

**Jo Farrar, Chief Executive, Kingston Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**

**Jo.Farrar@nhs.net**

February 17th, 2023

Dear Mr Farrar,

We have been contacted by several of our members concerning long delays for treatment in the Kingston A&E and problems with the Virtual Ward system.

Concerns related to long handover delay from ambulances to clinical staff in the A&E department, and long waits in the A&E department to be seen, and to be discharged or admitted within four hours.

In relation to the operation of virtual wards, we were told of a case where a patient with COPD was discharged to a ‘virtual ward’ but wasn’t adequately and sufficiently advised what this meant and how it operated. She was discharged home late in the evening suffering from breathing difficulties, which got worse when she got home. Her husband tried calling the GP and 111 and eventually called 999 to get his wife back to hospital because her condition had deteriorated. It was discovered that the equipment that she was connected to on discharge had not been properly connected to the virtual ward system at Kingston Hospital, resulting in a failure to monitor her cardiac function, O2 level and other clinical parameters.

I would be grateful if you could let know what action is being taken to ensure there are adequate numbers of beds at Kingston Hospital, in order to stop ambulances queuing up outside the hospital, which not only potentially causes harm to patients waiting to enter A&E, but also causes harm to patients waiting for an ambulance at home or in the street. Could you also please let me have your assurance that if the virtual ward system is used that the patient will be properly connected to prevent potential harm to patients and fully advised how the system works.

I would also be grateful for a response to our FOI sent to you in October 2022, regarding long waits for patients in a mental health crisis, who are being cared for in your A&E, and waiting for an admission to a mental health bed in a mental health unit. The FOI response is shown below but the data has never been provided.

Yours sincerely

Malcolm Alexander

Chair

Patients’ Forum for the LAS

www.Patientsforumlas.net

**FOIENQUIRIES (KINGSTON HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST)** <khft.foienquiries@nhs.net>

**To:** Malcolm Alexander

Mon, 7 Nov 2022 at 17:11

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This is an acknowledgement of your request. For the purposes of the Act, your request will be deemed to have been received on the first working day following delivery. We will reply to your request by the 20th working day following receipt. With kindest regards Kingston Hospital FOI.