

January 2026: Understanding Emergency General Surgery Change Timeline of Information.

- June 2022:** The Department of Health release the [Review of General Surgery NI](#) setting out the new evidence-based standards for Emergency General Surgery (EGS) and stating that hospitals delivering EGS must meet these standards.
- From October 2022:** Over the period of this timeline (October 2022 – January 2026), at regular and consistent intervals, full updates provided to Programme Board and Trust Board to keep members fully informed and appraised of all information.
- November 2022:** The Trust was unable to maintain a safe and sustainable emergency general surgery rota at SWAH following the resignation of the only remaining substantive Consultant General Surgeon available to work on the emergency rota at the hospital.
- Trust Board met on 17 November 2022 and approved a recommendation for an unplanned temporary suspension of Emergency General Surgery at SWAH in order to ensure patient safety. This decision was taken in response to immediate operational risk and was not a decision on the permanent configuration of services.
- December 2022:** The temporary suspension of Emergency General Surgery at SWAH was implemented in December 2022, following the decision by Trust Board.
- January 2023:** In line with its statutory obligations and the Department of Health Guidance on *Change or Withdrawal of Services*, the Trust launched a 12-week public consultation on the temporary change to Emergency General Surgery at SWAH in the week **commencing on 16 January 2023**.

The list of Consultation Events are as follows:

DEA	Venue	AVAILABLE DATES
Enniskillen	Fermanagh Lakeland Forum	30th Jan 6.30pm - 8.30pm
Erne East	Castle Park Leisure Centre Anne	31st Jan 6.30pm to 8.30pm
West Tyrone	Ecclesville Centre	1st Feb 6.30pm to 8.30pm
Erne North	Bawnacre Centre Anne	2nd Feb 6.30pm to 8.30pm
Erne West	Belcoo Community Centre anne	7th Feb 6.30pm to 8.30pm
Mid Tyrone	Owenkillew Centre	8th Feb 6.30pm to 8.30pm
Omagh	Omagh Leisure Complex	9th Feb 6.30pm to 8.30pm
Online	Zoom webinar	8 March 1pm to 3pm
Online	Zoom webinar	13 March 7pm to 9pm

- July 2023:** The Findings Report from this Public Consultation on the temporary change to Emergency General Surgery at SWAH was formally presented to the Trust Board at its public meeting on 6 July 2023. As required under the guidance, the consultation explicitly sought to explore viable alternatives to the temporary service arrangements. The Trust is satisfied that this requirement was met and that the consultation process was robust, transparent, and comprehensive.

- July 2025:** Trust Board approve the decision to proceed to a *‘Public Consultation on a permanent change to Emergency General Surgery’*.
- July 2025:** The Trust did not proceed with a planned *‘Public Consultation on a permanent change to Emergency General Surgery’* in July 2025 following a request from the Health Minister to pause that consultation and begin the process of producing a vision plan, emphasising how the South West Acute Hospital will meet the health needs of its current and future population.
- October 2025:** On 7 October 2025, the Trust Board formally agreed to close the Public Consultation and also approved the start of new work to design and develop a Vision Plan. This will be a forward-looking programme that will focus on the people and places of Fermanagh and West Tyrone. As requested by so many people and partners, including elected Representatives, this plan will need a meaningful period of engagement and listening sessions and will include specific work relating to the South West Acute Hospital (SWAH).
- February 2026:** The Trust are providing a full update to the Public in respect of improved patient pathways, information and data on the now established Ambulatory Surgical Care hubs in SWAH and Altnagelvin and Independent data information provided by Caspe Healthcare Knowledge Systems (CHKS), which benchmarks all Trusts in Northern Ireland, showing analysis for the period December 2022 – May 2025 indicating ‘Improved outcomes for Patients’ requiring emergency general surgery in the Trust.

More comprehensive detail and information in addition to clear ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ on all matters in relation to this topic will be available on the Western Trust Website online hub. The link is below and please note this will continue to be developed through January-March 2026:

- [Fermanagh and West Tyrone Future Health and Care Services | Western Health & Social Care Trust](#)