

Report to: **East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)**

Date: **19th March 2009**

By: **Director of Law and Personnel**

Title of report: **Developing Maternity Services for East Sussex**

Purpose of report: **To summarise progress in relation to the development of maternity services in East Sussex.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

HOSC is recommended to:

- 1. Consider and comment on progress with implementing HOSC and IRP recommendations as summarised in appendices 1-3.**
 - 2. Support the direction of travel outlined in the Maternity Strategy (appendix 4)**
 - 3. Support the network approach to maintaining and developing obstetric services in both Eastbourne and Hastings (outlined in appendix 5)**
 - 4. Consider and comment on the draft engagement plan (appendix 6)**
 - 5. Request a further monitoring report in July 2009.**
-

1. Background

1.1 Following the outcome of the East Sussex Primary Care Trusts' (PCTs') consultation on the configuration of maternity and related services, HOSC agreed to undertake ongoing monitoring of progress. This has focussed on four areas:

- The maintenance of safe childbirth services in Eastbourne and Hastings pending the development of a long-term sustainable model.
- Progress on the development of a service model which would ensure the continuing provision of consultant-led childbirth, special baby care and inpatient gynaecology services at both hospitals.
- Progress on the development of a broader maternity strategy for East Sussex which would include enhancements to ante and post-natal care.
- The development and use of a 'maternity dashboard' which would provide a selection of data about maternity care to facilitate monitoring of quality and safety.

1.2 At the HOSC meeting on 27th November 2008, the Committee noted that new governance arrangements were being established to take forward work on maternity strategy, including the development of a model for childbirth services in Eastbourne and Hastings. These arrangements included a Maternity Services Development Panel and a Maternity Services Clinicians Forum. The HOSC Chairman had agreed to join the Development Panel as an independent observer and independent Chairs were being sought for both groups.

1.3 HOSC also heard that three main projects were already underway to develop ante and post natal care and these would be integrated into the maternity strategy. The projects are:

- The Family Nurse Partnership – a pilot programme offering intensive support to first time young mothers in the Hastings and St Leonards area.

- Geographical working for midwives – the restructuring of community midwifery to provide more locally accessible ante and post natal services.
- Perinatal mental health – the implementation of a perinatal mental health network across Sussex and the development of integrated care pathways to improve outcomes for women and their families.

1.4 The PCTs confirmed that a draft maternity strategy had been developed and would be taken forward through the new governance arrangements. An indicative timescale suggested that the maternity strategy and new model for childbirth services would be developed by the end of March 2009. Final decisions would be taken by a joint committee of the PCT Boards.

2. Progress update

2.1 The Maternity Services Development Panel and Clinicians Forum held their first meetings in January 2009 and Chairs have been appointed for each. Richard Hallett, Chair of the East Sussex Maternity Services Liaison Committee, chairs the Development Panel and Professor Robert Shaw of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists chairs the Clinicians Forum. The two groups have been working towards the development of a service model for childbirth and related services and a first iteration of a maternity strategy for East Sussex. **The attached appendices provide HOSC with an overview of progress to date:**

2.2 **Appendix 1** is the updated HOSC monitoring template. This lists HOSC Fit for the Future report recommendations which remain relevant, plus the recommendations of the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP). Against each recommendation is a reminder of the last reported status to HOSC (November 2008) and the latest status (March 2009). This enables HOSC to gain an overview of progress on developing maternity services.

2.3 **Appendix 2** is the latest version of the maternity indicators developed to help monitor the quality of care on an ongoing basis.

2.4 **Appendix 3** is an update on recruitment to the Family Nurse Partnership Programme, requested by HOSC in November 2008.

2.5 **Appendix 4** is the first iteration of a Maternity Strategy for East Sussex. This strategy focuses on maternity services on the basis that this is a prerequisite for sustainable inpatient gynaecology services and special care baby services. These services will as a minimum be maintained, but are expected to be enhanced by the new model of care. The strategy contains a short section on the service model for childbirth services. A more detailed paper describing the 'network model' of care is included as appendix 5 - this model is being used in other areas of England, most notably the East of England. The programme of work is also supported by a detailed project plan which is also available on the PCTs website. The document focuses on a high level vision and direction of travel for maternity care over the next 3 years, with particular emphasis on community services. The document will be considered by the PCT Boards at the end of March and **HOSC is invited to support this first iteration of the strategy in advance of the Boards' decision.**

2.6 **Appendix 5** is a paper outlining the principles of a network model of services. The Clinicians Forum has recommended that this forms the basis of a future model for childbirth services for East Sussex. The intention is for the Clinicians Forum and its sub-groups to further develop this model over the coming months and flesh out how it would work in practice. The focus is on networking between the two East Sussex hospitals and Brighton, which is the local tertiary unit. **HOSC is invited to support this network approach as the basis for developing a sustainable model for childbirth services in Eastbourne and Hastings.**

2.7 **Appendix 6** is the draft engagement plan prepared by the Development Panel. It outlines principles for future engagement and key audiences. It is based on the premise that existing groups and communication methods should be utilised wherever possible. **HOSC is invited to comment on the plan.**

3. Issues to consider

3.1 HOSC may wish to explore the following issues:

- How a network model can address issues such as increased consultant presence on labour wards, unplanned closures, and training and skills maintenance for doctors.
- How choice for women will be considered within the development of a network model.
- How the plans for community services will be progressed.
- Whether the strategy will address issues of health inequality.
- The timescales for implementation of changes to community services and implementation of a fully developed network model for childbirth services?
- Whether the engagement plan includes all the key audiences and main routes for communication and involvement.

ANDREW OGDEN
Director of Law and Personnel

Contact officer: Claire Lee Telephone: 01273 481327