

**13 March 2018**

## **Neonatal Intensive Care Services**

### **Summary**

The Committee are requested to consider a briefing on neonatal intensive care services from NHS England.

### **Recommendations**

The Committee is requested to:

1. note the information provided;
2. confirm how it views these proposals, any further areas for clarification, and outline next steps.

### **Detail**

1. University Hospital of North Tees provides a neonatal intensive care service. An independent review of north east neonatal intensive care services was published in 2015. This was carried out by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.
2. The Review recommended a reconfiguration of services in the North East. A number of recommendations were made including the development of a single neonatal intensive care for the Tees area (to be sited at James Cook), and the development of a dedicated regional neonatal transport service.
3. The issues were considered at the Regional Joint Health Committee in December 2015. It was agreed that the consultation on the future of neonatal services would be included as part of the wider Better Health Programme consultation that was being planned at the time. However, as an immediate step, babies, from the Tees area, born between 23 and 26 weeks would be treated at James Cook. This was implemented in September 2017.
4. The regional dedicated neonatal transport service has also since been implemented.
5. The Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committee has been monitoring the progress of the regional review of neonatal services since 2015. The Committee was provided with an update at its meeting on 15 February 2018.
6. The consultation associated with the wider Better Health Programme is not now going ahead as planned. However NHS England highlighted that the

clinical pressures on the neonatal intensive care services remained and commissioners wish to discuss the future of the service. A shift to a single site at James Cook Hospital would affect a small number of babies each year, but NHS England noted that the 'vast majority' of current neonatal care would continue to be provided at North Tees (for example, special care).

7. Representatives of NHS England Specialised Commissioning will be in attendance at the meeting in order to brief the Committee, and a presentation will be provided.
8. When the Regional Joint Committee considered the matter, the Joint Committee agreed it did not have significant concerns on the current proposals, but it was noted that a local briefing would be considered at Stockton.
9. NHS England have been requested to provide information on:
  - numbers of babies cared for under the current arrangements and their home Local Authority/ CCG area;
  - capacity at James Cook to accommodate future service delivery;
  - details of why any babies from outside of the immediate area have had to be cared for at North Tees as part of the current arrangements;
  - details of any public engagement.
10. The Committee is requested to consider the information and any areas for further clarification/next steps.
11. Members are reminded that any changes to services may be considered to be a 'substantial variation' to local health services. 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. Under the Regulations and associated statutory guidance, 'substantial variation' is not defined and is subject to local discretion.

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