

11 April 2017

National Review of Congenital Heart Disease (CHD) - Consultation Update

Summary

The Committee are requested to consider an update on the new national review of congenital heart disease. NHS England has undertaken a new review of the services and put forward a range of proposals for consultation.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

1. note the update on the new national review;
2. re-confirm that any changes to this service would be considered to be a 'substantial variation' to health services;
3. consider the key issues from the Regional Committee's discussion and make any additional comments for consideration;
4. note that the draft regional response will be considered by Council on 3 May.

Detail

1. Congenital Heart Disease (CHD) relates to heart conditions and defects that develop in the womb, and can require a range of interventional or surgical procedures. Most babies born with the condition survive into adulthood, and is relatively common with between 5,500 to 6,300 born in the UK each year with CHD. Newcastle Hospitals NHS Trust currently provides CHD treatment including surgery.
2. Following concerns raised as part of the inquiry into care at the Bristol Royal Infirmary published in 2001, there has been a long standing process of reviews aimed at improving the quality of CHD care.
3. In 2008 the Safe and Sustainable Review examined changes across the system for paediatric CHD services and made proposals for public consultation. These included reducing the number of hospitals that provided surgery to ensure that in future hospitals providing surgery had a minimum number of surgeons providing a minimum number of operations per year.
4. In 2011 the Regional Health Committee responded on behalf of the region to the Safe and Sustainable review. The recommendations of the Safe and Sustainable review were challenged and ultimately not taken forward.

5. NHS England took over responsibility for the commissioning of specialised services including CHD treatment in 2013, and a new review, this time including Adult services, was started. This focussed on the development of new standards against which potential providers would be assessed and would need to meet.
6. Consultation is now taking place on the proposals that flow from this review, until 5 June 2017. An extract from the consultation document is attached at **Appendix 1**. Full details can be found at:
<https://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/consultation/chd/>
7. The North East Regional Committee has again considered the proposals on the region's behalf at its meeting on 2 March. A summary of the issues is as follows:
 - There were no current concerns over outcomes, with Newcastle recognised as providing world class outcomes. It was noted that the review was taking a national perspective to ensure that services were sustainable in the longer run with lower levels of risk overall.
 - The proposals would enable Newcastle to retain its services, providing that there was a plan in place to achieve the standards it does not currently meet. Activity levels and co-location of services are the two standards not yet being met, but a time-limited exception to the standards would be in place for the Trust to enable it to meet them.
 - A key issue is the requirement for co-location of children's services by 2019. Adults and Children's cardiothoracic services are based at the Freeman, and the interdependent services eg. paediatric surgery and nephrology, are based at the Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI).
 - The Committee noted that Newcastle Hospitals Trust welcomes the review proposals, and its appreciation of the strategic importance of the Trust's services within the NHS (eg. the amount of CHD patient heart transplantation provided to those with advanced heart failure).
 - Co-location of its services would require significant effort and planning. There is currently no obvious place to site the CHD services at the RVI. All options were being considered including a new build and moving services between the two sites. The Trust is currently looking at the options and costs, and working proactively with commissioners to see how the standards can be met.
 - The Trust indicated that in the interests of long term stability and quality, it would look to co-locate its services as required, potentially by moving all CHD services to the RVI. If only children's CHD services were moved to the RVI, there was a risk that the benefits of co-locating adult and children's CHD care would be lost.
 - The Committee supported the planned work by Newcastle Trust , both in terms of physical changes to the departments and also the work needed to ensure activity levels are maintained. There were concerns

over the scale of change needed but recognition it was necessary to achieve the standards.

- The Committee supported all efforts to ensure that this new review achieved its aims and does not lead to further uncertainty.
8. Under the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013, the NHS is required to consult local authority health scrutiny committees in relation to 'substantial variations' to local services.
 9. Under the Regulations and associated statutory guidance¹, 'substantial variation' is not defined and is subject to local discretion. In line with the approach taken by the other regional Councils, it is considered that this proposal (and any potential loss of service) would constitute a 'substantial variation' to regional health services under the Regulations, and should therefore be responded to on that basis.
 10. As it affects the residents of more than one local authority, the Regional Committee has been consulted and will produce a consultation response.
 11. In line with standard practice at Stockton for responding to substantial variations, consultation responses including any element of a Joint Committee Response pertaining to Stockton should be agreed by Council prior to submission.
 12. Therefore it is proposed that the meeting of Council on 3 May would be used to consider the draft regional response.

Contact Officer: Peter Mennear
Post: Scrutiny Officer
Tel.: 01642 528957
Email: peter.mennear@stockton.gov.uk

1

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/324965/Local_authority_health_scrutiny.pdf