

Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 14 November 2024 at 4.00 pm

Meeting to be held in the Large Drawing Room, Mansion House, Fernwood Road, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 1TJ

Contact Officer: Janet Howard, Democratic Services Officer
Tel: (0191) 211 5048, Email: janet.howard@newcastle.gov.uk

Membership

Councillors: **W Taylor, A Herridge, A Avaei, T Cairns, A Chisholm, L Ellis, D Huddart, M Sadiq, Vacancy and Vacancy(2nd)**

SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA

	Time	Page No
7. Newcastle Hospitals Improvement Plan and Committee Site Visit	5.15 pm	

Non-Executive Committee: Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 14 November 2024

Report Title: Committee Site Visit to the RVI – 11 October 2024

Report by: Caroline Docking, Director of Communications

Ward Implications: All wards

For Decision or Information

Public report

1 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 The report provides an overview of the committee's visit to the Newcastle Hospitals RVI site on Friday 11 October 2024.
- 1.2 The following committee Members attended: Councillors W Taylor (Chair), A Herridge (Vice Chair), A Chisholm, D Huddart and M Sadiq.
- 1.3 M Brown, Chair and Y Probert, Chief Executive of Healthwatch Newcastle also attended.
- 1.4 The site visit was hosted by Sir Jim Mackey (CEO), Rob Harrison (MD), Caroline Docking (Director of Communications), Jenna Wall (Director of Midwifery), Claire Pinder, Director of Operations, Medicine and Emergency Care).

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That committee consider how it reviews more detailed performance information (currently in public Board papers) and a short session with the Director of Performance and Governance would be explored to support Members with this.
- 2.2 That further updates on the Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) will be given to the committee in November, and throughout the construction.

3 Introduction and Background

- 3.1 At the invitation of Newcastle Hospitals, the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee members visited the RVI on 11th October 2024. They were also joined by the Chair and Chief Executive of Newcastle Healthwatch, and officers from the council.
- 3.2 The purpose of the visit was:
 - To gain insights into the hospital's operations and future plans, particularly in the light of the earlier CQC report and Notice of Decision.

- To visit the Maternity Unit to learn about the actions taken to support the reopening of the birth centre.
- To find out more about the Emergency Department, pressures and the proposed Urgent Care Centre and its anticipated impact on patient care.

4 Summary of key areas visited

4.1 Maternity Unit

Members were shown around the Newcastle Birth Centre and Delivery Suite by the Director of Midwifery. They observed the difference in facilities between the two units and heard about the ways that mothers and families are supported.

Members were able to hear about the plans in place for the reopening of the birth centre, the recruitment and training of the midwifery and obstetric workforce, and the experience of families. The Director also explained the range of services offered, including prenatal care, labour and delivery, and postnatal support as well as the regional specialist services that are provided to women and babies with very complex needs – such as the special care baby unit.

4.2 Emergency Department

On the morning of the visit the Emergency Department was very pressured so it was not possible for a large number of visitors to be accommodated in the unit. Instead, the Director of Operations, Medicine and Emergency Care described the services available and some of the challenges faced by the team. She focussed on the fast-paced environment and the critical role the department plays in serving the community, patient flow management, triage processes, waiting times and the importance of timely interventions in emergency situations.

The Director explained the ambition for a new Urgent Treatment Centre which it is hoped will be built at the RVI, explaining the services that would be provided, how this would reduce waiting for patients, and she also described the construction plans for the new building.

The link to previous public engagement work on the West Road Urgent Care Centre was highlighted and the committee are scheduled to receive a presentation on this from the ICB at its November meeting.

5 Trust Update and Performance

5.1 The Chief Executive and Managing Director presented an overview of the trusts progress since he joined the organisation in January, and since his last presentation to the committee. The Chief Executive described the work undertaken to improve governance, and address the concerns that had been raised by the Care Quality Commission in their report (published January 2024). He confirmed that the Notice of Decision which was imposed on the trust's licence had now been removed and also highlighted the significant changes at Board level and an extensive work programme to drive forward improvements. The Chief Executive also highlighted the focus on staff engagement and improvement and the trusts strategic priorities (The Big Signals and Quality Priorities).

5.2 Finally, the Chief Executive provided an update on future potential developments including major capital projects under consideration and the work underway to work collaboratively with Gateshead, Northumbria and Cumbria Trusts through the Great North Healthcare Alliance.

- 5.3 Questions and discussion followed, with a strong focus on the significant impact the trust is able to have for the community and the work underway to improve performance and drive up standards.
- 5.4 The committee expressed that it wanted to consider further how it reviewed performance information. It was noted that this is available in the Public Board papers. A short session with the Director of Performance and Governance would be explored to support Members with this.

6 Contact Officers

- 6.1 C Docking, Email caroline.docking@nhs.net
- 6.2 J Hall, Email Jessica.hall2@newcastle.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None.