

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW**

**SERVICE RECONFIGURATION - MATERNITY  
SERVICES IN NORTH DERBYSHIRE – CHESTERFIELD  
ROYAL HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

**REVIEW REPORT**

**APRIL 2007**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW**  
**SERVICE RECONFIGURATION - MATERNITY SERVICES IN NORTH**  
**DERBYSHIRE – CHESTERFIELD ROYAL HOSPITAL NHS**  
**FOUNDATION TRUST**

**DRAFT REVIEW REPORT**

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## **Foreword**

We would like to thank all of those individuals and organisations that participated in the Health Scrutiny meeting at Birdholme Children's Centre, Chesterfield on Friday 9 March 2007.

We would also like to thank Chesterfield Sure Start for hosting the event.

We have listened to the views of a range of organisations representing the service users, employees of the Trust, GPs, local Elected Members and also to senior managers from the PCT as commissioners of the service

We commend this Report and its recommendations to the Board of the Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

We recognise that the issues raised in this report will enable the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to take an informed view of the Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust in relation to, at least, Core Standard 17 of the Healthcare Commission's Annual Health Check.



Councillor Roger Wilkinson  
Vice Chair  
Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Healthier Communities  
Derbyshire County Council  
County Hall  
Matlock  
Derbyshire

April 2007

## **1. Background to the Review**

- 1.1 Derbyshire County Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee<sup>1</sup> were notified by Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust that it would be undertaking a review of community midwifery services within North Derbyshire (excluding High Peak).
- 1.2 The initial notification came in a telephone call from the Director of Nursing and Clinical Development to the Improvement and Scrutiny Manager in October 2006. Earlier that month the Committee had been advised of the temporary closure of the Darley Dale Maternity Unit following a significant clinical incident. The Unit had remained closed to in patient care whilst internal and external investigations were completed. The Trust had advised that as safe staffing levels couldn't be maintained, the situation was likely to continue for some months. The Trust stated that the proposed review, which would include the Darley Dale Unit, was not linked with the clinical incident
- 1.3 On 4 January 2007 the Improvement and Scrutiny Officer met with the Director of Nursing and Clinical Quality and representatives of the Trust to outline the Improvement and Scrutiny Protocol on Service Reconfigurations. The Improvement and Scrutiny Officer was informed that the public consultation on the proposals on the future of maternity services in North Derbyshire would run from 18<sup>th</sup> January 2007 to 20<sup>th</sup> April 2007
- 1.4 At its meeting on 9 January 2007, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Members Panel<sup>2</sup> to consider the proposals.  
In light of the position at the Darley Dale Unit and the mounting public campaign it was agreed that a full review of the proposals would take place.  
Members received a copy of the proposals in the public consultation document on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2007
- 1.5 The Panel determined that it wanted to find out more

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<sup>1</sup> The Health Overview and Scrutiny function is constituted in the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee for Healthier Communities

<sup>2</sup> Panel Members included Councillors Roger Wilkinson (Chair), Ken Armstrong, Sharon Blank and Bill Pickford

information, particularly from users of the service. It agreed to hold a meeting – in the style of an “Examination in Public”, on 9 March 2007, at the Birdholme Children’s Centre, although participation in the event was by invitation only, the press and public were invited to observe.

1.6 The Panel invited a number of organisations and individuals to the meeting, including:

- Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Derbyshire County Primary Care Trust
- Sure Start
- National Childbirth Trust
- Chesterfield Cherubs
- Darley Dale Town Council
- MOMS Campaign Group
- Whitworth Hospital League of Friends
- Royal Hospital PPIF
- Royal College of Midwives
- UNISON

In addition written submissions to the Panel were also received from:

- Local Elected Members
- Local Medical Committee (Derbyshire)
- Chesterfield Health LLP – Practice Based Commissioning Consortium
- Maternity Services Liaison Committee
- Chesterfield Borough Council
- Derbyshire Dales District Council

1.7 The Panel listened to information and evidence provided by the invited guests and focussed their attention on four issues:

- The Consultation Process and public involvement in shaping the proposals.
- Proposals for Ante Natal care
- Proposals for Intrapartum (Birth) care
- Proposals for Post Natal care

## **2. The Report**

- 2.1 The meeting at Birdholme Children's Centre on 9 March provided a good opportunity for all parties to express their points of view. The process has been welcomed, especially by the PCT and community representatives.
- 2.2 The consultation document has given rise to a level of public concern against the Royal Hospitals proposals formulated as a result of the Review of Maternity Services across North Derbyshire. The event provided an opportunity for the Panel Members to receive evidence from a range of organisations across the north of the county and in addition provided a forum for the different groups to meet with the Royal Hospital during the public consultation period.
- 2.3 In their presentation Chesterfield Royal Hospital Trust (the Trust) highlighted that it had to balance the dual responsibilities of achieving substantial efficiency savings within the service without compromising patient safety.
- 2.4 Changes to the national tariff under Payments by Results have had a significant impact on the Trust's income for 2006/2007. The Board of Directors has agreed that in order to find overall efficiencies of 7.5% between 2006/2007 and 2008/2009, in addition to the 2.5% already found in 2006/2007, the Trust will need to undertake a workforce review. The review of Maternity services in North Derbyshire is part of this review process
- 2.5 In order to make the service more efficient the Trust outlined proposals around:
- Rationalisation in the provision of ante natal care
  - A reduction in the choice of settings for women to give birth
  - A net decrease in the number of community midwives
  - A proposal to employ Maternity Support Workers
  - New working practices to ensure a more balanced caseload across the area and to meet the anticipated increase in the number of home births.
- 2.6 The Primary Care Trust (PCT), as commissioners of maternity services, stated that their main drivers were the needs of the local population and the national standards as set out in "Making it Better for Mother and Baby" and the National Service Framework.

The PCT considered that there were 3 main issues for them as commissioners, these being:

- The closure of Darley Dale Maternity Unit
- The introduction of the Maternity Support Workers
- The establishment of centralised maternity bases

The PCT outlined its desire to commission future intra-partum care (births) on the basis of need and future likely activity. There is evidence that the birth rate in the Dales area, in contrast to other areas of North Derbyshire, is likely to fall.

The PCT supported the introduction of the Maternity Support Worker (MSW) role which they considered would allow midwives more time for clinical duties but would be interested in the evaluation from other areas to inform the introduction of the role. The PCT commented that the role of the MSW was seen as a positive move. Breast feeding rates in Derbyshire are poor and the role would provide extra support to breast feeding mothers.

The proposal to establish 4 centralised maternity bases across the area was seen as the most concerning aspect by the PCT. This would be seen as a reduction in delivery points for ante natal care and as such may limit choice to women and their families. The PCT stated that they would be seeking reassurances that care would continue to be provided through the network of children's centres and GP practices in rural areas.

2.7 Representatives from user groups and the community raised serious concerns on a number of issues relating to the following areas:

- The reduction in locations for ante natal care;
- The capacity for midwives to meet the demands for the expected increase in home births;
- The closure of the only midwife led facility particularly in light of the paper – "Making it Better for Mother and Baby";
- The lack of patient and public involvement in the development of the proposals
- The quality of the public consultation

2.8 The Panel have also been made aware of further work being undertaken which they consider may have an impact on the outcome of the Maternity Review.

The PCT has informed the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee of work taking place in relation to Community

Hospitals within the Derbyshire County PCT area. This may have an impact on the future of the Darley Dale Unit which is located within the Whitworth Community Hospital complex.

In addition to this and perhaps more significantly, there is a requirement on the PCT to undertake a review of the maternity services it commissions throughout Derbyshire. This will form part of the National Maternity Review.

2.9 The Panel consider that there are four areas on which they would wish to comment:

- The Consultation
- The future of the Darley Dale Maternity Unit
- The establishment of the 4 Maternity bases
- The role of the Maternity Support Worker

## 2.10 **The Consultation**

The Panel have been disappointed with the quality of the public consultation and would wish to make the following comments:

### Pre Consultation

The importance of pre consultation cannot be over emphasised. The failure of the Trust to engage effectively with stakeholders at an early stage during the Maternity Services review has resulted in a resistance which has severely damaged the credibility of the proposals. The Panel consider that many of the subsequent criticisms would have been avoided if the Trust had provided opportunities for stakeholders to actively participate in the development of the proposals.

The Panel is particularly critical of the Trust's decision not to hold public meetings within each of the 4 areas. This move, they consider, would have facilitated a more inclusive process.

### The Consultation Document

The Panel is critical of the public consultation document. At the review in public it became clear that the document was factually incorrect and/or misleading in places. Examples of this were:

- The document states that there is only one midwife led maternity unit this being situated in Darley Dale. The presentation by the Trust on 9 March mentioned that it is proposed to ensure that the central delivery suite at the



Chesterfield Royal Hospital will provide a more clinical free, “home from home” environment in which women could give birth. The Panel are supportive of this move as they consider that this proposal, if sufficiently resourced, will allow women to have more choice of birth environment within the Royal Hospital. This information is not detailed in the consultation document and therefore not open to public comment.

- There is no mention of the current and future use of Children’s Centres to deliver ante natal care or the proposal to continue to provide a service through GP surgeries in rural areas. This information is not in the public domain and therefore the Panel consider that this presents an incomplete picture on which the public are invited to comment.
- The document states that there are currently 50 midwives working across North Derbyshire, the proposal is to cut these to 41 posts. Information given as part of the Royal’s presentation indicates that the new proposals will mean 2 wte team leader posts, 31.46 wte midwife posts and 8 wte Maternity Support worker posts. Members consider that this information is confusing and misleading and requires further clarification.
- The financial statements within the document are not supported by evidence which is in the public domain. This makes the financial argument confusing for consultees.

The Panel is concerned that the document does not present consultees with a range of options with supporting evidence. They consider that this would have enabled a more open and transparent process and be in line with best practice guidance.

The Panel is concerned that the questions within the document are presented in such a way as to illicit a positive response to the proposals. The Panel consider that the use of “closed questions” in the document contravenes best practice and undermines the credibility of the exercise leading them to the conclusion that the process may not truly reflect public opinion.

The Panel question the rationale for including information on the recent clinical incident at the Darley Dale Unit. The Panel consider that this has had the effect of raising anxieties about patient safety in midwife led units.

The Panel is critical of the lack of written evidence to support the

input of the Independent Advisor and internal review team as outlined in the consultation document and are concerned that this may challenge the authority of the proposals.

## **2.11 Darley Dale Maternity Unit**

The Panel are of the opinion that the case to close the Darley Dale Unit has not been made on a number of grounds:

- There is no evidence of public consultation taking place with regard to the closure of the Darley Dale Unit. Given that this is likely to have a significant impact then the Members consider that this should have been subject to a separate consultation process or at least have been part of the current consultation.
- The Panel consider that they have seen no evidence of the active promotion of the unit as an option for women in North Derbyshire. This lack of evidence gives credence to the view that the facility has been deliberately “run down” prior to closure.
- There is no evidence to suggest that different staffing models have been considered in relation to the Darley Dale Unit. The Panel have concluded that this should have been fully explored prior to the decision being taken.

## **2.12 Proposed Maternity Bases**

Whilst the Panel are supportive of the need for more appropriate accommodation for midwives they consider that the proposals for antenatal care need further clarification. The Panel is not convinced that the proposals will result in a more equitable service for women across North Derbyshire and are concerned that in some cases particularly in areas where there are poor public transport links, the proposals will mean a reduction in provision. In addition the Panel see this as a reduction in delivery points for care across North Derbyshire on current levels.

The Panel support the use of Children's Centres which have proved a successful model for the delivery of ante natal care. This has allowed a multi agency approach to flourish, particularly in the most deprived areas.

The Panel is concerned however that the reduction in the

number of services provided through GP's surgeries may lead to a lack of communication between the community midwife and the primary health care team which may have serious consequences such as those highlighted in recent high profile cases. (Sheffield Serious Case Review- December 2005).

#### **2.13 Maternity Support Workers**

In principal the Panel are supportive of the introduction of Maternity Support Workers within North Derbyshire to undertake administration, basic clinical tasks; and to provide breast-feeding support. However the Panel are anxious that the role should be used to complement and not replace the existing midwifery establishment.

- 2.14 The Panel thanks all the participants to the 'examination in public' style of meeting.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **RECOMMENDATION 1, 2 and 3**

##### **The Consultation**

**The Committee have concerns about the validity of the public consultation process and consider that the Trust will need to take steps to address the criticisms raised by a number of stakeholders.**

**The Committee consider further work needs to be completed and therefore make the following recommendations:**

- 1. That the Trust consults further on all significant issues and concerns raised as a result of the current public consultation process.**
- 2. That this further consultation takes into account the outcomes of the Community Hospital Review and the National Review of Maternity Services which will be conducted by the PCT during 2007/2008.**
- 3. That this further consultation should comply with the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Consultation and Department of Health Guidelines and be supported with robust evidence.**

## **RECOMMENDATION 4**

### **Darley Dale Maternity Unit**

**The Committee consider that further work needs to be completed around the viability of the Darley Dale Maternity Unit.**

**The Committee is pleased that the Trust is now meeting with the Darley Dale Town Council and the MOMs Campaign to discuss a counter proposal.**

**The Committee is also supportive of the Trust's decision to allow additional time for this counter proposal to be completed.**

**The Committee has also been made aware that the Derbyshire County PCT is about to review the provision of Community Hospitals across Derbyshire and in addition has a requirement to complete work as part of the National Review of Maternity Services. The outcomes of both these reviews may have a bearing on the future of the Darley Dale Maternity Unit.**

**In light of these developments the Committee would wish to make the following recommendation:**

- 4. That the decision to close the Darley Dale Maternity Unit is deferred until further work has been undertaken.**

**This work to include**

- the investigation of different staffing models at the unit;**
- consideration being given of the counter proposal from Darley Dale Town Council and the MOMs campaign and**
- the Community Hospital Review and National Review of Maternity Services.**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS 5,6 and 7**

### **Proposed Maternity Bases**

The Committee supports the proposal for extended opening hours and a more flexible approach to care delivery but considers that further work needs to be completed to clarify the proposals for ante natal care and therefore recommend that:

5. The Trust outlines its proposals to provide ante natal care from the Children's Centres and GP surgeries where appropriate to inform the PCT review on Maternity Services as this information is not currently in the public domain.
6. The Trust needs to demonstrate that this service model will provide a more equitable service across the area and that it has taken into account the needs of families in rural areas and also those of deprived areas where there is a heavy reliance on public transport.
7. The Trust must ensure and be able to demonstrate that effective communications systems will be in place with primary health care teams to ensure that patient safety is not compromised.

## **RECOMMENDATION 8**

### **Maternity Support Workers**

The Committee acknowledge the importance of the continuity of care for women and their families. The role of the named midwife is an important component of good maternity care and the relationship between the midwife and family is highly valued. The Committee are anxious to see this relationship maintained and where possible enhanced. With this in mind the Committee recommend that

8. The Trust ensures that the role of the Maternity Support Worker will support the midwife and not result in a reduction of individual protected time with the midwife. This situation is subject to monitoring on a regular basis.

#### **4. Additional Comments**

It is noted that the Trust has indicated in its consultation document, its intention to pass on comments to the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee received as part of the public consultation process where permission is given by the consultee.

With this in mind the Committee reserve the right to make further comments and recommendations to the Trust after the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2007 if, on receipt of these comments, further issues arise.

#### **5. Further Information**

The Committee received written evidence from the following sources:

- Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Derbyshire County Primary Care Trust
- National Childbirth Trust
- Chesterfield Cherubs
- Darley Dale Town Council
- MOMS Campaign Group
- Whitworth Hospital League of Friends
- Royal Hospital PPIF
- Royal College of Midwives
- UNISON
- Councillor Alan Charles
- Local Medical Committee (Derbyshire)
- Chesterfield Health LLP – Practice Based Commissioning Consortium
- Maternity Services Liaison Committee
- Chesterfield Borough Council
- Derbyshire Dales District Council

Copies of the written submissions can be obtained from Jan Goodwin, Improvement and Scrutiny Officer (Healthier Communities)

The Committee thanks all those individuals and organisations who provided information to the review Panel