

Dear colleague,

Welcome to the latest briefing on ULHT's efforts to maintain safe children's and maternity services at Pilgrim Hospital, Boston.

Paediatric services latest

As you may be aware, the Board of United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust has now agreed to progress towards an interim service model for paediatric services, which sees women and children who present to Pilgrim continuing to be seen and assessed there.

The model proposes:

- Outpatient clinics continuing at Pilgrim.
- Pilgrim managing only low-risk neonatal births.
- A 24 hour children's assessment and observation unit established on the children's ward at Pilgrim, patients who require more than 12 hours inpatient care will be transferred to another hospital.
- Paediatric day surgery remaining at Pilgrim.
- Consultant-led maternity unit remaining at Pilgrim.
- 98% of current activity remaining at Pilgrim (the exceptions will be the transfer of small numbers of premature babies or who require more intensive care and children needing more than 12 hours observation).

We continue to work towards this service model, to take effect from Wednesday 1 August. Work taking place at the moment includes:

- Developing staffing rotas for the service under the interim model.
- Developing pathways and criteria for children using the service, including the proposed assessment unit.
- Developing transport plans, including the development of a safe pathway for transferring children to Lincoln for inpatient care where necessary.
- Contingency planning in case the interim model becomes un-workable.

Our ability to deliver the interim model is still dependent upon continued support from staff and stakeholders, and we continue to work with our partners to ensure safe services can be maintained for our patients.

Recruitment update

We continue our extensive efforts to recruit to our middle grade doctor posts, as the staffing situation in the service remains volatile. We have seen some success in recruiting to some of the posts, which has enabled us to move towards the interim model.

Actions taken in recent weeks towards recruiting staff onto the service include:

- Posts being advertised on long-term advertisements for both NHS and agency medical staff.
- International recruitment is ongoing. We anticipate the following middle grade starters as part of the ULHT international recruitment/language assessment process. As these doctors have previously worked outside of the UK as experience

paediatricians we need assurance that they can operate at the standards required in the UK.:

- One doctor starting in August 2018, who will have a period of training and review before starting.
- One doctor starting in October 2018, with a period of training and review.
- One doctor has recently gained GMC registration and we are awaiting start date confirmation.
- Three further doctors will be starting their two week assessment process soon. One is here already, another is coming at the end of the month and we are busy arranging the visit for the third doctor.
- We have offered posts to two agency consultants, one of which is due to start later this month.
- We have successfully interviewed and offered a full time substantive post to a children's nurse at Pilgrim this week.
- We are expecting six newly qualified nurses to join the paediatrics team at Lincoln in September with a Trustwide role.

What now?

We are continuing our efforts to recruit paediatricians and nurses as we would like to see a full paediatric and neonatal service resumed at the hospital as soon as possible.

This includes using the methods outlined above, rolling adverts for both NHS and agency staff. Our international recruitment continues with doctors arriving for assessment, however, this is a long process taking between six to nine months from assessment to GMC registration and a start date.

We are working with our health care partners, such as Health Education England, who are committed to help us through this difficult time and are developing new ways of training for these doctors.

A further update will be made at our Trust Board meeting on Friday 27 July.

We are listening

We are keen to hear from you, help us shape the future of our paediatric service. As we manage our current staffing situation, we need to understand what matters to our patients, where you have concerns and what we can do to mitigate any concerns and risks. In the interests of ensuring our service planning takes into account this feedback, we have arranged a series of paediatric engagement events taking place over the next three months.

Here, you will find out more about our developing plans for the service, ask questions and help to inform the emerging service models.

Please come along, everyone is welcome. All meetings will be held in the committee room in the postgraduate medical education centre at Pilgrim Hospital, Boston:

Tuesday 31 July 12.30pm – 2pm

Monday 20 August 6pm – 8pm

Monday 17 September 3pm – 5pm

We are also busy analysing the results of the recent survey which asked specific questions about experiences and expectations of children's, young people's and maternity services.

The plan is to share the results in the next few weeks.

Best wishes

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