
From: PATEL, Lesley (NHS ENGLAND) [Irrelevant & Sensitive]
Sent: Tue 05/07/2016 1:01:34 PM (UTC)
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Subject: Neonatal Services Serious Issues

Dear All

We have been made aware of some serious issues relating to the Countess of Chester Hospital Neonatal Services. I had a conversation with their Director of Nursing, Alison Kelly yesterday. A set of triplets were born at 34 weeks, well at birth, however two have now died and the third is currently in the care of the Liverpool Women's. These cases are with the coroner but are currently not on STEIS as of today.

The Unit was under some local scrutiny earlier in the year following an infection concern. A thematic review was undertaken 10 cases reviewed with no clinical issues identified. The Director of Nursing has confirmed that there are other issues coming to light now, that have not necessarily been reported, the recent deaths identify the Trust as an outlier.

The Trust were speaking with their CCG late yesterday and the network have met with the Trust to look at some immediate actions as follows:

- Downgrade unit to level 1: 34 weeks and above babies (3 cots less). An action plan is being developed by their clinicians
- External review of all aspects of the unit to include staff/ equipment/ pathways/ competency/ incidents reported

Whilst willing to support these steps temporarily this will put strain on an already pressured system in the Northwest. Spec comm Northwest are going to work with the network and other units to enable this bed reduction and the potential transfer issues that will arise. The Countess also has some work to do in order for the system to be assured regarding their internal governance within this speciality.

In the longer term Specialised Commissioning aim to accelerate a planned service review of Neonatal services in the Northwest to ensure a sustainable future.

I have discussed this with Margaret Kitching who has suggested that the DCO team coordinate an incident review meeting to look at the impact across Cheshire and Merseyside. I have spoken to NHSI

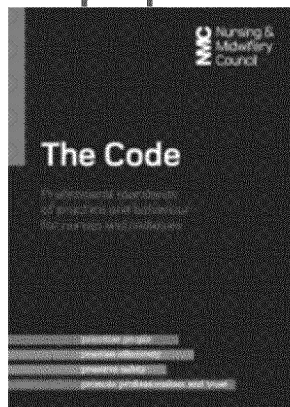
Nurse Director Gaynor Hales as she has been informed that the COCH are to issue a media statement regarding the above actions. Gaynor has agreed to discuss the next steps with the DCO team this afternoon via Clare Duggan and will let us know the outcome.

Kind regards

Lesley

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