

BRIEFING NOTE

For Elected Representatives

Postponement of non-time critical elective orthopaedic procedures



Today we have taken the difficult decision to postpone non-time critical elective orthopaedic surgery due to the significant pressures facing the regional health system in addition to the recent rise in Covid-19 admissions. All patients affected will be notified of their postponement by phone and will be offered a rescheduled date as soon as possible.

Currently Belfast Trust is caring for 71 Covid-19 inpatients, in addition to significant bed pressures across our sites as we continue to provide care to an unprecedented number of patients attending through our Emergency Departments. This decision will relieve some pressure on our bed capacity and, most importantly, will ensure we can maintain safe staffing levels across the rest of our sites. Medical Director, Mr Chris Hagan said “we would like to apologise to those patients and families affected by this decision, it is not one we wanted to make and we appreciate the anxiety it will cause. However, this is the only way we can ensure safe staffing levels for patients who are most acutely ill, whilst allowing regional complex surgery to continue at Belfast City Hospital.”

“In addition we have identified that 60% of patients admitted with Covid-19 symptoms are not vaccinated. It is therefore vital that everyone eligible receives the vaccination as soon as possible by using the booking system or calling into one of the many drop in centres this weekend. The regional complex surgery currently carried out at Belfast City Hospital remains unaffected and we continue to protect that site as a “green” (Covid-free) pathway.”