

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 JULY 2017

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), England's independent regulator of health and social care.
2. The Trust has been in special measures since November 2015 and remains so, following publication of the CQC's latest inspection report (in June this year), which relates to visits to the Trust's hospitals in November and December 2016.
3. The inspection report gives an overall rating of 'inadequate' and recommends that the Trust remains in special measures until further review.
4. Representatives from the Trust's Board have been invited to attend the meeting.

Background

5. The HOSC has requested regular updates during 2015 and 2016 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. The Minutes of HOSC meetings on 27 April and 16 November 2016 will be particularly useful to HOSC members and links to these documents are included in the background papers.
6. 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.
7. 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?

A table of ratings for each key question against services, can be found at page 24 of the June 2017 CQC inspection report, which is available on the CQC website: http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAG5822.pdf

8. Overall inadequate ratings are given to:
 - Urgent and Emergency Services

- Medical care
- Services for children and young people
- Outpatients and diagnostic imaging.

9. End of life care is rated as 'good', and each service is rated as 'good' against the key question 'Is it caring?'.

Scrutiny to Date

10. The Trust's updates to the HOSC 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.

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. 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 and to seek assurances that lessons had been learned.

Purpose of Meeting

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

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

- priorities for improvement
- how progress is being driven and managed since the 2016 inspections
- 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.

16. 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 – Acute Trust's statement to stakeholders in response to the CQC inspection

Appendix 2 – Quality Improvement Plan

Contact Points

Worcestershire County Council: 01905 763763

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Specific Contact Points for this Report

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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, 27 April and 16 November 2016
<http://worcestershire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=141>
- Worcestershire Acute Hospital NHS Trust Press Release, 20 June 2017
<http://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/news-and-media/625-worcestershire-acute-hospitals-nhs-trust-response-to-the-cqc-inspection-reports>
- Care Quality Commission report on Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust (June 2017)
http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAG5822.pdf
- Care Quality Commission report on Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust (December 2015)
http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAD7712.pdf