

19 June 2012

Fire at St Richard's Hospital - update

Patient services are back to normal at St Richard's Hospital in Chichester, after a small fire in the Pathology department shortly before 2pm.

The incident, which was entirely contained within one laboratory room, was declared over at approximately 4.35pm.

Nobody was hurt in the incident, although there was an evacuation of the immediate surrounding area – the laboratory contained chemicals and so the emergency services treated the incident with the utmost caution.

Outpatient clinics were stopped early because the area is close to the Pathology department. The patients who had their appointments cancelled will be contacted tomorrow to arrange a new time. Clinics will run as normal tomorrow (Weds).

A&E remained open although ambulances were temporarily diverted to Worthing and Portsmouth while the fire crews dealt with the situation. The divert has now been lifted.

The rest of the hospital continued to operate as normal.

Cathy Stone, Director of Nursing and Patient Safety at Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust, said: "Services are back to normal, although regrettably some of our outpatients were affected today – we will contact everyone involved to rearrange those appointments at the earliest opportunity.

"Whilst the public would have seen a great deal of activity from the emergency services, the majority of our hospital services were unaffected.

"The fire service commended the Trust for its handling of the incident, and we would like to thank everyone for their co-operation."

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