

Praying for the NHS and Social Services in Bucks

Mr Richard Smith – Consultant at Stoke Mandeville – has written this for your prayers:

As of Friday 3rd April, the number of people hospitalized because of Covid-19 is still relatively small, but of course this could change rapidly during the course of the coming week. The peak of the epidemic is widely expected to start during the Easter weekend and continue for 2 or 3 weeks afterwards.

A great deal of work has been going on in the background to provide additional training for staff who will have to look after seriously ill patients and to keep as many people who do not have the virus out of hospital by replacing hospital appointments with phone appointments. There is a lot of building work going on at Stoke Mandeville to provide new wards and separate access between emergency areas and other parts of the hospital.

There are many things we need to pray about during the current crisis, but here is a selection for the moment.

* Staff who are themselves ill with the virus or are in isolation because of a family member
* Relatives who cannot visit loved ones who are seriously ill and in strict isolation with the virus
* Staff working in the community services and social services who are trying to support increased numbers of vulnerable patients, some of whom will have been recently discharged from hospital
* Hazards for staff who care for patients with the virus include: catching the virus themselves and giving it to their relatives, exhaustion, worry about being unable to cope or having too much responsibility, feelings of guilt about not being able to save some patients.
* For some male staff (mainly Muslims and Sikhs), a beard is a non-negotiable expression of their faith, but increases their risk of exposure to the virus when working with patients and creates a tension for them.
* That people with other illnesses and long-term conditions would not suffer harm or avoidable deterioration because they are unable to gain access to care.
* If the lock-down is prolonged, there is a risk of secondary epidemics of obesity and loss of mobility (as people comfort-eat and take little exercise), depression, suicide, alcohol or drug dependency and domestic violence. Pray for those who support people at risk of these hazards.

Thank you for your prayers on behalf of all the staff in Bucks Healthcare Trust, the general practices and the social care teams of the Council.