

Review of Children's Heart Surgery Services in England: an update**November 2010****1.0 Background information**

In August 2010 we wrote to all Health Overview Scrutiny Committees in England about the ongoing review of children's heart surgery services. It is possible that when the NHS delivers recommendations for change some HOSCs may consider them to be a 'substantial variation', requiring us to formally consult with those HOSCs. The 2003 Direction from the Secretary of State requires scrutiny committees to convene a joint HOSC when two or more HOSCs consider that proposals affecting a population larger than a single HOSC to be substantial.

This briefing provides an update on the process for delivering recommendations for change. **HOSCs will particularly want to note that the date for publishing recommendations has been changed from October 2010 to early in 2011.**

2.0 The review process: Where are we now?**Consultation timings**

A full public consultation is scheduled to begin in early 2011. The NHS had planned to launch a formal public consultation in October 2010, but we now aim to launch the consultation in early 2011. This is because there is a need for the NHS to consider some limited mortality data that was only recently made available to the review team.

On 14 September 2010 the *Safe and Sustainable* team received an analysis of outcome data that was undertaken for the separate independent review of paediatric cardiac surgery at the John Radcliffe Hospital that reported in July 2010.

The analysis of mortality data for the period 2000 to 2009 identified three centres (in addition to the John Radcliffe Hospital) where the difference between expected mortality and observed mortality was statistically significant. The centres are at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, University Hospitals Leicester NHS Trust and Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust. The analysis did not suggest any immediate safety concerns.

Since receiving the initial analysis, we have asked for some further analyses to be carried out and it is now clear that that a further review should be limited to the three centres in respect of specific surgical procedures and specific time periods. This will involve the submission by the three centres of written summaries of 'Morbidity and Mortality Meetings' and other relevant information for review by an independent panel of experts.

Further details, including a list of the members of this new review panel can be found on our website: <http://www.specialisedservices.nhs.uk/doc/response-to-analysis-mortality-data-nhs-trusts-in-england-providing-paediatric-cardiac-surgery-2000>

The NHS is taking account of a lot of complex information to ensure that the eventual recommendations will result in the best possible service for children and families in the future, and it is right that we are taking sufficient time to develop viable options for change.

Safe and Sustainable

Children's Heart Surgery in England

Specialised Services

The change in timings provides HOSCs with further opportunity for pre-consultation engagement with the NHS.

The consultation: next steps

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The consultation will set out a number of options for change and will provide HOSCs, the public and NHS staff with the opportunity to comment on the options. The responses will be analysed by an independent third party and will be made available to the Joint Committee of PCTs (the decision making committee) as part of its deliberations.

We will shortly write to you again with a date for the launch of consultation and details of consultation events that are planned for your region.

Have any decisions been made by the NHS?

The NHS has not yet made any decisions on the future configuration of services. No decisions will be made until the outcome of consultation has been considered.

In October we issued a statement about one of the current centres, the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford. The NHS review team will recommend to the Joint Committee of PCTs that this centre should not be included in any potential configuration option. This is because the service at the John Radcliffe Hospital received the lowest ranking as part of the assessment process by a significant margin and that it would be the least likely of all the centres to be able to meet the new quality standards in the future. We published this statement in advance of formal consultation so that HOSCs, parent groups and local NHS staff are kept informed of emerging potential recommendations.

At this stage of the process all other centres currently providing heart surgery for children form part of the potential options being considered. The NHS has not yet made any decisions on the future configuration of services. No decisions, including on the future of the service at the John Radcliffe Hospital, will be made until the outcome of consultation has been considered.

3.0 Key dates

December 2010:	Outcome of the further review of mortality analysis presented to Sir Ian Kennedy's review team
January 2011:	JCPCT meets to consider shortlist of potential options for configuration
February 2011:	JCPCT agrees final set of options Formal consultation starts
May 2011:	Formal consultation ends
May – June 2011:	Analysis of consultation by independent third party
July 2011:	Completion of analysis of consultation by independent third party
July 2011:	JCPCT considers outcome of consultation and makes decision

4.0 What do we need from HOCs at this stage of the process?

Although some HOCs have let us know that they do not anticipate that future recommendations will constitute a substantial variation for their local populations, or that they have joint arrangements in place for consultation, some HOCs have not yet let us know how they would wish to be consulted.

Please let us know:

1. Your proposed arrangements for scrutiny (for example, whether or not you think that existing arrangements for regional joint scrutiny can be used and how much time you would need to put these arrangements into place e.g. how often does the regional network meet)
2. Contact details so that we can start to confirm dates and venues for presentations to HOCs (we suggest that we set dates now so that we can start to work with you in developing a consultation that meets your needs)
3. Any other questions that you may have

5.0 Would you like further information?

We have sent you a power point presentation with this leaflet that provides more detail on the review's aims and its processes.

If you would like your local NHS Specialised Commissioning Group to present this in person in advance of the formal consultation please contact Hannah Weaver at hannah.weaver@nsscgs.nhs.uk (020 7932 3700 x 4289)

Contact details

The NHS review is led by NHS Specialised Services on behalf of the 10 Specialised Commissioning Groups in England.

Please contact: Zuzana Bates, Project Liaison Manager e: Zuzana.Bates@nsscgs.nhs.uk

NHS Specialised Services 2nd floor, Southside, 105 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QT

Direct Line: 020 7932 3771

For further information please contact us, or see our website: www.specialisedservices.nhs.uk