

Health and Adult Social Care and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 07 March 2019

Report Title: Position Statement Relating to Specialist Oral Surgery and Orthodontics services at East Cheshire Trust

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1. Introduction and Policy Context

1.1. This report provides the Health and Adult Social Care Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an updated position statement on the East Cheshire NHS Trust decision to cease to provide Oral Surgery and Orthodontic Services. The service has not been de-commissioned and the situation has been created by a set of exceptional circumstances that the Trust and Commissioners have been managing together in the interests of patients. Staff at the Trust should be commended on their efforts during this difficult period in terms of their commitment to the provision of additional clinics, support to patients and in ensuring that those patients whose treatment can be completed and also in the onward clinical transfer to new providers.

2. Background

2.1 East Cheshire NHS Trust services will be ceasing because of significant workforce challenges. It is expected that the service will be re-provided as part of a larger clinical network of consultants which will strengthen resilience and sustainability of the service in the longer term. In the meantime, the Trust has been working with NHS England to agree a process of hand over for care and treatment of existing patients.

2.2 Notice on the Orthodontic services and Oral Surgery was served to NHS England North (Cheshire and Merseyside) by East Cheshire NHS Trust in

September and October 2018, for cessation on 6th March and 17th April 2019 respectively.

- 2.3 Commissioners and the Trust have been working together closely in circumstances underpinned by the workforce challenges faced by the Trust.
- 2.4 These circumstances have not allowed commissioners to re-procure a new service in such a short timescale. A normal procurement can take from between 9 months to 12 months and an up to date needs assessment is required prior to any procurement commencing. The priority has been to identify alternative providers for these services and to minimise disruption to patients as much as possible. As an interim measure any referrals made to the service whilst the re-procurement process is undertaken, are being redirected to other suitable local providers through the current electronic referral system introduced by NHS England. These other suitable providers may in some cases be closer to home for patients who may as a result not have to travel as far as previously required.

3. Impact on Service Users

- 3.1. Within Orthodontics there are patients who will be in a longer-term treatment plan and will require on-going care. The Trust are working with NHS England commissioners to identify and transfer these patients smoothly to an alternative provider. The table below gives details of the number of patients for transfer for East Cheshire residents.

New Provider Area	Validated no. of patients	Agreed point of contact site to transfer
Cheshire and Merseyside	26	Countess of Chester
	5	Warrington Hospital
	38	TBC

- 3.2. Within Oral Surgery there are a small number of patients who require follow up outpatient appointments beyond the closure of the service who have been identified for transfer to an alternative Oral surgery provider. There are also a number of patients who require day case surgery. These patients will be listed for surgery in order of priority in terms of wait on the 18-week pathway. East Cheshire Trust will maximise where possible the numbers it can undertake however, there is insufficient capacity to undertake all surgical procedures and discussions have taken place with a Private Provider who have committed to undertaking 69 patient operations over the next few months and to provide any follow up for patients should this be required. In addition, the Trust are also working with a Consultant Oral Surgeon from Stoke who is going to undertake some surgical work on site at East Cheshire for paediatric patients.

4. Implications

- 4.1 All patient transfers will be handled in a sensitive way and closely tracked using the required forms managerially and clinically between trusts, ensuring patients are not put at risk by the transfer of care and they are either seen or treated in a timely manner. The date of next expected appointment will be shared with the new provider along with all relevant medical records, X-rays and dental moulds where applicable.
- 4.2 East Cheshire NHS Trust are undertaking weekly teleconferencing with the NHS England commissioners and internal meetings within the Trust of senior managers and clinicians to track the progress with moving to cessation of the service along with the safe and efficient transfer of required patients. Patients will be invited to raise any concerns and steps will be taken where possible to mitigate against these.
- 4.3 Patient communication letters have been agreed between commissioners and the Trust and will be forwarded to the patients prior to any exchange of confidential information or records. The patient letters will detail the planned new provider along with appropriate contact details and a telephone contact number for their new provider should they wish to contact anybody for advice. The Trust will place a patient and public communication on their website.
- 4.4 Once patients have been transferred and the service at East Cheshire NHS Trust has ceased, further consideration will be given to the procurement of a new permanent service based on a full Needs Assessment to be undertaken by Public Health England. NHS England as the commissioner will then work with local dentists/the Managed Clinical Network, patients and the public along with other stakeholders to shape the service specification as part of any future procurement process.
- 4.5 **Legal Implications** – All parties involved in provision of the services have been given the agreed notice period for termination of the contracts.
- 4.6 **Financial Implications** – The Financial Implications for the Trust have been reviewed and any risks accepted by the Executive Team when options papers were presented for consideration. Final invoicing with other parties will be completed following the end date of the contracts.
- 4.7 **Human Resources Implications** - The Trusts with which East Cheshire collaborate through the SLA's to provide the existing service were given appropriate notice.

5. Summary

- 5.1. The services at East Cheshire Trust were not de-commissioned and the cessation of service has been created by a set of exceptional circumstances that the Trust and Commissioners have been managing together. These circumstances have not allowed commissioners time to re-procure a new service in such a short timescale. Further consideration will be given to the procurement of a new service based on an up to date Needs Assessment. NHS England will engage with stakeholders to shape any new service model.