

Sussex Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service – Health and Overview Scrutiny report update

Current position

- Feedback from provider trusts whose patients use the service, and from patients themselves, is that the service is much improved from its poor start. However, we know that the improvement is not embedded across the whole of Sussex.
- There have also been issues, widely covered in the media, of staff of one of Coperforma's subcontractors, Docklands Medical Services (DMS), not being paid. This clearly unacceptable and we are grateful to staff who continued to work despite not receiving pay. We have been speaking to provider Trusts and they inform us that these issues have not had an impact on the service.

Patient safety

- Patient safety is our priority.
- We have established a Patient Safety Group, led by a GP, and includes representatives from HealthWatch, local authority safeguarding, hospital Trusts and CCGs, to oversee safety and patient experience.
- Members of the group have been visiting hospitals, in particular renal departments, speaking to patients and front line staff to get their feedback on the service.
- This programme is continuing; the team will next visit oncology departments.
- These visits indicate that the health of patients has not been harmed by the problems with the transport service. However, too many patients have suffered stress at what is already a difficult time in their lives, and for that we are very sorry.

Performance

- The feedback we are receiving from patients and staff tells us that the service has improved significantly since April.
- Coperforma sends us regular reports on its performance and their figures show that around 9 out of 10 patients are getting to hospital and home again within the performance targets set out in the contract. Coperforma's performance report against key transport metrics is presented in attached **annex 1**.
- We know however that the improvements are not Sussex-wide.
- We have met with Coperforma to understand in detail how their performance reporting operates and how raw data is extracted and handled to generate the CCG's performance reports. This has identified some data anomalies which require Coperforma to investigate and respond.
- However, we are triangulating this against what patients and front line health staff are telling us.
- The latest patient user survey shows patient satisfaction at 4.1 out of 5.
- We are continuing to work with Coperforma to ensure that the improvements to date are maintained and to address outstanding issues.

Maintaining improvements

Coperforma the Managed Service Provider (MSP) have introduced a High Acuity Team to support the delivery of transport to frequent users and vulnerable patient groups, working closely with hospital staff and departments in these areas.

Summary of actions and improvements taking place:

- Continued recruitment of additional call handling staff in the demand centres to improve resilience.
- Two new Transport Providers added to the transport framework and introduced into Sussex.

- Formation of a 'High Acuity Team' to oversee the transportation of priority groups, including renal, oncology and frail patients and those travelling to specialist hospitals in London
- Phased implementation of Operational Zones for the booking, dispatch and delivery of transport across Sussex.
- Continued use of dedicated private ambulances by Acute Trusts to manage and maintain hospital patient flow.
- Additional concentration on staff training and building relationships through the local service development improvement plans.
- Coperforma working with transport providers to enforce professional standards.
- Engagement with Healthwatch and Patient Forum to assist with building public and patient confidence in PTS and gain patient feedback.
- Establishment of Patient Safety Group to oversee safety and patient experience.

Payment to Dockland Medical Services staff

- The CCGs were informed that staff at DMS have not been paid.
- The background to this is that staff originally transferred from the NHS to V M Langford's, another sub-contractor of Coperforma, under TUPE terms, and were then subsequently transferred to DMS after Langfords went into liquidation.
- At the time of the move to DMS the CCGs negotiated a contract whereby staff would retain their NHS Terms and conditions and we expect that to be honoured.
- The CCGs have been speaking regularly to Coperforma and the unions to fully understand the situation and in view of this dialogue the GMB decided not to go ahead with planned strike action, pending further discussion.
- On Wednesday 14 September drivers employed by DMS arrived at work to find the station locked.
- We are utilising the powers available to us within the NHS standard contract to resolve this.

Issues between Coperforma and some of its contractors

- Some Sussex CCGs received an email early in September from a number of contractors saying that they had not been paid for work they had done for Coperforma.
- The status of this email was unclear; it was unsigned, came from a generic email account, and three of the organisations listed as a signatory have since informed us that they had not consented to their inclusion.
- We have spoken to the various organisations to establish the facts, and these discussions are ongoing.
- We facilitated a meeting between Coperforma and Docklands Medical Services (DMS), and have now been informed by DMS that they have received the money owing to them.

TIAA Report

- Since the last Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee meeting the independent investigation report compiled by TIAA, reviewing the adequacy of the mobilisation arrangements for the new Patient Transport Service contract has been released.
- It was shared with the Sussex CCG Governing Bodies throughout July and stakeholder groups in early August, before it was released into the public domain.
- The report makes 10 recommendations, which are outlined in the attached annex 2
- The Sussex CCGs have committed to take on the learning from the report for future procurements and have acted on the recommendations that pertain to the current transport service contract.

However, separately from the TIAA report, allegations have come to light concerning potential irregularities and omissions in the booking and despatch of patient transport, which are being investigated.

Specialist advisor

- The TIAA report recommended that we recruit a transport expert to oversee the contract. An advisor is now in place.
- He is providing PTS specialist advice, advising the CCGs on data quality issues and is working closely with Coperforma to ensure that improvements to date are maintained and help address any issues that arise.

Contingency plans

- We continue to monitor the situation closely and have multiple contingency plans in plans based on scenario planning and should anything happen that may impact on service delivery.

Bi Weekly Report - August 31st to September 15th

Volume

- There were 9,462 journeys from August 31st to September 14th
- There were 4,654 calls received over the period of which 92% were answered with 60 seconds.

Highlights

- Patient Satisfaction scores remained at 90% for the period ending September 14th. Good anecdotal feedback from patients continues to be received.
- Good increase in performance of call handling of the booking line
- Renal Inbound and Outbound timeless continues to be good, additional transport resources have been brought in for the weekend.
- Renal Patients and Other patients not transported has decreased from an average of 20 to 2 and remains ahead of plan.
- Complaints have decreased from a high of 32 per day in w/c April 17th to an average of 2 for the period

Lowlights

- Performance issue with TAG and PTS 24/7 have been identified and are being addressed



Outcome

New call handling staff are making a very positive impact on patients and operational performance

Good performance continues to be reported for ward discharges from NHS staff and supported by all Discharge performance of between 90-100%.

Reports from the on-site Service Delivery Teams, that Trust 'Private' vehicles are consistently sitting empty at hospitals.

The Local Service Improvement Plans have been delayed due to holidays and are now expected to be in place by the end of the month.

Annex 2

Rec.	Recommendation	Priority
1	<p>An independent patient transport service specialist be considered to support the CCG to oversee Coperforma's remedial action plan and service resilience until the PTS is operating as 'Business as Usual'</p> <p>Management Update: Agreed. Following a competitive interview process the CCG appointed Derek Laird on a six month contract with effect from 30th August 2016 to provide specialist PTS support. Derek has a wide range of experience within PTS provider organisations at a senior level and has direct experience of PTS contract mobilisation.</p>	1
2	<p>Each of the Trusts in Sussex be requested to identify additional costs they have incurred and submit theses to HWLH CCG for contractual discussion with Coperforma.</p> <p>Management Response: Agreed. All provider organisations have been requested to submit details of additional transport costs incurred directly for reimbursement by Coperforma. All organisations with the exception of Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust have responded to this request. Coperforma have been advised to provide for costs from BSUH at c£80,000 per month.</p>	1
4	<p>Consideration should be given to establishing whether there are grounds for financial recovery due to the contract failure in terms of number of journeys not properly delivered during April and May 2016.</p> <p>Management Response: Agreed. The full contract is with Blake Morgan for review to ensure that the terms and conditions of the contract are enforced in full. A further update will be available once this review is complete and action considered and agreed by the CCG.</p>	1
8	<p>Contingency arrangements be built into the planning process for major contracts where significant service changes are anticipated.</p> <p>Management Response: Agreed. This recommendation is being shared with South East CSU and South of England Procurement who provide specialist advice to Sussex and East Surrey CCGs. Derek Laird has been asked to develop short term and long term contingency arrangements in the event that the current contract is terminated by the Provider or Commissioner prior to its end date.</p>	1
3	<p>Consideration should be given to establishing whether there is legal entitlement to recover CCGs additional costs arising from Coperforma's failures of contract performance.</p> <p>Management Response: Agreed. The full contract is with Blake Morgan for review to ensure that the terms and conditions of the contract are enforced in full. A further update will be available once this review is complete and action considered and agreed by the CCG.</p>	2
5	<p>The terms of reference for any mobilisation Board or similar be agreed at the first meeting.</p>	2

Rec.	Recommendation	Priority
	<p>Management Response: Agreed. This recommendation is being shared with South East CSU and South of England Procurement who provide specialist advice to Sussex and East Surrey CCGs.</p>	
6	<p>Failure to attend key mobilisation meetings should be noted and escalated appropriately (internally and externally).</p>	2
	<p>Management Response: Agreed. This recommendation is being shared with South East CSU and South of England Procurement who provide specialist advice to Sussex and East Surrey CCGs</p>	
7	<p>Legal advice be taken to confirm that the tender and contract documentation can make it explicitly clear that the signature of the appropriate person from the lead CCG is legally binding and signatures from the other participating CCGs are not required before contract mobilisation can commence.</p>	2
	<p>Management Response: The CCG understands that a Collaboration Agreement signed by CCGs participating in procurements provides the necessary governance framework for lead CCGs to sign service contracts on behalf of associate CCGs once individual GB approval of contract award is made. The CCG will share this recommendation with South East CSU and South of England Procurement who provide specialist advice to Sussex and East Surrey CCGs to ensure Collaborative Agreements and the contract signature process are more clearly expressed during the procurement process.</p>	
9	<p>Consideration should be given to including within the contract specification for major contracts where significant service changes are anticipated that a phased transition approach by bidders would be welcomed.</p>	2
	<p>Management Response: Agreed. . The CCG will share this recommendation with South East CSU and South of England Procurement who provide specialist advice to Sussex and East Surrey CCGs.</p>	
10	<p>Consideration be given to commissioning independent consultants to monitor and advise on the mobilisation for major contracts where significant service changes are anticipated.</p>	2
	<p>Management Response: Agreed. . The CCG will share this recommendation with South East CSU and South of England Procurement who provide specialist advice to Sussex and East Surrey CCGs.</p>	