



Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group  
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

# The Whalton Unit

**Barbara Scott**

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

**Rachel Mitcheson**

NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group

# About the unit

- Whalton Unit is located within Morpeth and provides consultant led rehabilitation and care for older people who live in South East Northumberland.
- The 30 bedded unit occupies the upper floor of a private nursing home.
- The unit provides
  - Specialist stroke rehabilitation
  - Post operative orthopaedic rehabilitation
  - Palliative and end of life care

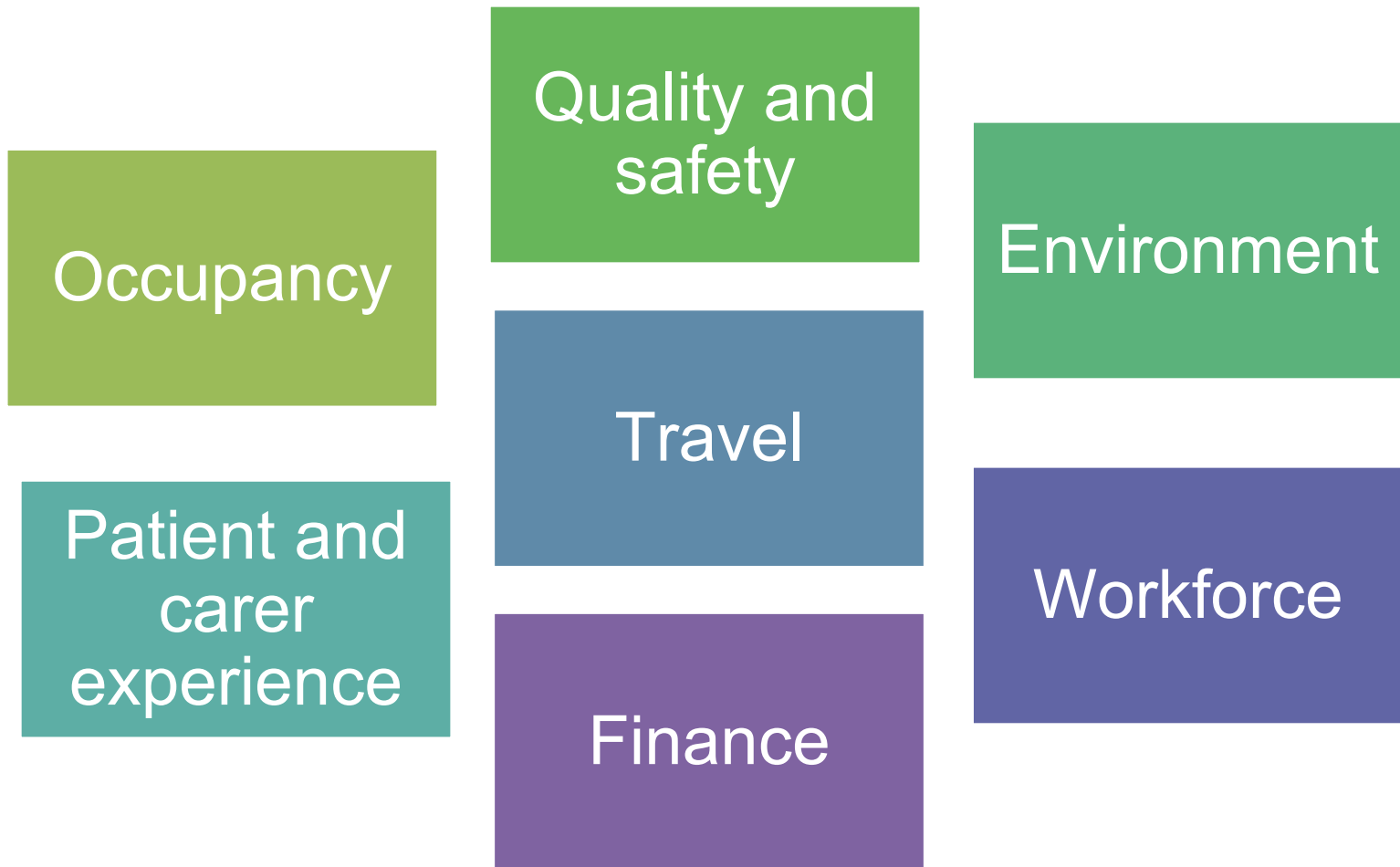
# Background

Timeline	
November 2018	NHCFT informed the CCG about the temporary move
December 2018	The Whalton unit moved to Wansbeck
April 2019	The temporary position was reviewed and extended.
July 2019	NHCFT took the internal decision to permanently move the Whalton unit to Wansbeck.
July 2019	The CCG considered the proposal and agreed to the Whalton unit remaining at Wansbeck while a period of public engagement took place.
October 2019	The CCG and NHCFT carried out the public engagement

# Reasons for the relocation

- Unable to recruit Nurses to work on the unit.
- Winter pressures and needing to ensure the beds were available to meet the increase in demand over the period.
- Potential impact on patient safety and quality.

# The Review



# Outcome of Review

More timely investigations

Fewer transfers

Fewer episodes of harm (Falls)

Consistent nursing care

Improved skill mix

# Possible solutions

## Improve environment

- Move the ward, to include more space enabling a rehab space, MDT office and day room.

## Improve access

- Explore internal transport to cover long corridors.
- Review parking options nearer to ward site.

## Improve offer

- Review TV charges for longer stay patients
- Information on travel support available

# Further understanding of the impact

Catchment

Travel

Deprivation

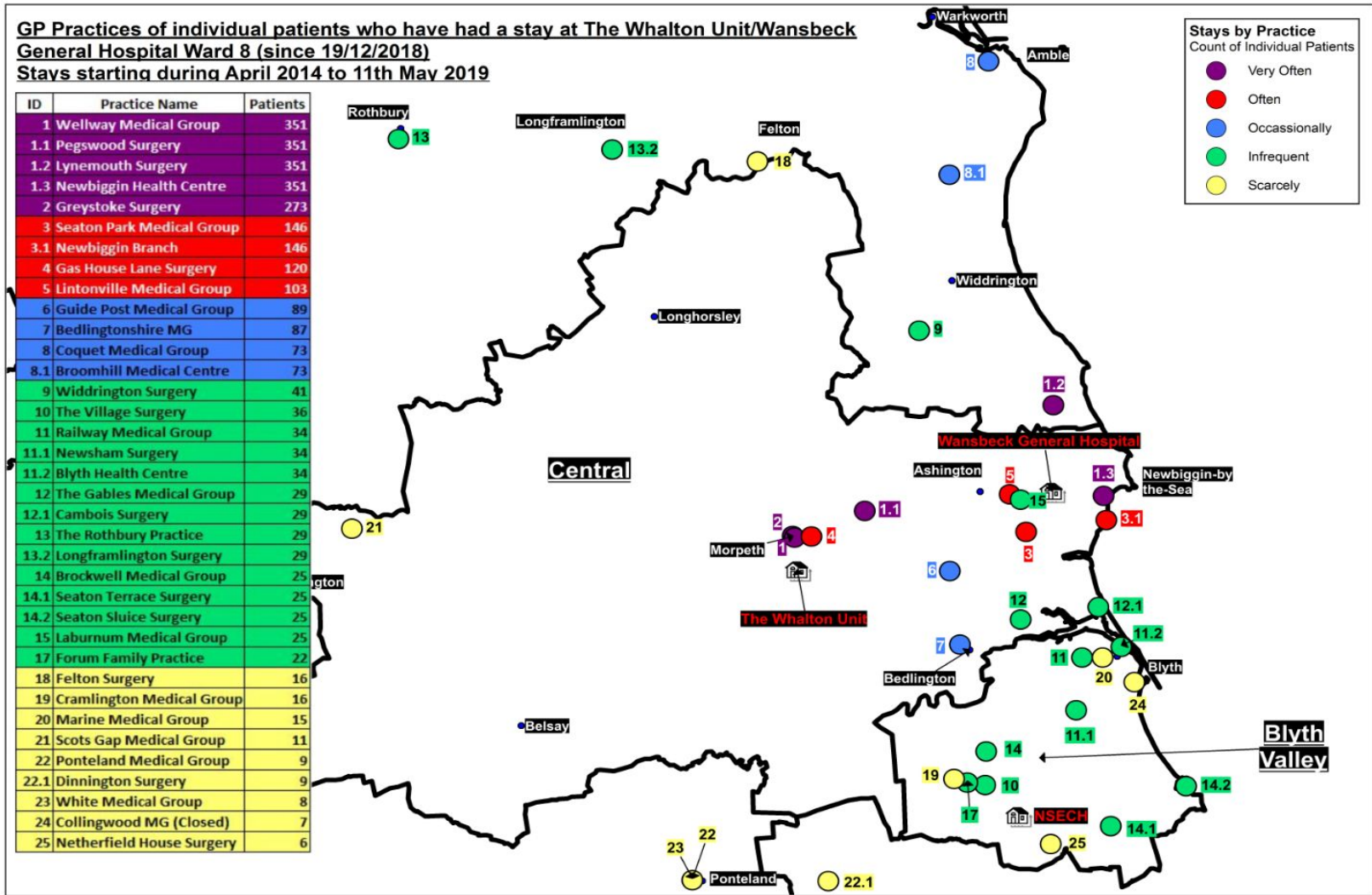
Engagement



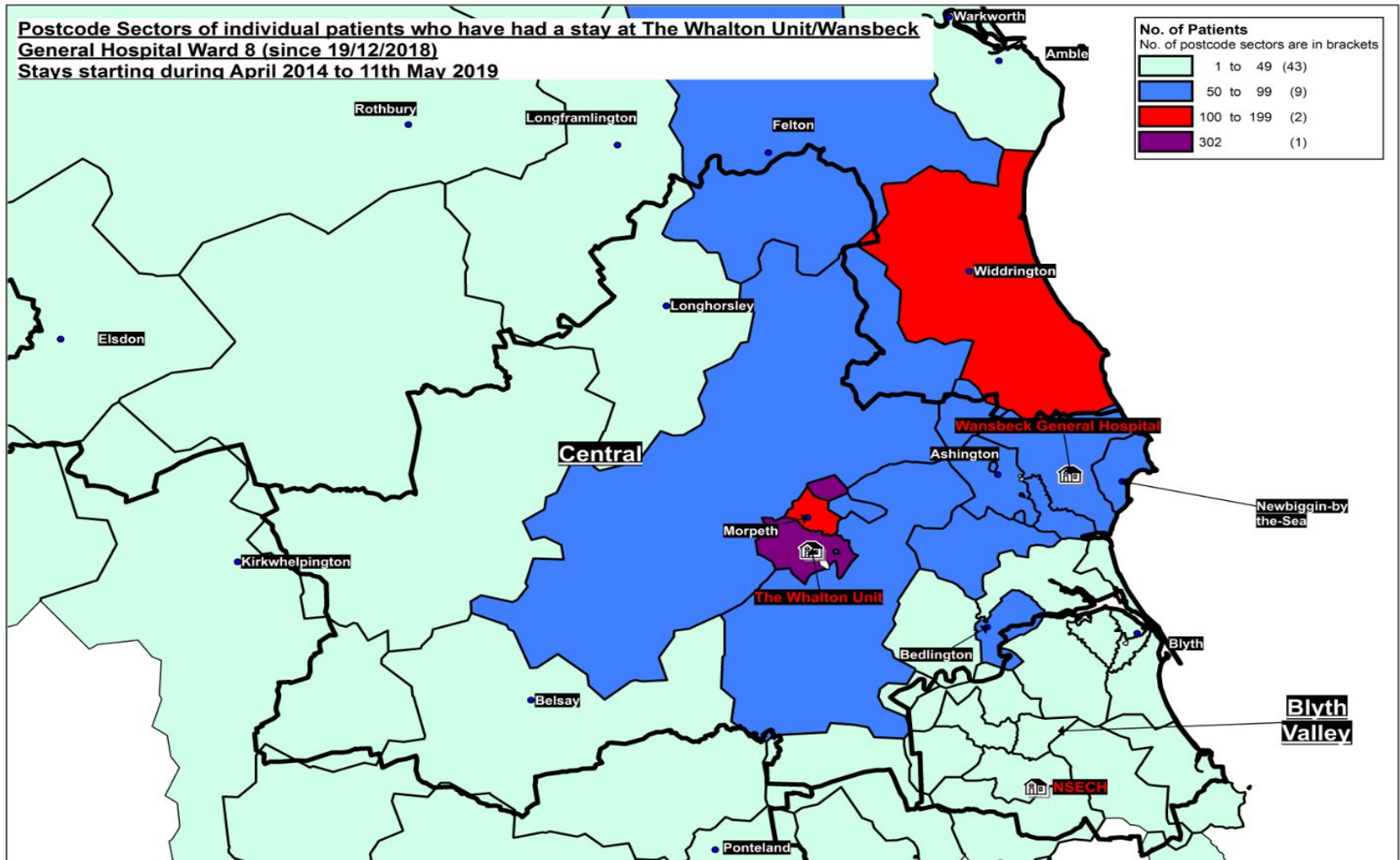
# Catchment

- The next two maps shows who had a stay at The Whalton Unit on both sites
  - Morpeth - (1 April 2014 to the 18 December 2018)
  - Ward 8 at Wansbeck General Hospital - (19 December 2018 to 11 May 2019)

# The number of patients registered at each practice who had a stay on the Whalton Unit (1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 – 11<sup>th</sup> May 2019)



# The number of patients by postcode sectors who have been admitted to the Whalton Unit.



# Travel distances and deprivation

## Public Transport

Following on from where people live, analysis took place to establish access within 30 mins.

- A larger number of people are able to access Wansbeck General Hospital in 30 mins than the Morpeth site.
- The larger number of people accessing the site by public transport in 30 mins come from a more deprived neighbourhoods.
- The move is detrimental to of those able to access from a rural village and dispersed areas.
- Main bus routes North to South – 2 buses needed from Morpeth to Wansbeck General Hospital.

# Travel distances and deprivation

## Car Travel

- Access by car in 30 mins to each site were the same.
- The difference in terms of deprivation levels and urban/rural classification between the two populations are very similar.
- Increased deprivation has an impact on car ownership.

# Engagement Methodology

Drop-in  
Sessions

Community  
Groups

GPs, PPGs,  
Town  
Council

Campaign  
Group

Independent  
Research

# Engagement Promotion

Stakeholder  
Briefings

OSC briefing

Posters &  
Information  
Cards

Press  
Releases

Online &  
Social Media

# Results

Awareness  
high

Mostly female  
& over 45

Viewed  
relocation  
negatively

Drop-Ins  
241

Independent  
Research  
500



# Engagement themes

Convenience

Travel

Parking

Environment

Isolation

Privacy and  
Dignity

Palliative  
Care

Staffing

Finance

# Areas of consideration

		Whalton Unit	Wansbeck General Hospital
1	Recruitment of nursing staff	Red	Green
2	Patient experience	Green	Green
3	Patient quality and safety	Red	Green
4	Palliative care	Green	Yellow
5	Travel – Car	Green	Green
6	Travel – Public transport	Yellow	Green
7	Travel – Impact raised through engagement	Green	Red
8	Environment – (Privacy)	Green	Yellow
9	Environment – (Safety)	Yellow	Green
10	Environment – (Space)	Green	Yellow
11	Financial	Red	Green

# Conclusions

Workforce  
and staffing

Travel

Environmental  
(Palliative  
care)

# Recommendations

- NHCFT continue the transport offer to support families and carers.
- NHCFT improve the environment – to include rehabilitation space, MDT office and day room.
- NHCFT and CCG invest in additional community matron time.
- NHCFT and CCG to improve rehabilitation offer in peoples own homes.
- NHCFT and CCG to jointly develop a palliative care bed model in nursing homes, with expertise from palliative care team.
- Fully support the development of the Northumberland wide end of life strategy.

# Summary

- NCCG have supported NHCFT proposal to permanently move the Whalton unit to Wansbeck General Hospital.
- The above recommendations have been agreed and many came out of the engagement process.
- NCCG and NHCFT are requesting confirmation from members that this move of service is not a significant variation and therefore a consultation process is not required.

**Any Questions**