

Sick Kids will open in January 2021

Health Secretary Jeane Freeman provided an update on the timescale for the opening of the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People in Edinburgh to parliament.

She said: “Despite the impact of Covid-19, positive progress has been made with the Department of Clinical Neurosciences, including Neurophysiology and Diagnostic Radiology, moving in May as promised and the majority of outpatient services moving in early July.

“We now have a confirmed date for safe completion of the final areas of the new Royal Hospital for Children and Young People of January 2021.

“This is good news and I am very grateful to everyone for all of their work. This final move, like the earlier ones, will be planned with the full involvement of staff and communicated clearly to patients and families.”

NHS Lothian has agreed the final works plan with contractor IHSL. These will include changes to the ventilation system due to be completed by 25 January 2021. This will allow the NHS Lothian project team to agree with clinicians the schedule for moving the remaining Children’s Services into the new building. This will happen after the commissioning stage when equipment will be installed and tested and staff will be given orientation training.



Susan Goldsmith, NHS Lothian Finance Director and Executive Lead for the Project, explained that reaching this stage has taken a huge amount of dedication and commitment from both the Project Team and the contractors on site. She added, “Despite the challenges that COVID-19 has presented us with, the teams have done an incredible job in continuing to drive this project forward. I am delighted to have received a date by which the building works will be completed.”

Ms Goldsmith added, “Planning for a move is always an exciting time, and this is no exception. Having seen colleagues within Children’s Outpatient Services move to the new building in July this year, those who remained at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children at Sciennes, and those who work in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, have undoubtedly been eager to find out when they too will migrate.

“I know I am not alone, in looking forward to seeing all of our Children’s Services together in the fantastic new facility

that is the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People.

“I am delighted that we can now start to have discussions on the final phase of this move with greater clarity and conviction.”

In July 2020 around three quarters of children’s outpatient services moved out of the old Sick Kids at Sciences. This included fracture clinics, physiotherapy services, and follow up appointments after surgery. The health board has used video call technology for a number of appointments, which reduces the need for some patients and their families to travel to the hospital.

The Department of Clinical Neurosciences also moved both outpatient and inpatient services to the new building in July 2020.

Lothian MSP Miles Briggs commented: “I am pleased that we have now finally been given a firm deadline for the opening of the new Royal Hospital for Children and Young People.

“This hospital is years late, millions of pounds over budget and families, and NHS staff in Edinburgh and East of Scotland will be glad that they will finally be getting the state of the art hospital they deserve.

“The independent review into why we have seen such mismanagement of the project to build the new Royal Hospital for Children and Young People must get to the bottom of what went has gone so spectacularly wrong and ensure those responsible are held accountable.”

