



# Black Country Provider Collaborative

May 2023

## Innovation the way to address inequities

**Sir David Nicholson used his first opportunity since taking over as joint Chair of all four Black Country NHS Trusts to highlight how innovation can start to address health inequities across the region.**

The first robotic-assisted operation was performed at Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust's City Hospital on 14 April, while Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital hosted its first robotic procedure – a kidney removal – in March 2023.

Earlier this year, in January, Walsall Manor Hospital became the first district general hospital in the country to offer robot arm-assisted surgery for hip and knee replacement patients.

Surgeons at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust have been performing robotic surgery in urology for more than a decade.

Sir David, who became joint Chair of Walsall and Wolverhampton Trusts from 1 April 2023 to add to his similar responsibilities at Sandwell and Dudley, believes the digital and technological advances must continue at pace if the area

is to redress health inequities.

“What we’ve tried to do is focus on clinical change – how can we really get better services for our patients? asked Sir David at the Black Country Provider Collaborative’s latest Clinical Summit before 200 delegates at The Hawthorns, home of West Bromwich Albion FC.

“We have so many people dedicated to make sure all people in the Black Country get access to high quality care.

“One of the great things about technology is it’s moving really fast and robotic surgery is now commonplace in some parts of the country.

“Wolverhampton has led the way in the area in terms of robotics and now we’ve seen that continue through the Collaborative with robots at Sandwell and Dudley hospitals and robots in Orthopaedics at Walsall.

“These are fantastic innovations for the local area and they will significantly improve our services.

“The Black Country is the second most challenged healthcare system in the country in relation



**Sir David Nicholson KCB, CBE, joint Chair**

to health inequities, so it’s really incumbent on us now across the region to make sure we can raise standards right across the board.

“There’s fantastic practice in almost everything in different parts of the Black Country. What we need to do is make sure we spread that good practice across the area so all of our patients get access to the best possible care.”

### Working in partnership

Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust

# MMUH will deliver “massive” improvements

**Richard Beeken, Chief Executive of Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, outlined the “massive” improvements to healthcare that the Midland Met University Hospital (MMUH) will bring to patients.**

Healthcare bosses expect to open the eagerly-awaited acute and emergency facility in 2024, Richard said, speaking at the latest Black Country Provider Collaborative Clinical Summit at The Hawthorns.

The Midland Met will boast:

- A total of 732 beds across adult and children’s wards with 50 per cent of those in single side rooms with en suite facilities
- One of the largest Emergency Departments in western Europe with co-located imaging and diagnostic services
- Same-day emergency care for adults
- Eleven operating theatres, including for both emergency and major planned surgery
- A Neonatal Unit
- A dedicated Children’s Emergency Department and Assessment Unit
- A Midwife-led Birth Unit next to a Delivery Suite, two Maternity Wards and an Antenatal Clinic
- A Sickle Cell and Thalassemia Centre

The model of care is very different to what is provided now. Outpatient services, day case surgery and planned diagnostics will continue to run from Sandwell General Hospital and the City Hospital site, with Midland Met caring for acute and emergency patients.

Richard said: “This is the biggest new hospital development taking place right now in the English NHS. It is more than a hospital – it relies on a radical redesign of the care model, moving to seven-day consultant-led services.

“It also relies very heavily on significant investment in community and primary care services to make it work and create the pathways that are best for patients’.

“The improvements are going to be massive. The hospital design will greatly change patients’ experience, with a dementia-friendly environment filled with natural light – very different from the

current facilities at City and Sandwell Hospitals.”

Richard is keen to stress that it’s not just a relocation of services that’s happening.

“For many specialties we’re actually moving from two sites into three,” he added. “The largest patient footfall remains at our current hospital sites, including Rowley Regis.

“A 24/7 Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) will be on site at Sandwell treating 40,000 patients a year and there are plans for a new UTC on the Midland Met estate.”

As well as an improved environment for clinical care, the new facility is a catalyst for regeneration.

Beyond the opening of the hospital, a Learning Campus will open on the site, in partnership with education providers.

This will provide opportunities for people from the local community to be trained and to develop careers in health and social care.

A community-led arts programme is also in development, as the new hospital provides space for an 80 metre-long public art gallery, the largest single art gallery in the region.



**Richard Beeken, Chief Executive of Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust**

# Perfect 10 deliver to BCPC audience

**Ten specialties showcased their services at the latest Black Country Provider Collaborative (BCPC) Clinical Summit before 200 delegates.**

Three clinicians – **Puneet Sharma, the BCPC's Pharmacy Network Lead**, Dr Shameer Gopal, the BCPC's Clinical Lead for Critical Care, and Ayman Ewies, the BCPC's Clinical Lead for Gynaecology – took the stand and delivered presentations before the assembled audience at the home of West Bromwich Albion FC.

The other seven clinicians presented highly-detailed posters and gave talks to passing delegates.

Puneet spoke about how Aseptic Pharmacy Services are being developed and co-ordinated across the Black Country, and revealed how a review of high-cost medicines in Ophthalmology is underway to explore potential cost savings and opportunities.

Another review – of the Pharmacy workforce across the Integrated Care System (ICS) – is also taking place, with 21 per cent of all Pharmacy posts in hospitals in the Midlands region unfilled.

**Dr Shameer Gopal, the BCPC's Clinical Lead for Critical Care,**



looking at the challenges for Critical Care post COVID-19 through workforce shortage/exhaustion, shortages of beds, performance quality indicators and information technology.

**Mr Ayman Ewies, the BCPC's Clinical Lead for Gynaecology,**



announced the opening of a one-stop ovarian cancer clinic, starting in spring 2023, reflected on the opening of the Black Country Menopause Clinic at Walsall Healthcare and revealed a roll-out for a day-case hysterectomy service by April 2024 for all Black Country patients.

**Mr Martin Sintler, the BCPC's Breast Clinical Network Lead,**



showed how Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Hospital has become the first Trust in the country to use a whole breast Automated Breast Ultrasound Scanner (ABUS) within the symptomatic breast service.

Standardising Colorectal pathways, including reducing variation in practice and improving outcomes in the survival of patients, is the focus of **Mr Andrew Torrance, the BCPC's Colorectal Clinical Network Lead.**

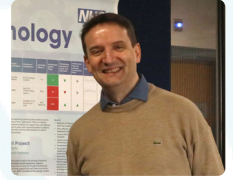


**Mr John Murphy, the BCPC's Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Clinical Network Lead,**



is involved a project to reduce the number of readmissions of tonsillectomy patients across the Black Country.

**Mr John Barry, the BCPC's Ophthalmology Clinical Network Lead,**



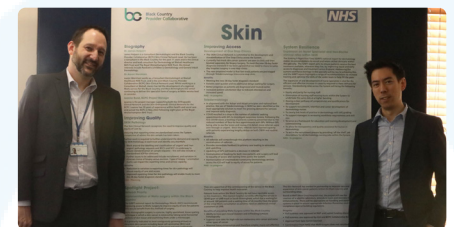
is developing a community glaucoma pathway so low-risk patients can be optimally managed by community Opticians.

Harmonising Orthopaedic clinical pathways across the Black Country is the focus of **Mr Sohail Butt,**

**the BCPC's Orthopaedic Clinical Network Lead,**



who is leading a series of task and finish groups.



**Dr James Halpern and Dr Aaron Wernham, Joint BCPC Skin Clinical Network Leads,**

are developing one-stop clinics where fast-tracked patients are pre-triaged through Teledermatology.

This enables patients to be seen quicker and no additional delays waiting for surgery.

To reduce the need to use Theatres, **Mr Peter Cooke, BCPC's Urology Clinical Network Lead,**



is driving a Local Anaesthetic Transperineal (LATP) biopsy service.



## BCPC newsletter

Would you like to contribute to the next newsletter? Maybe you are working on something collaboratively that's exciting and would like to share it more widely with all colleagues. Or do you have feedback which could shape the next clinical summit? Whatever it may be, we would love to hear from you.

Please email [rwh-tr.CommunicationsDept@nhs.net](mailto:rwh-tr.CommunicationsDept@nhs.net) with your information.

