

**Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust**

**Incident Coordination Panel Meeting**

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018

11:30-13:30

Room 1, Education and Training Centre

Countess of Chester Hospital, Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1UL

**Attendees:**

Margaret Kitching, Chief Nurse North – NHS England & NHS Improvement (Chair)

Alison Kelly, Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust

Angela Kelly, NHS Improvement

Avril Delaney, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Caroline Radford, NHS England

Emma Taylor, Cheshire West and Chester Council

Hazel Richards, NHS England

Ian Harvey, Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust

Jo Richardson, NHS England

Julie McCabe, North West Neonatal Operational Delivery Network

Michelle Turner, Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust

Mike Prentice, NHS England

Nicola Pollard, NHS England

Paul Hughes, Cheshire Police

Paula Wedd, West Cheshire CCG

Simon Blackwell, Cheshire Police

Vince Connolly, NHS Improvement

**Apologies:**

Nick Smith, CQC

Welcome & introduction	Margaret Kitching (MK) welcomes the group and thanked everyone for attending the meeting at such short notice.
Purpose of the meeting	<p>MK advised that the meeting has been set up in response to a call received on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July following the arrest of a member of staff employed by Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust (CoCH). MK reiterated the importance of the system working together.</p> <p>The MOU (2007) was shared with the group , MK notes that this version is now over 10 years old and it has not been brought up to date since the cross system organisational changes in 2012. The MOU and tools are very helpful in guiding the setting up of an incident coordination group for system wide sharing. In the absence of any up-to-date guidance this framework is being used to support todays meeting. MK noted that there is consideration being given to the need to bring this guidance back up to date.</p>
Confidentiality agreement	MK requested that the agreement is signed by all group members and return to her. MK emphasised the importance of total confidentiality as the incident is a live police investigation.
Police update	<p>Paul Hughes (PH) also reiterated the importance of the confidentiality agreement PH advised the group that he has been working with the CoCH since 2017 investigating the harm of 32 babies, of which 15 have survived with serious life changing injuries and 17 deceased.</p> <p>A suspect was arrested and interviewed on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2018. They have been released on bail whilst further investigation takes place.</p> <p>The bail conditions include the following restrictions; not being allowed in the County of Cheshire, not to work within the Healthcare setting and not to work with children under the age of 16 years old.</p> <p>The bail conditions are reviewed every 28 days.</p> <p>PH advised that the police have over a 100 witnesses to interview which include families of the deceased/injured babies.</p> <p>PH confirmed he is liaising with NMC.</p> <p>PH is liaising with DBS to ensure that any attempts to get a DBS check is flagged immediately.</p> <p>PH is currently unable to give specific timelines due to the nature of the investigation however. Should hopefully be in a better position to update in three months' time.</p> <p>Concern was raised regarding the bail conditions and it was noted that there was no mention of 16/17 year olds.</p> <p>Concern was also raised regarding the suspect potentially approaching agencies for care work/non nursing role as these wouldn't require a NMC check or to provide a proof of nursing registration. PH confirmed that their discreet oversight of the DBS checks in this case should provide further assurance and prevent such actions occurring.</p>
Commissioning/service contingency update	<p>Janet McCabe (JMc) advised the group that babies born in CoCH are occasionally moved to Arrow Park or Liverpool Women's for ICU treatment.</p> <p>JMc notes that there are available cots in these Trusts should any concerned mothers wish to transfer out of CoCH.</p> <p>To date there hasn't been any transfer requests made and the number of available cots are being closely monitored with checks taking place three times per day. It was recognised that this situation could change quickly Mike Prentice (MP) will work with the Network , CCG and Specialised Commissioner to design a robust contingency plan.</p>

Trust(s) update	<p>Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust (CoCH) :</p> <p>Alison Kelly (AK) advised that activity on the unit has not been affected. Staff are dealing with queries and questions from mothers on the unit but all have been resolved and answered. There have been no requests to transfer to another unit or Trust.</p> <p>Ian Harvey (IH) thanked the North West Neonatal Operational Delivery Network for their support.</p> <p>AK advised that staffing levels are being monitored closely and there are currently no issues with staffing numbers, at present, there is one staff member off sick.</p> <p>AK credited the staff on the unit for their resilience in such a difficult and stressful time.</p> <p>Staff are being supported well by occupation health and AK thanked Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust for their continued support.</p> <p>It was also noted that Junior Doctors who had contact with the suspect in the allotted time frame have been contacted.</p> <p>AK/IH thanked NHSE/I Comms team for deflecting the media calls to the Trust. It was noted that all media / press were no longer on site from Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July.</p> <p>All families affected have their own Family Liaison Officer.</p> <p>A help line was initially set up however no calls were received within 24 hours so a decision was made to stand this down, AK advised that The Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board have been notified as 25% of births at CoCH are Welsh.</p> <p>Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP):</p> <p>Avril Delaney (AD) advised the group that the suspect had 2 placements at CWP during the time frame being investigated.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>I&amp;S</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>I&amp;S</b></p>
Safeguarding implications	<p>Emma Taylor (ET) confirmed that she is the single point of contact for Cheshire West and Chester Council and will support the investigation where possible.</p> <p>ET notes that the LADO process will be adhered to and a meeting will take place following this meeting but a subsequent LADO meeting would not take place unless there was a significant change i.e. the suspect is charged.</p>
Communication & Media plan	<p>Caroline Radford (CR) advised that any potential witnesses are being directed to the Police.</p> <p>CR to link in with Police Comms.</p> <p>Any families who have been affected by the incident are being advised to contact BLISS.</p> <p>Police &amp; NHS Comms are monitoring all social media for threats or potential threats of acts of violence towards the suspect and their family .</p> <p>All staff at CoCH have been briefed regarding being approached by the media and they're use of social media.</p>

Family liaison & support	<p>AK &amp; AD are working together to support staff.</p> <p>Police have robust support systems and processes in place to support and protect the suspect and family as this is a high profile case. AD has offered 'FLOW' support to the police and families if this is required.</p>
Individual support	<p>To note ,the suspect is a member of staff and health and care support has been arranged to ensure the individual is supported during this investigation.</p>
Next steps & actions	<p>MK will continue to be the single point of contact for this group. Vince Connolly (VC) and MP will support.</p> <p>The group will meet again in 3 months' time (October 2018).</p>