

ITEM: 08/150
Doc: 6

Meeting: Trust Board – 15 October 2008
Date:

Title: Maternity Services Improvement Action Plan – Update on Progress

Executive Summary:

During 2007, The Healthcare Commission (HCC) undertook a national review of Maternity services. This review consisted of a self-assessment questionnaire and a patient survey. Based on an average score, Trusts were given a rating of Excellent, Good, Fair or Weak. Results were published in January 2008.

The Whittington was given a rating of ‘weak’ alongside 19 of 27 London Trusts, and was requested to develop a Maternity Services Improvement Action Plan in conjunction with local Commissioning PCTs.

On 19 September NHS London requested an urgent update on action plan progress to be provided by October 1st, and have specifically requested that this update is presented to the Trust Board to secure Board support.

Significant progress has been made since the action plan was last presented to the Board in February 2008, and these improvements are summarised in the attached paper, which is supplemented by the full action plan at Appendix 1.

The Trust Board is requested to acknowledge the progress to date and sign off the action plan as work in progress. It is proposed that an updated report is brought to the Board on a quarterly basis.

Action: For Approval

Report from: Kate Slemeck – Director of Operations

Sponsor: David Sloman – Chief Executive Officer

Financial Validation

Lead: Director of Finance

Name of finance officer

Compliance with statute, directions, policy, guidance

Lead: All directors

Reference:

Compliance with Healthcare Commission Core/Developmental Standards Lead: Director of Nursing & Clinical Development	Reference:
Compliance with Auditors' Local Evaluation standards (ALE) Lead: Director of Finance	Reference:
Evidence for self-certification under the Monitor compliance regime Lead: All directors	Compliance framework reference:

1. **Background**

During 2007, The Healthcare Commission (HCC) undertook a national review of Maternity services. The review consisted of a self-assessment questionnaire and a patient survey. Based on an average score, Trusts were given a rating of Excellent, Good, Fair or Weak. Results were published in January 2008.

The Whittington was given a rating of 'Weak' alongside 19 of 27 London Trusts, although scored highly in the following areas:

Safety Culture
Staffing levels
Morbidity outcomes
Breastfeeding initiation rates
Choice in labour

An action plan developed in conjunction with our host Commissioners (Islington PCT) and signed off by NHS London was produced to address all identified areas of weakness. This was reviewed by the Hospital Trust Board in February 2008. On 19 September NHS London requested an urgent update on progress to be provided by October 1st, and have specifically requested that this update is presented to the Trust Board to secure Board support.

The purpose of this paper is to update the Trust Board on progress against the action plan to date, to seek Board support for the actions being taken, and provide assurance regarding progress that is being made.

2. **Progress to Date**

The Trust has made significant progress against the maternity services review action plan, having fully achieved all the actions due for completion by the end of September 2008, and is able to demonstrate significant improvements since the Healthcare Commission review, which are summarised below.

Improving Our Environment

- A refurbishment of the labour ward is now complete.
- Antenatal clinic capacity has been increased with the addition of 3 rooms.
- Midwifery Birthing Unit building works to commence on 6th October 2008
- A separate and refurbished maternity day unit will open in November, freeing up labour ward capacity.

Increasing Staffing Levels

- Midwifery staffing establishment has increased by five Band 5 posts.
- The Antenatal screening co-ordinator post has increased from half to full time.
- An additional 0.6 WTE Obstetric Consultant has been appointed, and plans in place to increase by a further 1.00wte by April 2009.
- Specialist Registrar posts in Obstetrics and Gynaecology increased by two.
- Two housekeepers have been appointed onto the maternity wards to improve mealtimes and the environment
- An additional administrative post appointed to improve data collection.

Other Improvements

- We have increased user involvement on the Labour Ward Forum
- All midwives have received training to undertake mental health concerns screening.
- Our Maternity website is up and running.
- Antenatal classes have increased by 12 per year.
- The Sector Wide Breast Feeding Policy has been launched and implemented.
- We have a direct access referral form on our website for children's centres, emergency department, and early pregnancy unit.
- Users are now involved in reviewing menus, and changes have been implemented as a result of this involvement.
- The productive ward programme has been introduced into maternity wards
- Work is well underway with South Bank University to review workforce and specialist roles, and plans in place to introduce nursery nurses later this year.

The areas that require further work are as follows; mental health support, reducing antenatal admissions to national benchmark levels, early booking to comply with NICE guidelines, increasing community appointments, and improving continuity of care. All these areas are highlighted as work in progress on the action plan, which is attached for information at Appendix 1.

The action plan will continue to be reviewed on a quarterly basis by NHS London in conjunction with the Trust and Islington PCT.

3. In Summary

The Trust is making good progress against the action plan and continues to have the support of lead commissioner Islington PCT.

The Board is requested to acknowledge the progress to date and sign off the action plan as work in progress. It is proposed that an update on progress is brought to the Board on a quarterly basis.