



Scrutiny Committee
26 November 2014

**Report from the Assistant Chief
Executive**

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

**Northwick Park Hospital Care Quality Commission Quality
Compliance and Quality Improvement Action Plan**

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This covering report accompanies the report from London North West Healthcare on their progress in responding to the findings and recommendations of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of Northwick Park Hospital.
- 1.2 The Inspection report was published by the CQC on 20 August 2014 following an announced inspection conducted during late May 2014. The decision by the CQC to conduct a comprehensive inspection of both North West London Hospital Trust and Northwick Park Hospital, which is the main location for the trust, was prompted by areas of risk identified through the national monitoring system used by the CQC.
- 1.3 The findings of the CQC inspections highlighted a number of areas where both the Trust and Northwick Park Hospital were found to be requiring improvement. In the case of the critical care at Northwick Park Hospital this service was found to be inadequate. Across the five assessment areas for the Trust, each domain was found to 'require improvement'.
- 1.4 Of particular concern were the findings in relation to the A&E service at Northwick Park Hospital. This service was judged to 'require improvement' with continued staff shortages, over four hour waiting times and patients spending too long in A&E when they require hospital admission due to lack of bed capacity.
- 1.5 Since the inspection in May, the planned closure of the A&E Unit at Central Middlesex and Hammersmith Hospitals took place on 10 September 2014. In recent months the length of wait times at A&E at Northwick Park have been

reported by the NHS as being amongst the worst in the country. The new A&E facility at the hospital has not yet been opened and there has not been a confirmed date for its opening. In view of the approaching winter months, when additional pressure on A&E services and hospital admissions is generally experienced, the continued poor patient waiting times and delays to the new A&E facility are of critical concern to local residents and the Council.

1.6 The Compliance and Improvement Plan highlights some areas where full implementation of the recommendations is not due to be achieved until 2015. These are in relation to:-

- The midwifery staffing workforce plan.
- Repeat of the national maternity survey.
- Total additional bed capacity as currently planned.
- Achievement of the A&E medical staffing plan

Given the planned changes to maternity services in North West London, which are the subject of a separate report on the agenda these are matters of high importance.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The committee is recommended to question representatives of the North West London Hospital Trust regarding their response to the findings to the CQC inspection of Northwick Park Hospital. Including the timescale for implementing improvements and their assurances on the safety of the A&E services provided to Brent residents.

3.0 Detail

3.1 The North West London Hospitals NHS Trust manages three main sites: Northwick Park Hospital, St. Mark's Hospital in Harrow and Central Middlesex Hospital in Park Royal. Northwick Park Hospital has previously been investigated in relation to the poor quality of maternity services, which have been a particular focus for improvement activities. Figures published in October 2014 by the NHS indicated that Northwick Park Hospital has one of the worst performances in the country for patient waiting times in A&E.

3.2 The key findings from the inspection are summarised below:-

- The patient flow through the hospital impacted on patients waiting in the A&E department, in that patients were often bedded down in the A&E until a bed became available.
- Middle grade doctors did not always receive the training and supervision they required.
- Policies and protocols, particularly in surgery and critical care, were not always up to date and reflective of national guidance.
- Pressures on the critical care units were such that some patients were discharged too early and had to be re-admitted on some occasions.
- The pace of change in maternity services was slow, leading to potential risks for women using the service.

- In most areas the hospital was clean but in need of refurbishment.
- Overwhelmingly across the trust, the staff were found to be caring and compassionate towards patients, their family and friends.
- The stroke unit is an example of outstanding clinical practice.

3.3 The CQC made specific recommendations for improvement at Northwick Park Hospital concerning A&E and related services. These are set out below:-

- Ensure that there are appropriate numbers of staff to meet the needs of patients in the A&E department, surgical areas and critical care.
- Ensure that there are systems in place to assess and monitor the quality of services provided in A&E, critical care, surgery and maternity to ensure that services are safe and benchmarked against national standards.
- Review the coping strategies within A&E during periods of excessive demand for services.
- Empower senior staff to make changes to ensure that patients are safe in A&E in maternity.
- Review discharge arrangements in A&E and critical care to avoid re-admission to these areas.

3.4 Given the significant number of areas requiring improvement in the current A&E provision at Northwick Park Hospital reassurance is sought from the senior management of the NWLH Trust specifically concerning the implementation of actions and the safety of the A&E services available to Brent residents.

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