

Accommodation at Treliske

Date: 05/09/16
Title: Report to Isles of Scilly Health and Wellbeing Board
Report of: Healthwatch Isles of Scilly

The need for affordable accommodation at or near Treliske Hospital in Truro has been reported to Healthwatch and previously Link4Scilly as an issue of concern, for a number of years.

Categories of patients and carers affected include:

- Patients undergoing a course of daily or weekly treatment, i.e. cancer therapy;
- Patients unable to travel on the day of admission or discharge;
- Carers of inpatients at Treliske;
- Expectant mothers who are required to travel to the mainland ahead of their due date, and family or other person providing support.

Planning a hospital trip must take into account the time of the appointment, transport schedules, and if it is likely that there will be weather related disruption to flights. Our research indicates that people routinely plan to travel the day before or after treatment, sometimes days before, in order to make sure that they can attend. This is borne out by the relatively low number of cancelled by patient appointments, or 'Did Not Attend', for IOS patients.¹

Islanders are bearing considerable costs for accommodation and some have said that this may become a factor in decisions about their medical care.

Healthwatch makes a list of recommended B&B accommodation available. However, affordability is still an issue, particularly when looking at single occupancy rates;² and availability is restricted during the busy summer season and by the requirement of some providers for a 2 or 3 night minimum stay.

We have discussed the problem with Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust over the years and various solutions have been suggested but not always communicated at point of need to patients and carers: use of staff accommodation, or being allowed to book university-owned accommodation onsite, where available and at the usual cost.

Lately, the issue has been taken up by Mr Andrew Wood of the Cornwall and IOS Cancer Patient and Carer Group and his report is attached, with permission.

Mr Wood has undertaken much research and contacted a number of bodies in his championship of this issue. This provides the groundwork for the case for provision of affordable accommodation at Treliske, which we suggest is taken up by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

We propose that the Health and Wellbeing Board establishes a working group which will:

- a) Investigate the case for NHS subsidised accommodation for islanders in accordance with guidelines and accepted practice elsewhere.
- b) Investigate the feasibility of a joint project utilising additional funding sources to establish a patient/carers hostel at Treliske.

Recommendation: that the proposal above is accepted by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

¹ See Healthwatch Isles of Scilly: [Medical Travel from the Isles of Scilly Winter Travel Survey Report May 2016](#)

² See sample accommodation price guide at the end of this report

4th Sept 2016

Treliske Hospital Accommodation - I.O.S. Residents

To whom it may concern:-

It is ironic that as I begin this report to inform my progress or lack of, relating to the above situation, the Government should announce a large scale review to ensure that different groups are not treated unfairly by public services in particularly hospitals and schools.

Two years ago as Chair of the Cornwall Myeloma Support Group (a blood related cancer), I was co-opted onto the Cornwall and I.O.S. Cancer & Carer Group representing Haematology.

One of my first efforts was to look at what the Group was achieving and how it did its business, and how effective it was within the Cornwall N.H.S. Trust.

There were a small amount of outstanding issues, one of which relates to the above subject. Members of the Group had identified the problem and made some efforts to resolve the situation but had not achieved a satisfactory outcome.

Having a vested interest as my family are resident on St. Marys I decided that I would investigate how the matter could be progressed, and whether I could add value to the cause.

The problem is best described by providing 3 anecdotal examples of how residents of the Islands are unfairly treated in relation to receiving medical care on the mainland:-

1. An outpatient requiring 20+ days radiotherapy treatment at Treliske Hospital
2. A patient either discharged or as an outpatient unable to travel because of weather conditions
3. A young person as a patient and an accompanying carer require accommodation due to travel or day by day treatment.

The starting point for my enquiries show that there are no facilities to enable patients/carers to be accommodated at Treliske at a greatly reduced/subsidised cost, as is the case across the whole of the U.K. Therefore a patient requiring 20+ days of outpatient treatment at Treliske would be required to fund the accommodation out of their own pocket. This cost would be very significant and in some cases would have an impact on whether that patient would be prepared to undertake the treatment programme, and as you will be aware mainland patients have a number of options so as to obtain free access to their treatment programme.

Previous attempts to resolve this have resulted in Trust Management Committees making reference to Rotary or other charitable support, which to me is utter nonsense and must never be an answer.

In my enquiries over the past year I have been in informal contact with 20 Trusts around the U.K. and without exception every one of them provides some form of assisted accommodation to enable patients to access treatment programmes at an acceptable cost.

A comparable situation would be where patients on the Isle of Wight are always given assisted accommodation when travelling to the mainland, but it is also the case that even when there is no water to cross patients travelling for treatment not available within their home area are provided with assisted accommodation.

The Keir Group, whilst building The Cove at Treliske made an unofficial suggestion that they would assist, cost free, with refurbishing to rooms of dilapidated unused nursing quarters within the Treliske estate but this was rejected by the Estates Management.

I have been in contact with the M.P. Mr. Derek Thomas who has, what can only be described as being mildly supportive of my efforts, although sympathetic to the principal.

I have been in contact with the national Institute for Clinical Excellence and the Care Quality Commission to seek advice on any national standards that might exist and on each occasion have been referred back to the Trusts Clinical Commissioning Group.

I have made contact with the Clinical Commissioning Group and await a reply.

May I bring to your attention the recently published report by NHS Kernow, Cornwall Council and the leading Health providers for Cornwall and The Isles of Scilly outlining the Health and Care priorities - <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/shapethefuture>.

From my own perspective I have taken my efforts as far as I can, without the complete success that I had hoped. Hopefully I have advanced the need for the people of the Isles of Scilly to have a far greater consideration of the disadvantages that they are currently subjected to.

In conclusion, I believe that what is now needed is a more formal approach from the Isles of Scilly Council to enable progress to be made and their voice to be heard. It is fairly easy to ignore the shouts of an innocuous person who does not even live on the Islands, no matter how well the case is made.

If there is anything that I can add or assist with in the future please get in touch.

Andrew Wood

Sample Truro accommodation price guide
 (searched for availability September/October 2016)

	Single per room		Double/twin per room	
	From	To	From	To
Mannings	£105	£115	£105	£115
The County Arms	£95	£109	£95	£109
Truro Townhouse	£79	£89	£89	£99
Premier Inn	£70	£94	£70	£94
Merchant House	£55	£89	£65	£89
The Victoria Inn	£55	£55	£74.50	£74.50
The Kings Head	£50	£50	£60	£70
Air BnB	POA approx. £45			
Truro Lodge	£33	£40	£45	£60