

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

Since the last update at the end of May, the situation is looking more hopeful but still precarious. We still have an insufficient number of trained medical staff to continue to do everything we currently do at Pilgrim beyond Wednesday 1 August 2018, unless additional doctors at the right skill level can be found.

As has been widely reported in the media, the supply of junior doctors from August to Pilgrim is also now fragile. However, the media wrongly reported that Health Education England (HEE) has withdrawn trainees. The reality is there are more posts than trainees and HEE struggles to recruit to Pilgrim.

In response to the crisis in junior and middle grade tiers, on Friday 8 June a national risk summit was held - Dr Kathy McLean the national medical director of NHS Improvement chaired. Staff from ULHT met with NHS Improvement, NHS England, Health Education England, clinical commissioning groups, the CQC and the GMC to review progress to maintain paediatric services at Pilgrim Hospital, Boston beyond Wednesday 1 August 2018.

All partners have committed to support the Trust in maintaining services and a small group of key partners agreed to work with the Trust to quickly develop plans to provide safe paediatric services at Pilgrim Hospital. As part of this:

- NHS Improvement is looking beyond ULHT to try and identify where other Trusts might be able to identify additional doctor support in the short term; and
- HEE will support the Trust in developing training models to ensure that all of the trainee doctors can work across the Trust, not on just one site. This work should be complete within four weeks.
- The Trust and its partners will look innovatively at possible service models, and therefore maybe different to what is in place now.

We don't know what the short to medium term model at Pilgrim will look like, but what we do know, is ULHT's primary focus will be on keeping paediatric and obstetric services at Pilgrim.

Recruitment slow but improving

To help support consultants and middle grades, we are recruiting two extra locum paediatric consultants at Pilgrim. These posts will help in training and supervision of junior doctors and help stabilise the rotas.

There are green shoots in international recruitment, with interviews by Skype being held this Sunday. In July, a recent successful Skype interviewee will join us for a two-week assessment so we can assess their clinical skills on the front-line.

Focusing our efforts

As you will know, on Friday 25 May 2018, ULHT Trust Board made a clear commitment to make every effort to continue to operate safe services at Pilgrim Hospital beyond Wednesday 1 August 2018.

As part of this, we have appointed a full-time programme manager to oversee this work. He will develop a plan working with partners on how we can best keep paediatrics and obstetric services running on two sites. NHS Improvement has asked for a project plan to be submitted ahead of another risk summit in a month's time.

Alongside this work, we'll also prepare for "plan b" to develop a full contingency plan to temporarily move paediatric and obstetrics services by Saturday 1 September to Lincoln if needed in case the safety of current services cannot be sustained.

To oversee this fundamental work, weekly project meetings and weekly oversight meetings will be held.

Royal College of Paediatrics and Children's Health review

ULHT invited the Royal College of Paediatrics and Children's Health (RCPCH) to review acute paediatric services and recommend how we can deliver safe and sustainable services at Pilgrim in the medium and longer-term.

The review team arrives at Pilgrim on Thursday 14 June and then onto Lincoln on Friday 15 June. As well as actively involving ULHT staff, the college is engaging Lincolnshire people as part of their review. Please see and share the survey below www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RCPCHLincs.

The RCPCH will provide a report of their findings in the next couple of months.

We are listening

We have continued to listen to staff and the public at various meetings. We have attended council meetings, public meetings and attended Lincolnshire's Health Scrutiny Committee. As always, the councillors asked difficult questions but we hope they are reassured by our efforts to maintain services.

We'll be attending a public meeting in Boston on Thursday evening too.

We want you to help us in developing options for the future that best meet the needs of our population, please take few minutes to complete the survey below and please share with your networks. <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YBGC9LT> .

Best wishes

Jan