

Brent Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting report for 9th September 2014 Briefing Note

Care Quality Commission Inspection report August 20th 2014 and Implications for Central Middlesex Hospital A&E Closure on 10th September 2014

1. Introduction

North West London Hospitals Trust and Brent Clinical Commissioning Group attended Brent Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 6th August to present and discuss the assurance processes that have been undertaken for assuring the safe transition for the closure of the Accident and Emergency Department at Central Middlesex Hospital planned for 10th September 2014.

During May 2014 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a comprehensive inspection of the North West London Hospitals NHS Trust (NWLHT). This included the three sites of Northwick Park, St. Mark's, and Central Middlesex hospitals and was prompted by the Trust's Band 1 rating within the CQC "Intelligent Monitoring System".

Inspection results were published on 20th August 2014, and the Trust received an overall rating of "Requires Improvement for the 5 domains of being safe, effective, caring, responsive and well led".

Full inspection reports for the Trust and each hospital site are available publically on the CQC website and can be accessed via: <http://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/RV8>

2. CQC Inspection Results

In general terms the CQC identified a number of areas where the Trust must make improvements, these included ensuring that:

- There are enough staff to meet the needs of patients in A&E, surgery and critical care at Northwick Park Hospital and St Mark's Hospital.
- There are systems in place to assess and monitor the quality of the service provided in A&E, critical care, surgery and maternity at Northwick Park Hospital, to ensure that services are safe and benchmarked against national standards.
- The environment is suitable and that appropriate equipment is available, safe and suitable in paediatric services at Northwick Park Hospital.

Specifically the inspection identified maternity services as requiring improvement and they rated the service as inadequate for responsiveness, as women could not always summon the assistance they required and individual needs were not being met. The environment and equipment in paediatric services was also identified as in

need of improvement.

Inspectors also identified a number of areas of outstanding practice, including:

- The stroke unit, which was providing a 'gold standard service' with seven-day working.
- The STARRS (short-term assessment, rehabilitation and re-ablement) service, which had strong ownership by geriatricians and the multi-disciplinary team. The STARRS team was aware of the needs of frail elderly patients who attended A&E, and had identified the number of these. This service has been introduced to mitigate some pressures on A&E and hospital beds.

The CQC identified that in general, staff across the Trust were found to be caring and compassionate towards patients, and their families and friends.

Inspectors also particularly noted that most areas of the Trust were clean, and infection control practices and infection rates were good.

3. North West London Hospitals Trust Response to CQC report and implications for Central Middlesex Hospital A&E Closure on 10th September

The Trust has already indicated that it considers the CQC's assessment as being a fair reflection, with:

- work already being implemented to improve safety and effectiveness of care in the Maternity Unit
- Accident and Emergency care will be improved through the planned centralisation of services in North West London
- A new £21 million Accident and Emergency department will open at Northwick Park Hospital in Autumn 2014

The Trust is required to submit a compliance action plan by 17th September (within 20 working days of the date of publication of the report by the Care Quality Commission). This will address issues of non-compliance in respect of specific regulations.

It is recognised that whilst on-going work is required to make improvements, the planned closure of Central Middlesex Hospital A&E department will enable NWLHT to address key issues identified within the CQC report and to achieve improved performance at Northwick Park A&E.

The risks of delay to closure have been assessed, with unplanned closure a likely possibility on clinical safety grounds, as it has become increasingly difficult to staff the service to safe levels, due to its reliance on locum staff. This is not a safe way to manage a service on an on-going basis with a likely deterioration in performance, particularly over the winter months.

3.1 CQC Inspection – Northwick Park Hospital A&E Services

The CQC inspection of the A&E department at Northwick Park Hospital found caring to be good. However, a number of areas require improvement:

CQC comments	NWLHT response
Workforce shortages – A&E department not operating at the required whole time equivalent with a number of vacant nursing posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved by the closure of CMH A&E as staff will move to Northwick Park A&E • Northwick Park A&E will have 30 nurses per shift compared to 23 nurses now as a result of CMH A&E closure • Northwick Park A&E will have additional consultants - at least 5 consultants in the A&E department per shift
Lack of joint ownership amongst the leadership team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressed by newly recruited clinical leads already in post • Improved by renewed senior team meetings following appointment of additional consultants
Patients waiting for beds caused pressure on A&E with 4 hour A&E standard at elevated risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 additional new beds will opened and operational at 8 am on 10th September as part of the plans for the closure of CMH A&E • This will lead to improved performance in the 4 hour A&E standard (estimated at 1%) • Further improvements are expected from the new £21M A&E department opening in Autumn
Privacy & Dignity limited for patients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy and dignity significantly improved when new A&E department opens in November as this will have single bay rooms

4. External Assurance

The closure of the CMH A&E department has also been through extensive external assurance by NHS England (NHSE) and NHS Trust Development Authority (NTDA). This assurance process has been ongoing over a number of months and has involved the submission of documentary evidence, face to face meetings with clinicians and the trust leadership team as well as an in-depth site visit.

The outcome of this assurance process concluded that NHSE and NTDA are fully assured that the closure of services at CMH A&E can go ahead as planned on 10th September.

Furthermore at a meeting on 4th September 2014 NWLHT, commissioners, NHS England and NHS Trust Development Authority reviewed the planning and assurance processes for the Central Middlesex Hospital A&E Closure and are

confident that the change should proceed as planned on 10th September. It was noted that any delay to closure would likely result in deterioration in performance, whereas this change will improve the quality and safety of services and as a result the care provided to patients will be improved.

5. Next Steps

In addition to the above, NWLHT is in the process of developing a detailed Quality Improvement Action Plan, in liaison with key partners, to address the quality issues highlighted as requiring action.

The compliance action plan will be presented and discussed at the next meeting of the Brent Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1st October 2014.