



Update on Paediatrics at Bassetlaw Hospital

As OSC is aware, the Paediatric Ward at Bassetlaw Hospital, known as A3, closed to inpatient admissions from 30 January 2017. This was due to a national shortage of specialist paediatric medical and nursing staff.

These problems have affected services for a number of months and, despite best efforts to recruit, the vacancies have remained unfilled. There are currently six nursing vacancies out of a staffing complement of 12 with three vacancies on the junior doctor rota. We currently have the vacancies advertised and applications we have so far received are all from specialist nurses who are due to qualify in September.

Although the overnight service cannot be maintained, acute ward based paediatric assessments have been enhanced and are available from 8am to 10pm, seven days a week, creating a 'consultant-led Paediatric Assessment Unit'.

To improve the current daytime service, the Trust is maximising opening times and is providing special urgent Outpatient clinics with senior paediatricians to support children's care. These changes also ensure that medical support for children attending the Emergency Department is maintained so that children continue to attend the Emergency Department at Bassetlaw Hospital 24/7.

Children who do require transfer to DRI are transferred as soon as necessary. The CCG and Trust have commissioned a dedicated, and appropriately staffed, ambulance with journeys managed by the ED and Clinical Site teams.

The numbers of children who have been transferred since the changes are as follows:

- In the first week of the new service from 30 January – 6 February the Trust transferred 10 attending the Children's Assessment Unit and 12 who attended the Emergency Department
- From 6 – 13 February the Trust transferred 11 children attending the Children's Assessment Unit and two who attended the Emergency Department.
- From 13 – 20 February the Trust transferred three children attending the Children's Assessment Unit and seven who attended the Emergency Department. Two of the Children were transferred to Sheffield Children's Hospital because of clinical need.

As we anticipated the numbers of transfers are currently higher as the service is still new, and we anticipate that will begin to reduce and eventually stabilise. The feedback we have

received from parents and families affected by the change have been overwhelmingly positive, with no incidents to report as a result of transferring children.

Children with the clinical need have always been transferred to either Sheffield Children's Hospital or Doncaster Royal Infirmary, depending on their requirements, and in the last year 148 children were transferred from Bassetlaw when the unit remained open during the night.

The Trust has a small number of children who attend A3 on a regular basis and have stayed overnight if required. We have been working with these children, and their families, to ensure that there is a personal care plan (which includes details such as return transport for parents) in place for any future attendances.

As is understandable, in light of the publicity around service changes and the Sustainability and Transformation Plan, it is important to confirm that the Trust remains absolutely committed to Bassetlaw Hospital and is committed to maintaining paediatric services at Bassetlaw, as shown by the very recent investment of £278,000 to provide purpose-built children's outpatient facilities. The Trust and CCG will be actively engaged in any clinical service reviews and subsequent consultations undertaken as part of the STP programmes.

Maternity Services at Bassetlaw

Earlier this month, a national newspaper published a leading item that asserted that 11 units were earmarked for closure as part of STP proposals, naming 'South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw' as 'reshaping' children's and maternity services due to lack of specialist staff.

Some local publications mistakenly interpreted from the piece that Bassetlaw specifically would be singled out for changes. I can confirm that the Trust remains committed to maintaining maternity services at Bassetlaw and will be actively engaged in any clinical service reviews and subsequent consultations.

It has also since been clarified by Will Cleary-Gray, Director of South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw STP that 'there are no plans to close maternity units in South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw'.