

Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3 April 2017



Proposals to implement Standards for Congenital Heart Disease services for Children and Adults in England.

Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and Partnerships

Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report provides members with background information in respect of NHS England's current consultation on proposals to implement standards for congenital heart disease services for Children and Adults in England and invites members to support the retention of Level 1 surgery and interventional cardiology for Adults and Children at Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Background

- 2 In July 2016, NHS England published a set of proposals regarding the future commissioning of congenital heart disease (CHD) services for children and adults. They describe the actions that NHS England as specialised commissioners of these services proposed to take in order to ensure a consistent standard of care for CHD patients across the country.

North East Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committee considerations

- 3 The North East Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference include provision for that Committee to consider statutory health scrutiny reviews to consider and respond to proposals for developments or variations in health services that affect more than one health authority area, and that are considered "substantial" by the health overview and scrutiny committees for the areas affected by the proposals.
- 4 In view of the fact that NHS England's current consultation on proposals to implement standards for congenital heart disease services for Children and Adults in England affects all 12 local authorities within the region, this is considered the appropriate body to respond to the current consultation.
- 5 The North East Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committee considered a report and consultation documents from NHS England at its meeting held on 2 March 2017.
- 6 At the Joint Health OSC meeting, members were advised that the consultation document proposed that surgery and interventional cardiology for adults and

children would continue at Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, albeit with some provisos attached.

7 The consultation document states that:-

“While we are clear that all hospitals providing CHD services must meet the national CHD standards, we have had to propose a time-limited exception, or derogation, in the case of one particular hospital. Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust does not meet the 2016 activity requirement and is unlikely to be able to meet the 2021 activity requirement. It also does not meet the 2019 paediatric co-location requirements or currently have a realistic plan to do so by April 2019. The CHD service for both children and adults is located at the Freeman Hospital, which is primarily an adult acute hospital. Relevant children’s specialties – paediatric surgery, nephrology and gastroenterology – are located at the Great North Children’s Hospital, which is part of the same hospital trust, but is not located on the same site. While the hospital trust meets the co-location requirement for 2016, i.e. bedside access within 30 minutes, it is unlikely to meet the full co-location requirement for 2019 for children’s CHD surgery to be on the same site as other children’s specialist services.

Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has a unique, strategic position in the NHS in England in delivering care for CHD patients with advanced heart failure, including heart transplantation and bridge to transplant. Advanced heart failure amongst people with CHD is increasing as a result of increased life expectancy, and treatment for people with this condition is dependent on CHD surgeons. Adult CHD patients with end stage heart failure have limited access to heart transplantation, and the unit in Newcastle is recognised as delivering more care to this group than other transplant centres nationally. This service is intimately connected to the CHD service and can only be delivered at a hospital providing Level 1 surgical services. No other provider currently has this capability so, while in principle it would be possible to commission these services from an alternative provider, the learning curve would be long and initially outcomes would not be as good.

In addition, the hospital trust is one of only two providing paediatric heart transplantation for the UK (the other is Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust in London).

While Newcastle does not meet these required standards now and is unlikely to be able to do so within the required timeframe, its role as one of only two national providers of critical heart transplantation and bridge to transplant services means that we need to consider retaining services at Newcastle despite the fact that it does not meet all the standards at present and is unlikely to do so within the required timeframes. The surgeons who perform CHD operations are the same surgeons carrying out heart transplants. If CHD surgery were moved elsewhere, the transplantation service could not be replaced in the short term without a negative effect on patients. For this reason, we are proposing to retain CHD services at Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

This does not mean that change at Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust will not happen in the longer-term. The hospital trust is required to meet the standards in the same way as all of the other Level 1 surgical centres. Timeframes for doing this may differ, but we will be working closely with the hospital trust to ensure that patients receiving CHD care at Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are not compromised in any way.”

- 8 Whilst the North East Regional Joint Health OSC welcomed the proposals to retain Level 1 surgery and interventional cardiology for Adults and Children at Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, there were concerns amongst members around the conditions placed upon Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals Foundation Trust around the need to co-locate children and adults CHD services on 1 site and the timescales that this may involve. To this end, the North East Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committee have asked for regular updates back to that Committee upon the work to be undertaken by the Trust to meet the requirements of NHS England’s derogation in this respect.
- 9 The North East Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committee were also minded to recommend their support for the retention of Level 1 surgery and interventional cardiology for Adults and Children at Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and sought confirmation of this approach from the constituent authorities.
- 10 A copy of the consultation document is attached to this report together with an easy to read version. (Appendices 2 and 3)

Recommendations

- 11 The Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:-
 - (a) receive this report, and
 - (b) respond to the consultation on proposals to implement standards for congenital heart disease services for Children and Adults in England via the North East Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committee that members support the retention of Level 1 surgery and interventional cardiology for Adults and Children at Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Background papers

Agenda and Report to the North East Regional Joint Scrutiny Committee - Proposals to implement standards for congenital heart disease services for Children and Adults in England – 2 March 2017

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - None

Staffing - None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - None

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder - None

Human Rights - None

Consultation – None .

Procurement - None

Disability Issues - None

Legal Implications – This report has been produced in response to the Council's statutory responsibilities to engage in health scrutiny consultations as detailed in the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Board and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 and associated Department of Health Guidance.