

NORTH TEES AND HARTLEPOOL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST: MATERNITY SERVICES UPDATE

Summary

Senior representatives of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) will again address the Committee to give a further update on developments in relation to the Trust's maternity services. This will be the third such update following issues raised by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in 2022 regarding NTHFT maternity provision, and will also include details of the Trust's review of its community midwifery offer after concerns were raised by the Committee in early-2023.

Detail

1. In March 2022, the high-profile Ockenden Report was published (see link below) following an independent review of maternity services at the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, a report which included a number of recommendations for all NHS Trusts.
 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1064302/Final-Ockenden-Report-web-accessible.pdf
2. The Committee regularly monitors published CQC reports and consider these on a quarterly basis at its formal public meetings. In September 2022, Members were made aware of the latest CQC findings in relation to NTHFT's maternity services (see link below) which resulted in the Trust being downgraded from 'good' to 'requires improvement' overall.
 - <https://api.cqc.org.uk/public/v1/reports/f877d342-ae10-48cc-9783-f99144e029fc?20220916070419>
3. Senior NTHFT representatives attended Committee in November 2023 to respond to the CQCs findings and update Members on actions the Trust was taking to address identified issues. A summary of discussions is included in the minutes which can be accessed via the following link (see item ASCH/32/23):
 - <https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1140&MID=1294#AI2244>
4. Early in 2023, Members raised concerns about inconsistencies in the offer of home visits for pre- and postnatal checks (instead requiring expectant / new mothers to go to Endurance House for appointments), a situation which meant the identification of potential safeguarding issues may be being missed. NTHFT subsequently submitted the following response (circulated to the Committee in March 2023):

Antenatal

- *All women who reside in Stockton / Billingham / Wynyard and surrounding areas are asked to attend an antenatal clinic appointment in Endurance House – this is a practice that has been in place for some time.*
- *Women attend a Community Midwives appointment in a clinic setting in accordance with NICE guidance as it is not appropriate to measure GROW on anything other than a clinical couch.*

Postnatal

- *The team have undertaken postnatal clinics at Endurance House since COVID emerged (when many other facilities were closed) and have reported that they have observed a significant reduction in women DNA appointments since the postnatal clinics have been established.*
- *Women who are unable to attend a postnatal clinic appointment are offered a choice of a home visit. Women reportedly prefer to be given an appointment time which can be facilitated in clinic rather than being advised they will be visited between the hours of 9.00am – 5.00pm.*
- Initial postnatal visits (first visit after discharge from hospital – ‘day 1’ (day after the day of discharge))
 - *If this falls on a Monday to Friday, these are undertaken at home.*
 - *If this falls on a weekend, due to current staffing pressures (national issue regarding midwifery workforce), all women due a ‘day 1’ visit are contacted by a Community Midwife, and an agreement is made between them regarding a home visit or attendance at clinic. The team have found this method of communication is much better than providing a leaflet as it gives the midwife a chance to speak to the woman and personalise the care depending on need.*
 - *Women are provided with information (verbally, not written) about home visits / attending clinic prior to discharge before going home from the post-natal ward (note: this will also have been discussed antenatally from 34 weeks onwards (verbally) and documented in hand-held notes).*
- Subsequent visits (at 5 days and then at discharge (around 10 days)) are generally at clinic but discussed at each contact with the women regarding preference and adjustments made for home visit if preferred.

NTHFT stated that there is never a circumstance where someone will not receive a home visit at all. All women would have had a home visit at some point within the pathway (antenatal or postnatal) to ensure no safeguarding concerns.

5. Following further concerns received in relation to the existing offer, the NTHFT Chief Nurse / Director of Patient Safety and Quality initiated a full review of the community maternity service. As noted at the November 2022 meeting, the Trust was working with a maternity safety advisor through NHS England and, with their help, had commissioned a Regional Midwife to support the community review led by the Trust’s new Associate Directory of Midwifery (who started with NTHFT at the beginning of March 2023). The Trust’s Maternity Voices Partnership Chair was also asked to do some focused work at Endurance House with the women and families using the service.
6. The NTHFT Director of Nursing and the NTHFT Associate Director of Midwifery are scheduled to be in attendance and a presentation has been provided for consideration (see attached).
7. In preparation for this item, Members may wish to familiarise themselves with the following:
 - Maternity Survey 2023 (NTHFT outcomes)
<https://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/RVW/surveys/36>
 - CQC national review of maternity services in England 2022 to 2024
<https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications/maternity-services-2022-2024>

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