

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

Date of meeting: 7 March 2024

By: Assistant Chief Executive

Title: Future location of Specialised Cancer Services for Children – Public Consultation Update

Purpose: To update the HOSC with the outcomes of the public consultation on proposals for the future location of very specialist cancer treatment services for children

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Committee is recommended to:

Note the report and agree how it would like to continue to be informed on future developments.

1. Background

1.1 NHS England (NHSE), London and NHSE South East commission specialist children's cancer services that are led and coordinated by Principal Treatment Centres (PTC) which serve South London and much of the South East Region. The service is currently provided in partnership by The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust (Sutton site) and St George's University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust in south west London. While the service they provide is safe and high quality, they are not all on the same site as a children's intensive care unit, and therefore to meet new national requirements the services currently provided at The Royal Marsden site need to relocate.

1.2 In 2019/20, 28 children and young people aged 15 and under from East Sussex accessed inpatient care at the existing PTC out of a total of 411. East Sussex patients visited on a total of 302 occasions for predominately day case activity (284), plus a smaller number of visits for elective (17) and non-elective (1) procedures. Although the number of children, young people, families and carers using these services is small, what is provided is regarded as vital and specialist care. Therefore, the NHSE Programme Board consider that any changes to these services would be significant for service users overall and engaged East Sussex HOSC to gather its views on the proposals.

1.3 At its meeting in March 2023 the HOSC considered whether the proposals constituted a substantial variation to services for East Sussex. In the meeting the Committee raised areas of consideration that would be important for residents of East Sussex who would be affected by the change, in particular around travel and access to the PTC, but agreed that the proposed changes did not constitute a substantial variation in health services for the county. The Committee instead agreed to submit a written response to the public consultation, which was submitted in December 2023, and to continue to be engaged by receiving updates on developments at future meetings.

1.4 The NHSE public consultation ran from September to December 2023, consulting on two options for the future PTC, both of which have a children's intensive care unit and other specialist children's services. The two options consulted on were Evelina London Children's Hospital in Lambeth, south London, run by Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, and St George's Hospital in Tooting, South London, which currently provides some of the PTC service. In both options children's cancer services would relocate from The Royal Marsden to the chosen site. Under both options conventional radiotherapy services for children currently provided at the Royal Marsden would move to University College Hospital.

2. Supporting information

2.1 The presentation from NHSE which is attached as Appendix 1 sets out the outcomes of the public consultation. The presentation includes:

- An explanation of the background and context to the changes and why they being made.
- A summary of the proposals for the two shortlisted options for the future location of the PTC.
- The public consultation process, including communications and engagement activity and the key stakeholders it sought to reach.
- A summary of the independent consultation report including:
 - the number of responses and reach of the consultation;
 - the demographics of respondents;
 - feedback on on attributes people said they would value in the future PTC;
 - feedback on the two shortlisted options for the new location of the PTC and other ideas put forward;
 - suggestions put forward to minimise any negative effects of service changes; and
 - localised feedback from across Sussex (East & West and Brighton & Hove).
- The decision-making process and next steps.

2.2 Following the end of the public consultation, NHSE will now consider themes from all the feedback it has received, and plans to come to a decision on the future location of the PTC in spring 2024. There will be no sudden changes and services will not move until at least 2026, with all preparations for the future PTC expected to take place within two and a half years.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The HOSC is recommended to note the report and agree how it would like to continue to be informed on future developments.

PHILIP BAKER
Assistant Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Patrick Major, Scrutiny and Policy Support Officer

Tel. No. 01273 335133

Email: patrick.major@eastsussex.gov.uk