

Agenda Item No 11

Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee - 26th January 2012

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust

Maternity capping

1.0 Purpose of Report

To update the Committee on progress since the report presented in July 2011.

2.0 Background

As per the paper discussed at the July Committee which laid out the requirement to restrict our maternity bookings to ensure we continue to provide safe, effective care for women and their babies.

3.0 Update

- 3.1 Our maternity unit remains to be a popular choice for mums-to-be and we are continuing to see an increased number of women choosing to have their babies at Russells Hall Hospital which cannot continue without affecting the service.

In the immediate term, Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals has capacity at City Hospital and the Halcyon Midwifery Led Unit (MLU) to provide additional births. The Halcyon MLU in Smethwick opened in September 2011 and is not yet working at full capacity. There is also a MLU planned in Walsall.

Following discussions with the Black Country Cluster PCT regarding the demand being placed upon maternity services in Dudley the Cluster has agreed with Dudley Group and Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals to discuss with 140 women registered with Sandwell GP practices identified as low risk transferring their care to City Hospital, the Halcyon Unit, or if they prefer, maternity units in Walsall or Wolverhampton.

These women have an expected delivery date from 1st February onwards. They are receiving an individual visit from a SWBH community midwife to provide information and reassurance about the alternative facilities. They are also being given a letter confirming the details discussed and contact details of the community midwife should they have any further queries. It is anticipated that undertaking this action will relieve some of the pressures on Russells Hall Hospital.

Given the urgency of the position, these visits and discussions began at the end of December and SWBH community midwives will have met with all 140 women by mid January 2012.

- 3.2 In addition, to relieve further demand beyond the delivery dates of these 140

women, we have written to GP practices in Sandwell which are closer to City Hospital and asked them not to offer Russells Hall Hospital as an option for women who are confirmed as pregnant, from now until 31st January 2012. The position will be reviewed by the end of January, in light of discussions we intend to hold.

- 3.3 The third action has been to convene a meeting for 26th January 2012 involving Clinical Commissioning Group representatives, clinical and managerial colleagues from DGH and SWBH, Cluster representatives, representatives from local LINK groups and OSC colleagues to undertake an option appraisal to ensure effective action to manage this risk for the next few months.

4.0 Guidelines

- 4.1 Safer Childbirth guidelines

5.0 Equality Impact

- 5.1 Once set restrictions will be clear and will apply equally. An Equality Impact Assessment is being carried out.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 For information
6.2 Reassurance that we are working with stakeholders to provide the safest possible care for Dudley women.
6.3 Reassurance that current pressures have not impacted on service quality

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