

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 OCTOBER 2022

MATERNITY SERVICES

Summary

1. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) has requested an update on Maternity Services, in order to seek assurance on progress by Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (the Trust) since its last update in May 2022.
2. As a result of an inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on 9 December 2020, the overall rating for the Service went down from Good to Requires Improvement. It was rated Requires Improvement for being safe and well-led, and Good for being effective. Inspectors did not assess the service for whether it was caring or responsive at that inspection.
3. The Maternity Service Improvement Plan was shared with the HOSC in September 2021. At the last update on 9 May 2022, Members were advised that there were five outstanding actions to be completed to meet all of the recommendations made by CQC in its report published in March 2021. Further progress has been made on outstanding actions and these are detailed in paragraph 13.
4. Senior Representatives from the Trust have been invited to attend the meeting.

Issues for the Panel to Consider

Workforce

5. Nationally it is recognised that there are significant workforce challenges in the NHS and that there is a national shortage of midwives and obstetricians in the UK. Locally the Trust has previously reported to the Committee that the local maternity service has experienced staffing shortages due to COVID and non-COVID related absence, leavers and vacancies.
6. There is recent improvement in the Trust's maternity workforce as shown in the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (Appendix 1) which in turn has led to a reduction in delays in care – specifically in the Induction of Labour pathway.
7. There continues to be a focus on retaining and looking after staff so the Health & Wellbeing work stream has continued to meet. The lead has recently secured support from the Rugby League National Cares programme – this will provide a selected number of staff with additional leadership, effective team working and resilience skills.
8. The Directorate has successfully secured funding for a 'retention midwife' who will

join the preceptorship midwife and practice development midwife to support staff to maintain their clinical skills, develop new skills and provide support to the team in the clinical area.

9. The Director of Midwifery continues to hold twice monthly drop-in sessions with the teams and the Chief Nursing Officer continues to engage through drop in sessions and the safety champion role.

Maternity Service Improvement Plan

10. The Maternity Service Improvement plan (Appendix 2) has made some significant progress over the last six months. It has been difficult to engage with frontline staff as the service has been unable to release colleagues from clinical activity.

11. However, a number of actions have been completed following a small number of engagement events. For example, a clear standing operating procedure for Continuity of Carer model, an agreed long-term plan for future roll out of this model, new roles in midwifery to support staff to develop, and support to develop the Trust's maternity support workers through the national apprenticeship route.

12. The Trust has also received additional funding from NHSEI to strengthen the midwifery leadership team and also to support the maternity governance team with new roles to enable delivery of the safety agenda.

CQC Actions Update

13. In the CQC report published in March 2021 11 must do's and 9 should dos were reported. Of these the maternity directorate has completed 16 actions with 4 actions partially completed. These are:

1. Audit plan – leads now in post – plan to be agreed
2. Escalation Policy – finalise and embed new regional escalation policy
3. Appraisal rates – currently at 70%
4. Displaying safety information – boards in development

Final Ockenden Report

14. On 30 March the second and final Ockenden¹ report was published. Within the report there are a further 105 essential actions for each Trust to review and make improvements if actions are not already in place. There are a further 3 actions outlined in the report that are not for Trusts or systems to implement and require national action.

15. The Maternity Directorate Team have reviewed the report, completed a gap analysis, collated evidence and prepared an action plan to support the monitoring of ongoing improvement against the 104 essential actions (1 action revoked since publication).

¹ Independent Review of Maternity Services at Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Trust

Ockenden Final report compliance

16. The table below indicates performance of Maternity Services at the Trust against the compliance areas of the Final Ockenden Report.

| RAG (red/amber/green) status | May | August |
|------------------------------|-----|--------|
| Red | 8 | 7 |
| Amber | 40 | 44 |
| Green | 57 | 53 |

17. The areas requiring most improvement are:

- multi-disciplinary training,
- obstetric anaesthesia,
- training and provision of High Dependency Unit (HDU) care
- investment in the time available for medical staff to engage in the governance agenda.

18. The areas where scores were highest are:

- Financing a safe maternity workforce
- Preterm care
- Neonatal care
- Bereavement Care
- Supporting families

19. Further progress will be monitored through monthly assurance meetings and quarterly reporting to Trust Board.

Purpose of the Meeting

20. The HOSC is asked to consider and comment on the information provided and agree:

- whether any further information or scrutiny is required at this time.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 - Key performance Indicators

Appendix 2 - Maternity Services Improvement Plan

Contact Points

Emma James / Jo Weston, Overview and Scrutiny Officers Tel: 01905 844964 / 844965

Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager), 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 9 May 2022, 21 September and 10 March 2021 and 20 July 2018 [Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes and Agendas](#)
- [Final report of the Ockenden review - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)