

Request for Scrutiny – Children’s epilepsy surgery

Submission from Dr Colin Ferrie, Consultant Paediatric neurologist and Mr Paul Chumas, Consultant Paediatric Neurosurgeon

We are clinicians at the LGI involved in the evaluation and surgical treatment of children with epilepsy. You may be aware that recently the specialist commissioners designated 4 paediatric epilepsy surgery centres in England. There was no public consultation or involvement in the process because the purpose was said to be about procurement of additional surgery. However, it has gone much further and the end result may be that children’s epilepsy surgery will only be commissioned from the four designated centres.

None of the designated centres are in Yorkshire, or indeed the north east of England. Consequently, children who previously were treated in Leeds will have to travel elsewhere, probably to London, Liverpool or Manchester. This is a consequence not of a detailed consideration of what is in the best interests of the patients but purely because the Trusts in Leeds, Sheffield and Newcastle were unable to reach agreement and consequently no bid went forward from region.

We are of the opinion that the process followed has been deeply flawed for a number of reasons and the losers are children requiring epilepsy surgery and their families. We would like to discuss these matters further with you, if you think this concerns matters within your remit.

19th July 2013