

Report to: East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)

Date of meeting: 30 June 2016

By: Assistant Chief Executive

Title: South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECAMB) Update

Purpose: To update HOSC on a number of developments in relation to the Trust's services including triage scheme patient impact report, Trust leadership, Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection and Trust recovery plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) to consider and comment on the attached report
 - 2) to request a further update on the CQC inspection and triage scheme patient impact report in September 2016.
-

1 Background

1.1 In March, HOSC was informed of the findings of an independent report by Monitor (the regulator of Foundation Trusts) on South East Coast Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust's (SECAMB) pilot scheme to allow additional triage time for calls transferred from the NHS 111 service to the 999 emergency service. The report described an initiative that was hastily introduced, with poor risk and clinical governance mechanisms. Details of the initiative were poorly communicated to SECAMB's commissioners.

1.2 At that time, it appeared that the scheme had caused no actual patient harm, although a further investigation was underway in relation to this aspect. The only Trust staff criticised in the Monitor report were very senior officers. Disciplinary procedures were ongoing against some of these officers. The Trust's Chief Executive had taken a mutually agreed leave of absence and the Chair had resigned. A new interim Chair had been appointed by Monitor and SECAMB had agreed a joint recovery plan with Monitor and its commissioners.

2 Supporting information

2.1 Since March there have been a number of further developments in relation to the Trust. SECAMB has supplied a report (**appendix 1**) to update HOSC which covers the following areas:

111-999 triage scheme

2.2 The second independent report on the scheme, focusing on the impact on patients, was due to be published in June but has been slightly delayed. SECAMB will be able to give a verbal update on progress at the meeting.

Trust leadership

2.3 The Trust Chief Executive has now resigned from his post. A recruitment process for a new Chief Executive will now begin, and this is expected to take 4-6 months. In the meantime, the Trust has an Acting Chief Executive as well as an interim Chair.

Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection

2.4 CQC inspected the Trust in May as part of its routine programme of inspections of ambulance trusts. The full report is not yet available. However, CQC has sent a letter to the Trust

highlighting some significant concerns and indicating that the Commission may take immediate regulatory action. The CQC letter is attached at **appendix 2**.

Trust recovery plan

2.5 The Trust continues to work to implement the recovery plan agreed with Monitor and commissioners. SECAMB's report (appendix 1 – to follow) provides an update.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 HOSC is recommended to consider and comment on this report.

3.2 Given the delay to the triage scheme patient impact report, the immediate action required in response to CQC's inspection and the possibility that the full CQC report will be published later in the summer, it is recommended to schedule a further report for the next HOSC meeting in September 2016.

PHILIP BAKER
Assistant Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Claire Lee, Senior Democratic Services Adviser
Tel. No. 01273 335517
Email: Claire.lee@eastsussex.gov.uk