

**Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee**  
**19 May 2022**

**Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust Maternity Services**

**Report of the Head of Legal and Governance**

**1 Purpose**

- 1.1 To review action to improve maternity services provided by Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust.

**2 Action required**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to review progress in improvement, and plans for further improvement of maternity services provided by Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust and whether:
- a) it wishes to make any comments or recommendations; and
  - b) the focus and timescales for further scrutiny.

**3 Background information**

- 3.1 In December 2020, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) published a report which re-rated Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust (NUH) maternity services from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Inadequate, along with a warning notice.
- 3.2 Representatives of NUH attended the Committee's meetings in January and July 2021 to discuss the CQC findings and actions being taken and planned to address the identified failings. At the July meeting the Committee also considered evidence from the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Maternity Voices Partnership and Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. In addition, the Committee met informally with a parent whose child had died whilst in the care of NUH's maternity services to hear their perspective. The Committee noted the progress that had been made to that point and plans to continue the improvement journey. It acknowledged that it will take time for sustainable change to be made but noted that the issues and concerns about care had already been known about for some years. The Committee also remained concerned about a number of areas including how women are listened to and involved in decisions about their care and when things go wrong; the Service's processes for hearing about when things don't go well, such as complaints from patients and confidence by staff to speak up about concerns, and the extent to which learning takes place as a result; care for women from ethnic minority groups, particularly those who require translation services, as an inability to communicate with the professionals providing care can affect a

woman's engagement in decisions about her care and her ability to raise issues or concerns. The Committee was also concerned about the number of Serious Incidents still being reported.

- 3.3 In September 2021, the CQC published a report of an inspection it carried out into how well NUH is lead and some specific service areas in July. Following this inspection, the Trust was issued with a Section 29a warning notice under the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and rated as Requires Improvement, with an inadequate rating in relation to whether services are well-led. Some of the failings identified by the CQC in relation to maternity services were also reflected in the findings of how well the Trust as a whole is led. The Acting Chief Executive and Chief Nurse, along with other colleagues, attended meetings of the Committee in November 2021 and January 2022 to discuss action being taken to address identified failings. The CCG has provided information to the Committee in relation to its role in supporting and holding NUH to account for improvement and the Chair has spoken to the NHS England Regional Medical Director for the Midlands about NHS England's role in supporting improvement. The Committee has also held informal evidence gathering sessions with representatives of trade unions representing workers employed by NUH.
- 3.4 In February, the Trust's Chief Nurse and Director of Midwifery gave an update to the Committee on progress in making improvements to maternity services. The Committee concluded that it remained concerned about a lack of evidence that the necessary improvement was taking place at sufficient pace and it agreed to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the CQC expressing these concerns. Copies of the letters are attached alongside a subsequent letter sent following up on a response.
- 3.5 In March the CQC carried out an inspection of the Trust's maternity services. The arising report has not yet been published but a feedback letter from the CQC was published as part of the Trust Board papers in March alongside action being taken in response. While the feedback letter notes positive aspects, some areas of concern were identified and the Trust received a warning notice in relation to the care women receive within triage services and how they are monitored while admitted.
- 3.6 The Chair of the Trust Board, Acting Chief Executive, Medical Director, Chief Nurse, Director of Midwifery and Director of Communications and Engagement will be attending the meeting to give a presentation on progress since the last update, with a focus on the action that has been taken since the CQC visit in March.
- 3.7 Representatives of the Thematic Review of Maternity Services will also be attending the meeting to provide an update on progress of the review, with a focus on communication and engagement with families and service users.

#### **4 List of attached information**

- 4.1 Letter to Secretary of State for Health and Social Care dated 16 March 2022
- 4.2 Letter to Care Quality Commission dated 16 March 2022
- 4.3 Letter to Secretary and State for Health and Social Care and Care Quality Commission dated 11 May 2022

#### **5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information**

- 5.1 Notes from informal evidence gathering sessions

#### **6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report**

- 6.1 Care Quality Commission Nottingham City Hospital Published 02/12/2020
- 6.2 Care Quality Commission Queens Medical Centre Published 02/12/2020
- 6.3 Care Quality Commission Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust Inspection Report Published 15/09/2021
- 6.4 Reports to, and minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee held on 14 January 2021, 15 July 2021, 11 November 2021, 13 January 2022, 17 February 2022 and 17 March 2022

#### **7 Wards affected**

- 7.1 All

#### **8 Contact information**

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