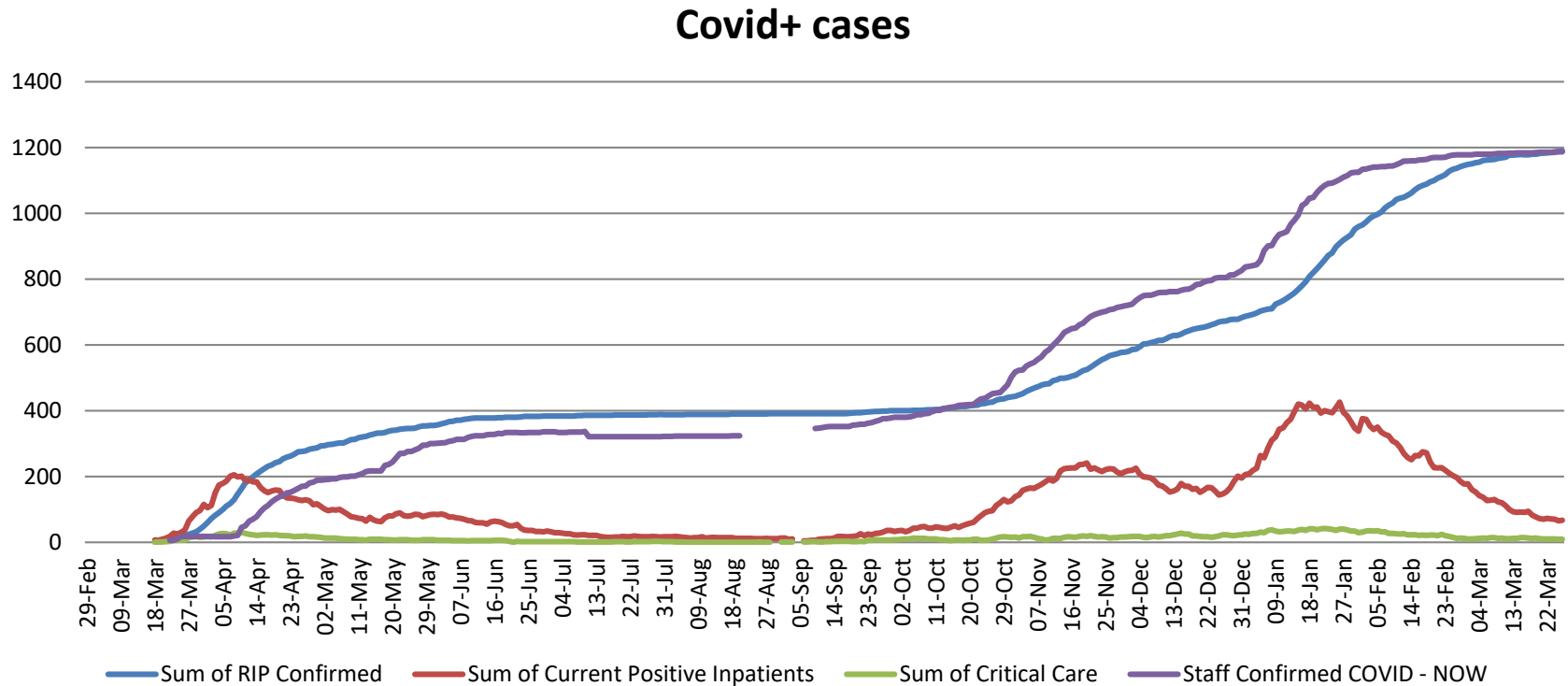


OPERATION MARY SEACOLE

Covid-19 Briefing
Richard Beeken, Interim Chief Executive

29 March 2021

Covid-19 cases in Sandwell and City Hospitals



- Inpatient numbers increased rapidly during January with peak of 426 inpatients (compared to our peak of 205 in the first wave). As of 26th Mar, 67 patients are in hospital with Covid, 10% of our hospital beds.
- 1190 people have tragically died with Covid since the start of the pandemic in March. We are seeing differences in mortality rates compared to earlier in the year.
- Staff absence relating to Covid is levelling (either through testing positive or self-isolating)
- Critical care Covid+ cases have reduced (9 in ICU on 26.03.21)

Clinical pathways for Covid-19 patients and other patients needing admission

- All patients are tested on admission and regularly depending which stream they are in. We have red, amber and green streams in place, and contact wards for people who test negative but have been in contact with Covid+ patients
- Maternity continue to see patients in community locations and at our hospital sites
- Outpatient activity is a mix of virtual (video / telephone) and face to face where appropriate
- Regrettably we have had to step down some planned surgical procedures to manage the additional patients needing hospital admission during this wave. Our surgery activity has resumed from 22 March 2021.
- Urgent diagnostics and surgery continues on site as well as in some private sector hospitals
- We have returned haemato-oncology from private facilities to the Trust, but based at City Hospital rather than Sandwell Hospital. This enables patients to be in single en-suite rooms, reducing infection risk.

Test, trace, vaccinate, protect

- Staff swabbing remains in place for staff and their household members with symptoms
- Staff now have access to LAMP testing which is a lab-tested saliva test – more accurate than the lateral flow tests, and can identify asymptomatic cases
- Staff shielding are having regular contact from the Trust to check in
- Staff have been offered the Covid-19 vaccine. The Sandwell Hospital Hub stepped down its vaccine clinic on 12 February having completed over 7000 first dose vaccinations. It reopened on 23 March for second doses.
- We are working hard to ensure that all staff adhere to our infection prevention and control guidelines including wearing appropriate PPE depending on the area they are working – we have good PPE stocks
- We monitor and review all cases of potential hospital acquired Covid-19
- Patients and staff must wear masks when in shared areas (patients when moving around a ward or out of bed).

Supporting colleagues and our communities

- The Trust has in place a range of mental wellbeing support including confidential counselling and a wellbeing sanctuary
- Time for staff to recover after this wave will be vital in ensuring we are able to restore the NHS services and tackle waiting lists
- We continue to take a flexible approach to those required to self-isolate
- Hotel accommodation is available for staff to protect their families
- We expect to reintroduce limited visiting in line with lockdown restrictions easing.
- We recognise the amazing support from our communities and also the difficulties that so many are facing with joblessness, business collapse, furlough and employment uncertainty. We are not accepting community donations of food and supplies in recognition of this. Instead we are pointing donors at community organisations who can help or asking that they donate to Your Trust Charity where we can use funds to support patients, families and staff in the best ways.

Messages to our communities

1. We all must continue to comply with the lockdown restrictions and take a cautious approach as these are relaxed.
2. People should continue to seek medical help when needed. Our services provide safe care with extensive precautions in place .
3. Sandwell Hospital is the new location for the Parsonage Street Walk-in Centre activity from 1 April 2021
4. GP practices remain open - GP referrals for diagnostic tests and specialist appointments are continuing.
5. Surgical procedures that have been paused are beginning again from 22 March 2021.
6. People should take up the Covid-19 vaccine offer when they are contacted.
7. Along with the Covid vaccine, the best defence is to ensure social distancing, frequent handwashing and face coverings / masks.

Thank you: Any questions?