

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 NOVEMBER 2016

QUALITY OF ACUTE HOSPITAL SERVICES - UPDATE

Summary

1. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) is to receive an update from Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (the Trust) on the quality of hospital services, and in particular, progress to address improvements required by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) – through the Patient Care Improvement Plan.
2. The Care Quality Commission is due to revisit the Trust in late November 2016.
3. The Trust's Interim Chief Executive and the new Chair have been invited to attend the meeting.

Background

4. The HOSC requested regular updates during 2015 on the quality of acute hospital services – as part of its role to monitor the impact of ongoing pressures experienced by many hospital trusts, such as increased activity, greater complexity of patient needs and financial constraints. Within Worcestershire, a further pressure has been the delay in finalising a reconfiguration of acute hospital services, which has resulted in an on-going period of uncertainty for the Trust.
5. Additionally, the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) most recent (December 2015) inspection report led to the Trust being placed into special measures as a result of the planned inspection in July 2015. Key issues from the inspection report centred on:
 - Outpatient Strategy
 - Women and Children's Services
 - High Dependency Unit Review Emergency Surgery Reconfiguration
 - Governance and Safety.
6. Of the 115 domains rated, the Trust received ratings of outstanding in 2, good in 54, with 13 inadequate and the rest requiring improvement – for the latter this meant that consistency needed to improve, and not that all areas were poor.
7. The Trust's previous updates to the HOSC on 9 December 2015, 27 April and 19 July 2016, have focused on the initial inspection findings and progress to date, priority work streams and plans, as well as the recent temporary emergency changes to services which needed to be made on patient safety grounds by the Trust, under emergency powers - in November 2015 all births from the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch were moved to the Worcestershire Royal Hospital because of a severe shortage of neonatal nurses, and from September 2016, Inpatient Paediatric Services were centralised at Worcestershire Royal Hospital also.

8. Whilst acknowledging the innovative work in hand to progress the Patient Care Improvement Plan since the CQC's inspection, the HOSC's discussions have raised a number of concerns, including the impact on national performance targets, the need for clear communications to inform, reassure the public and dispel rumours, the need for better systems to improve patient waiting times and discharge, staffing and recruitment, capacity at Worcestershire Royal Hospital, significant financial pressures, the onset of pressures from seasonal winter illnesses and transportation between hospital sites.

9. Concern was also expressed about the need for stability and the negative impact of the on-going delay to the reconfiguration of acute hospital services in Worcestershire.

10. More recently, on 26 September 2016, HOSC members discussed Radiology Services with the Trust, to understand actions being taken to address reports of a backlog of Radiologist reports on X-rays.

11. The Care Quality Commission is due to revisit the Trust in late November 2016.

Purpose of Meeting

12. HOSC members are invited to consider and comment on progress being made to address the quality of services at the Trust.

13. Following the discussion, HOSC Members are asked to consider whether any further information is required and identify any specific elements for potential future scrutiny.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 April, 19 July and 26 September 2016, 16 September and 9 December 2015
<http://worcestershire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=141>
- Care Quality Commission Press release, 2 December 2015
<http://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/news/care-quality-commission-report/>
- Care Quality Commission report on Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust (December 2015)
<http://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/RWP#sthash.mEq4ofel.dpuf>

- Worcestershire Acute Hospital NHS Trust Press Release, 2 December 2015
<http://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/news/care-quality-commission-report/>
- Press releases on temporary emergency changes to maternity, neonatal and gynaecology services August 2015 to February 2016:
 - <http://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/news/temporary-relocation-of-emergency-gynaecology-services/>
 - <http://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/news/temporary-relocation-of-emergency-gynaecology-services-from-alex/>
 - <http://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/news/temporary-emergency-changes-to-services-to-remain-in-place/>