

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

29 JANUARY 2018

QUALITY OF ACUTE HOSPITAL SERVICES - UPDATE

Summary

1. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) is to receive an update from the Chief Executive of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (the Trust) on the quality of hospital services, and in particular, further progress to address improvements required by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), England's independent regulator of health and social care.
2. HOSC Members will be aware, from the previous update on 17 October 2017 that the Trust has been in special measures since November 2015.

Background

3. The CQC served a section 29A notice on the Trust in January 2017, requiring significant improvement by 10 March 2017. The CQC conducted a focussed assessment in early April to assess progress against the s29A notice and the results of that assessment were released in July 2017.
4. The CQC served a further section 29A notice on the Trust as a result of this assessment, which required significant improvement by 30 September 2017.
5. The CQC conducted core service reviews of four services and a focussed assessment on governance in November 2017. The report from that inspection was released on 17 January 2018.
6. The CQC inspects services by asking five key questions:
 - Is it safe?
 - Is it effective?
 - Is it caring?
 - Is it responsive?
 - Is it well-led?

Scrutiny to Date

7. The HOSC has received regular updates 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, although now agreed, has resulted in an on-going period of uncertainty for the Trust.
8. Links to the minutes of these discussions are available in the background information section of this report.

9. The Trust's updates to the HOSC have focused on the inspection findings and progress to date, priority work streams and plans, as well as the negative impact of the on-going delay to the reconfiguration of acute hospital services in Worcestershire, which were finally approved in July 2017.

Progress on Quality Improvement

10. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) published its report on Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust on the 18 January following their inspection in November 2017. The inspection assessed the core services of urgent and emergency care and medical care (including older people's care) at the Alexandra and Worcestershire Royal Hospitals.

11. The report shows that all four of the core services inspected have improved from 'inadequate' to 'requires improvement' in the safe domain, urgent and emergency care at the Worcester site now rated 'good' in the effective domain and three of the four services have improved their overall rating from 'inadequate' to 'requires improvement'.

12. Given that only four of the twenty-two core services were rated in this inspection, there have been no changes to the overall ratings of the hospitals individually or the Trust overall as a result of this inspection.

13. The CQC identified outstanding practices in this review including medicines safety work by the Pharmacy Team in the Emergency Department (ED) at Worcestershire Royal Hospital, and care for patients with mental health conditions in the ED at the Alexandra Hospital. Evergreen Ward at Worcestershire Royal Hospital, which provides a rehabilitation area for inpatients waiting for discharge, was also singled out for praise for its outstanding work in promoting holistic care and timely discharge of patients.

14. The CQC also identified areas that the Trust needs to continue to improve. This includes further improvement in the levels of mandatory training, VTE risk assessments at 24 hours post admission, improved responsiveness by specialist doctors for patients in the Emergency Departments, timeframes for resolution of complaints and risk management processes.

15. The CQC will return over the next six weeks to conduct more core service reviews. They have not identified which services will be reviewed, but they need to inspect all core services that are rated as 'inadequate' annually. These services are surgery at the Alexandra Hospital, children and young people at the Worcestershire Royal, urgent and emergency care (MIU) at the Kidderminster site and outpatients and diagnostic imaging at all three sites. They can, of course, inspect any other core services. The CQC have also advised that they will conduct a 'well-led' review at the end of February 2018.

16. The Trust's Quality Improvement Plan, which the HOSC reviewed on 19 July, will be refreshed following this report.

17. The attached presentation includes detail from the report.

Winter Pressures

18. The health economy has a detailed winter plan. For the Acute Trust, this included opening additional beds, implementation of the county wide frailty pathway and implementation of the expanded ambulatory emergency care at the Worcestershire Royal. In addition, the health economy received winter funding totalling £2.6M in the middle of December to support further enhancement of the county wide winter plan.

19. The hospitals have seen increased activity this winter when compared to last winter. For the period 22 December to 16 January, an additional 418 patients have presented to the A&E departments at the two acute hospitals. There have also been 264 more ambulances over this period compared to last winter. The Trust has also seen many people affected by influenza and norovirus. Having patients with these infections, on top of the increased demand, adds additional pressure as often they need to be cared for in side rooms, which can require significant bed movements, and contacts need to be cohorted in bays together.

20. Unfortunately this has contributed to a deterioration of approximately 4% in the Emergency Access Performance at both sites and an increase in ambulance handover delays, which is very regrettable. Ambulance handover delays are particularly problematic when there are surges in ambulance activity. In partnership with West Midlands Ambulance Service, part of the additional winter funding will be used for a new ambulance position to be located in the health economy winter plan and assist in 'load balancing' across both sites.

21. Patient flow at the Worcester site has been, and continues to be, an issue of high focus for the Trust. It is pleasing to see that there have only been three 12 hour trolley breaches over this period of winter compared to 135 for the same period last year. This is resulting in patients spending 40% less time on the ED corridor than last year and 20% less time waiting for a bed, once the decision to admit has been made. It remains the Trust's goal to cease using the corridor completely. During early December, the corridor was clear for days at a time, however the increased activity has made this difficult to maintain through winter.

22. The Trust is also very pleased with the uptake of flu vaccination among staff with over 75% of staff being vaccinated.

Capital Expenditure Plans

23. HOSC Members will be aware that the outcome of the lengthy review of Acute Hospital Services in Worcestershire, finalised in July 2017, meant that the Trust was able to submit a bid for £29.6million of capital funding from the Department of Health. The funding would enable the works involved to be completed by May 2020.

24. The clinical model recommended from the Review was to enable continued delivery of services in Worcestershire and respond to national changes in the training of doctors and increasing staff shortages.

25. At its 17 October 2017 discussion with the Trust, the HOSC was pleased to learn that £29.6m capital had been allocated, however, it was understood that the funding would only be secured subject to a further business case.

26. Separate to these works, HOSC Members were also advised that part of the Trust's winter plan included an additional ward on the Worcester site, which would be an Ambulatory Emergency Care (AEC) Unit.

27. The new AEC Unit saw its first patients on 20 November 2017. The Unit, which adjoins the current A&E department, allows appropriate patients to be seen and treated more quickly, as well as helping to free-up space in the main A&E department.

28. The money for the AEC Unit is separate to the £29.6m and resulted from a bid from national funding to support Emergency Department streaming to Primary Care and other co-located front door services.

Purpose of Meeting

27. HOSC Members are invited to consider and comment on progress being made to address the quality of services at the Trust and progress made on their capital expenditure plans

28. In doing so, potential areas of enquiry may include:

- priorities for improvement
- how progress is being driven and managed since the 2016 inspections and the previous update to HOSC in October 2017
- winter pressures and how the Trust is coping with this particularly busy period
- other main issues or obstacles to improvement
- progress with bringing stability to the leadership team
- role of partnership working
- managing the impact on patients, families and staff.

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

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – presentation re CQC findings.

Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this Report

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Michelle McKay, Chief Executive of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

Email: d.wark@nhs.net (Donna Wark, Executive PA)

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 19 July and 17 October 2017, 27 April, 19 July and 26 September 2016, 16 September and 9 December 2015, 27 April and 16 November 2016
<http://worcestershire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=141>
- Worcestershire Acute Hospital NHS Trust Press Release, 17 January 2018
<http://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/news-and-media/689-response-to-cqcinspection-jan2018>
- Care Quality Commission reports on Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust:
(January 2018)
http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAH0798.pdf

(June 2017)
http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAG5822.pdf

(December 2015)
http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAD7712.pdf