shops, they will have a key role in levelling up healthcare across the East of England.

As part of his visit, the Health and Care Secretary was keen to hear from local residents. He took part in a wide ranging town hall discussion in Clacton with voluntary and community representatives from across diverse backgrounds to discuss the specific challenges they face, plans to tackle the COVID-19 backlog, disparities in the area and how the Elective Recovery Plan, Integration White Paper and upcoming Health Disparities White Paper could

help address these challenges.

The first day of the tour finished at the Cambridge Biomedical Campus where the Health and Social Care Secretary sat down with representatives from Cambridge University Hospitals and leading scientists from industry and the University of Cambridge, including cancer and genetics experts, to hear about advances in cutting edge research and treatments.

The Road to Recovery tour will continue across English regions this week to highlight plans for recovery and reform.

Laird MacKay, Chief Operating Officer, Canford Healthcare said:

It was our great pleasure to welcome Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Mr Sajid Javid, Professor Green, CEO Care England and Andrew Rosindell, MP for Romford, to Willows Care Home.

They were interested to hear about the experiences of the pandemic, the challenges that we faced, and the support that we feel is needed within the sector moving forward. We have wonderful staff at the home who talked with pride about the care they provide and the opportunities that there are to create a career within the sector”.

Alex Green, Executive Chief Operating Officer at Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) said:

We were delighted to show Mr Javid exactly how the Urgent Care Response Team operates, from receiving an urgent call to providing timely care for a patient in need.

The service is not only helping to reduce demand on our hospitals but provides an improved experience of care for patients by enabling them to recover in the comfortable and familiar surroundings of their own homes.

Our aim for the future is to deliver further community support like this for at least another 1,500 people per year as the service expands.

Helen Taylor, Chair of East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust said:

We were delighted to welcome the Secretary of State for Health Sajid Javid to Clacton Hospital today and to show him how we are currently providing more diagnostic tests to local people and to see our exciting plans for a brand new community diagnostic centre. The new centre will bring much easier and quicker access to diagnostic tests but will also provide employment and regeneration

to this important coastal town”.

Background

- The delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care was published on 8 February 2022
- The Integration White Paper was published on 9 February 2022