

Government taking action on Sick Kids

The Scottish Government has announced a programme of measures which has been put in place to ensure patient safety at the new Royal Hospital for Children and Young People (RHCYP). Health Secretary Jeane Freeman halted the move to the new premises earlier this month due to ventilation problems.

NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) will undertake a detailed assessment of compliance of all building systems which could impact on the safety of patients and staff at the new site.

This will be phased, with assessment of water, ventilation and drainage systems prioritised, including the proposed fix for the ventilation unit. This will determine the timeframe for services moving to the new hospital and a full report is anticipated in September.

NSS will also review current and recently completed major NHS capital projects and provide assurances that the same standards have been complied with.

To establish the factors that led to the delay, KPMG began an independent review of the governance arrangements for RHCYP on Monday.

In addition, the Health Secretary has escalated NHS Lothian to Level 3 of the NHS Board Performance Escalation Framework. A package of tailored support will be made available to the health board to drive forward improvements.

Health Secretary Jeane Freeman said: "I understand that this is a disappointing and worrying time for parents and carers of patients who have appointments at the new children's hospital.

"However, safe, effective and high quality clinical services continue to be delivered from the existing site in Sciennes.

"The work carried out by NSS will give quality assurance on the water, ventilation and drainage systems and establish a timeframe for services to move safely to the new hospital.

"Infection prevention must always be embedded within the design, planning, construction and commissioning activities of all new and refurbished healthcare facilities, which is why I have also instructed NSS to review current and recently completed major NHS capital projects and provide assurances that the same standards have been adhered to.

"KPMG are also now on site independently reviewing the governance arrangements for the new children's hospital to establish the factors that led to the delay.

"I recognise and appreciate that NHS Lothian staff have made considerable efforts both in the lead up to the planned move and following the delay. I have written to staff today to thank them for their hard work and for all that they are doing to help manage the situation, and for their excellent track record of providing high-quality patient care."

Meantime anyone with a child requiring medical attention should use the existing Sick Kids at Sciennes Place.

Parents and carers are being contacted directly by the team at the existing Royal Hospital for Sick Children to confirm arrangements for their child's appointment.

Those with appointments in July are being contacted by phone in the first instance and those with appointments in August onwards will be contacted by letter. Every effort is being

made to retain the same appointment date and time wherever possible.

A dedicated helpline (0800 028 2816) is available for families and carers to discuss any concerns about appointments or treatment with the clinical team already caring for their child.