

Date: 16 March 2021

1	Summary
	<p>Intention to tender Leeds Fertility IVF service</p> <p>Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust wishes to explore and test the market for opportunities to grow and sustain the Leeds Fertility IVF service in light of a changing competitive market in Leeds.</p> <p>LTHT provides both NHS and private reproductive medicine services operating under the trading name Leeds Fertility. In relation to private patient services, those are delivered in conjunction with Genesis Healthcare LLP. The income LTHT receives for providing private services supports the provision of our wider NHS services and has enabled further capital investment in the fertility service for the benefit of NHS and private patients.</p> <p>In the last 10 years there has been an increasing trend nationally towards privately run fertility clinics, often in chains operated by large commercial organisations. In the south of England almost all NHS and private fertility work is undertaken in these private clinics. In the north it is common for large NHS teaching hospitals to run fertility clinics, but for private clinics to set up in competition, undertaking private and NHS work. Overtime the increase in private provision can lead to a reduction in work in NHS hospitals with a consequent loss of income and risk that services become financially unsustainable.</p> <p>Until recently, Leeds was the only major city in England without a private commercial company providing IVF services and we are aware that at least one private competitor is now open in the city. The potential implications of this are that Leeds Fertility would then be in direct competition with these providers and potentially lose income and NHS staff to the new providers. In this highly specialised field, staff loss could have a substantial negative impact on the service at Seacroft. This would also potentially have a knock-on effect on other specialist women’s services provided by the Trust since there would be loss of critical mass for reproductive medicine services.</p> <p>To mitigate the risk to the fertility services provided by Leeds Fertility and to ensure they continue to be provided at Seacroft Hospital, Leeds Teaching Hospitals proposes to tender the Leeds Fertility IVF service for a contract period of ten years.</p> <p>In developing our plans, we have reviewed the latest guidance from NHS England on planning service change and notes that this suggests “Tendering a service by itself is unlikely to be a significant change unless the new service specification will provide a substantial change in service.”</p>

2	Current Service
	<p>Leeds Fertility is based at Seacroft Hospital and treats 2200 new referrals annually in secondary and tertiary care.</p> <p>Approximately 1300 IVF/ICSI treatments (in vitro fertilisation, Intracytoplasmic sperm injection) and 700 frozen embryo transfers are performed each year. In addition the unit also undertake egg donation, sperm donation, surrogacy and a number of other treatments. NICE guidelines recommend three cycles of IVF, and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) decide local NHS policies for how many IVF cycles they will commission. The West Yorkshire CCGs currently commission one cycle of IVF. At Leeds Fertility, 55% of IVF and ICSI cycles are NHS and 45% privately funded.</p> <p>Leeds Fertility is one of the top performing IVF services in the country, ranked 3rd in UK (2019), as shown by a live birth rate of 39% vs 23% nationally, with the lowest multiple pregnancy rate (a recognised measure of service quality). It is a flagship department with an international reputation for clinical excellence, research & innovation and is the only unit in UK to offer the complete spectrum of reproductive medicine services for NHS patients. Recent successes include the development of one of the UK's largest pre-implantation genetic diagnosis services, and the establishment of a quaternary-referral service for tissue preservation in children with cancer.</p> <p>Leeds Fertility is highly rated, receiving 5 out of 5 stars following recent HFEA (Human Fertility and Embryo Authority) inspection, and 4 out of 5 stars from patients rating the clinic on the HFEA website.</p> <p>Leeds Fertility is the only IVF clinic in West Yorkshire with its own embryology laboratory, so it also has a number of independently run satellite clinics including in Calderdale and Huddersfield and Bradford which send patients to the unit for their care.</p>
3	The proposal and its impact on our patients
	<p>The proposal is to tender Leeds Fertility services (NHS and private provision) for a period of 7 years with the option to extend for a further 3 years. The Trust's intention to tender these services has been discussed with Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group and with NHS England. Both organisations are supportive of the approach to explore opportunities by testing the market with a view to maintaining the critical mass of activity needed to enable the full range of services to be offered to NHS patients in a cost-effective way. It is expected that the tender process will take around 12 weeks, and if the Trust decides to award the contract there would then follow a 6 to 12-month transition period. The tender will be based on providing the service at Seacroft Hospital to at least the existing quality and experience standards meaning there should be minimal impact for patients.</p> <p>The scope of the tender is focussed on assisted conception treatments provided in the unit. NHS patients referred to Leeds Teaching Hospitals will continue to receive specialist reproductive medicine expertise in their diagnosis and treatment and would only be referred onto the new provider when they require treatment at the assisted conception unit.</p> <p>The fundamental objective of this process is to continue to be able to deliver a cost-effective, high quality and specialised service for NHS patients in Leeds and the wider region.</p>

Appendix 1 – LTHT Briefing Paper to the Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles Scrutiny Board

Issue	What this means for our patients.
1: Location	Our intention is for the service to be maintained at Seacroft Hospital. The current unit was purpose built in 2010 and is easily accessible to patients, being on main bus routes and with good parking facilities.
2: Services tendered	We expect all the clinical services currently provided at Leeds Fertility to be maintained and this is reflected in the proposed tender. This will mean that the service will continue to provide the normal suite of IVF treatment and interventions as well as the specialised services developed in the department over recent years including pre-implantation genetic diagnosis and treatment and tissue preservation for children with cancer.
3: Quality of Care	<p>The fertility sector is closely regulated by the HFEA and has key quality, safety and success indicators against which all fertility clinics are monitored. The contracts being developed to support this process have explicit expectations around the maintenance of a high quality, safe service and will be part of the contract management process.</p> <p>We anticipate there will be no negative impact to the quality of care that patients receive at the unit, and in fact the potential benefits of being part of a company dedicated to providing IVF services are the benefits for training and education and research in this area.</p>
4. Patient Support	There has been a real growth in the use of internet resources, social media and digital applications to support patients to choose where to receive their treatment, to educate them and to provide them with support throughout their IVF journey. Companies dedicated to delivering IVF services across a number of clinics have developed excellent resources in recent years to better support patients and this would be an improvement on what we are currently able to provide patients at Leeds Fertility.

4	Patient and Staff Engagement										
	<p>The Trust recognises the importance of engaging staff and patients in this process and has taken the following steps:</p> <p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff meetings with all of the staff at Leeds Fertility to discuss the context and plans to test the market. • Staff questionnaire undertaken to assess what is important to them in the development of a tender. • Staff engagement meetings held to discuss important issues for staff - these issues are now reflected in the tender documentation. <p>Patient Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The key patient experience metrics for the service, including patient advice and liaison enquiries, complaints and results from our quarterly service patient engagement questionnaire have been reviewed to inform the service specification. • Listening events are being undertaken virtually 1st-14th March 2021 (due to the COVI-19 pandemic) to understand patient views of the service so that these inform the service specification. The Trust will actively promote these to all the relevant communities who use the service. • A patient and public representative will be included as part of the tender evaluation panel considering any bids. <p>The most recent patient experience survey (December 2020) rated our services at Leeds Fertility highly:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="220 1137 1396 1473"> <thead> <tr> <th>Area</th> <th>Score out of 5</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Administrative processes</td> <td>4/5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Clinical Care</td> <td>4.2/5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quality of information provided</td> <td>4.2/5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment including privacy and dignity</td> <td>4.5/5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Patients identified the following areas as potential improvements for the service: improved telephone access for information and advice - patient advice/ enquiry line, named nurse/ team contact to improve communication regarding their ongoing care. Access to a patient supporting mobile application and greater personalisation of care.</p>	Area	Score out of 5	Administrative processes	4/5	Clinical Care	4.2/5	Quality of information provided	4.2/5	Environment including privacy and dignity	4.5/5
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5	What are the health and equality impacts associated with the proposal? If appropriate, how will these be addressed and/or mitigated?										
	<p>The Trust is undertaking an Equality and Quality Impact Assessment to inform the specification.</p> <p>Leeds Fertility has developed some specific services to support LGBTQ+ patients including the development of a dedicated clinic for fertility preservation of transgender patients and a surrogacy service for gay men and these services will be maintained in any transfer of service.</p> <p>Throughout our engagement activity we have worked to ensure we are highlighting and address any cultural or religious impacts associated with proposed changes</p>										

6	Summary
	<p>Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust is seeking to explore and test the market for opportunities to grow and sustain the Leeds Fertility IVF service in light of a changing competitive market in Leeds.</p> <p>There are no plans to change the service for patients, rather to maintain the current high quality and specialisation of services that are delivered. The decision to award a contract to a new provider is dependent on the quality of the bids submitted and the assessment LTHT makes of those bids.</p> <p>Staff and patients' views have been considered in the development of the tender, and are important aspects of the evaluation of any bids that are received.</p>

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