

Sutton Hospital wards closed for six months after legionella find

1:50pm Thursday 20th August 2009

By Kevin Barnes

Inpatients will be moved from [Sutton Hospital](#) to sites in Surrey and Wandsworth after the discovery of legionella bacteria in water systems.

Healthcare officials have taken the “difficult decision” to close three wards on the Chiltern Wing for six months so the bug can be eliminated.

The move is planned for early September but there is no immediate threat to public health because the legionella bacteria has been contained.

A spokeswoman for South West London and St George’s Mental Health Trust said: “Although patients and staff on the site are currently safe, the trust has taken expert advice as to the work required to resolve the issue in the long term.

“It has now taken the difficult decision to temporarily close all our inpatient facilities on the Sutton Hospital site.

“This is not a decision that has been taken lightly.

“It will involve moving all our existing patients to appropriate wards on our other sites and we know how disruptive this will be for staff, patients and their loved ones.

Kim Goddard, the trust’s director of nursing said: “We regret the inconvenience these moves will cause our staff, patients and their families, but safety must be our absolute priority.

“We are not able to care for our patients safely on our three wards on the Sutton Hospital site, while this necessary work is being completed.

“We must ensure all steps are taken to protect our patients and staff and we will be moving them off the site as quickly as possible.”

Initial proposals involve transferring inpatients and staff on Jasper ward, for acute admissions, to Springfield Hospital in Tooting.

Short-stay older patients may be supported by an enhanced home treatment team or sent to a specialist ward at Tolworth Hospital.

It is also hoped that outpatients, managers and administrators could be moved temporarily to the Henderson Hospital in Sutton.

The trust is to discuss the implications of the arrangements with service users and carer groups to identify any problems.

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