

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

Date of meeting: 7 March 2024

By: Assistant Chief Executive

Title: Changes to Paediatric Services at the Eastbourne District General Hospital (EDGH)

Purpose: To consider the Review Board's report on changes made at EDGH to paediatrics services and receive an update from ESHT on the implementation of the new model.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) consider and agree the report and recommendations of the Review Board attached as Appendix 1; and
 - 2) agree to refer the report to East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust for consideration and a formal response to the recommendations.
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1. Background

1.1. On 14 December 2023 the HOSC considered a report from East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (ESHT) on changes to the Paediatric service model at the Eastbourne District General Hospital (EDGH). Both NHS Sussex and ESHT do not regard the changes as a substantial variation to services which would require formal consultation with HOSC, and the changes are considered to be operational differences in the way in which the current services are provided. They do not consider the changes as representing a removal of existing paediatric services from the EDGH site and do not consider the changes will result in more children having to attend the Conquest Hospital in Hastings.

1.2. The Committee agreed to establish a Review Board to examine the impact of the changes to the Paediatric service model at EDGH more closely and requested ESHT pause the implementation of the changes to give HOSC the time to examine the proposals in more detail. However, for operational reasons the Trust decided to continue with the implementation of changes to paediatric services which started on 8 January 2024. To support with transition to the new model, ESHT also ran the existing Short Stay Paediatric Assessment Unit (SSPAU) based in the Scott Unit in shadow form until 4 February 2024. The implementation of the new service model is being carried out in two phases and the second phase will start once a new modular building is ready for use in March 2024.

1.3. The Review took place over a series of meetings held during February 2024, which examined a range of evidence from ESHT staff, Healthwatch, and East Sussex Parent Carer Forum. This included the submissions and concerns raised by members of the public and staff that HOSC had received regarding the service changes. These issues, together with the Committee's own observations, informed the scope of the review which included:

- What has changed and the impact of the changes on patient safety, particularly for those children whose pathway is different from the previous service model;
- The impact on patient care and experience, including the new facilities for the treatment of children;
- Travel and access impacts of the service changes; and
- Staffing and sustainability of the services, including operational hours and Paediatric consultant cover and supervision.

2. Supporting information

2.1. The report of the Review Board is included at **Appendix 1** and contains the findings and recommendations of the Review Board. The Review Board comprised Councillors Abul Azad, Colin Belsey, Christine Robinson (Chair) and Alan Shuttleworth.

2.2. The report of the Review Board has been agreed by the majority of the Review Board members. However, after hearing all evidence and witnesses Cllr Shuttleworth has concerns about aspects of the new service model and is not in agreement with all the findings and recommendations of the report as set out in appendix 2 of the Review Board report.

2.3. The Review Board considered evidence from a range of witnesses and sources and has made a number of recommendations which it considers will help provide assurance about the impacts of the new model of care, and to make changes where the Board believes adjustments are needed. The Board has also recommended working with Healthwatch to monitor and review the new service model.

2.4. ESHT has also provided an update on the implementation of the new model with operational data and insight from the first five weeks of it being operational. This is included at **Appendix 2**.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The HOSC is recommended to consider and agree the Review Board's report and recommendations and agree to refer it to ESHT for consideration and a formal response.

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