



**West Kent
Clinical Commissioning Group**

Sevenoaks District Council

Scrutiny committee

Patient Transport Services

3 February 2015

Patient focused,
providing quality,
improving outcomes

Eligibility

- Patient Transport is provided in line with National eligibility criteria that requires the NHS to provide transport for patients requiring non-emergency care traditionally provided in a hospital:
 - Whose medical condition is such that require the support and skills of PTS staff on or after the journey and/or where it would be detrimental to the patient's condition or recovery if they were to travel by other means
 - Where the patient's medical condition impacts on their mobility to such an extent that they would be unable to access healthcare and/or where it would be detrimental to the patient's condition or recovery if they were to travel by other means
 - Recognised as a parent or guardian where children are being conveyed.
- Transport can also be provided for a patients escort or carer where their particular skills and/or support are needed.
- Patient transport is provided free of charge.
- Kent and Medway CCGs are required to commission Patient Transport Services for individuals registered with Kent and Medway GPs or, if not registered, who are resident (or homeless in Kent and Medway)

Background

- The contract for patient transport services (PTS) is hosted by NHS West Kent CCG on behalf of all Kent and Medway CCGs.
- Historically PTS services were provided by a range of providers in Kent and Medway.
- The previous PCT cluster re-procured the service in 2011/2012 and NSL Care Services were appointed as a new provider for the whole of Kent and Medway.
- Two months before contract go-live the commissioner discovered that they had failed to advise all bidders of an additional 100 staff who needed to be TUPEd to the new provider. Discussions were held with NSL who agreed to take on these staff, subject to the Commissioner paying the additional costs. These additional costs are c£0.6m per annum.
- NSL took over the contract in July 2013.

Contract performance

- Following implementation of the new contract in July 2013 it became clear that the mobilisation was running into difficulties. Patients were not being collected on time. This meant patients arriving late for appointments or trust not being able to discharge patients on time.
- NHS West Kent CCG worked with NSL to support the mobilisation and performance started to improve over the summer.

- However, by September it was clear that performance had plateaued at about 60 to 65% of contact KPIs and was not improving. Over the period September into October performance started to drift downwards.
- NSL were asked for a recovery plan and trajectory which they produced but failed to achieve.
- A review of activity showed that although actual activity compared to activity estimates included in the ITT and Contract were significantly different. Although total activity was comparable the profile was very different:
- As a consequence NSL were incurring significant additional costs hiring vehicles and crews to cover peaks in demand and were losing significant money on the contract. NSL sought to recover their losses from the CCGs.
- West Kent CCG briefed the NHS England Area team about the issues with NSL and contacted other commissioner across England who use NSL as a provider of PTS services. Whilst a number of other CCGs are having performance issues with NSL, none were of the scale experienced by Kent & Medway. It is also worth noting that other CCGs with other PTS providers are having similar performance issues to those experienced by Kent and Medway.
- Performance made some improvement in 2014 but has still not met the level required by contract Key Performance Issues. Performance is running between 70% and 80% of the required levels.
- Apart from the delays to patient journeys there are no other concerns about the quality of NSL's services.

CQC Report

- CQC inspected the PTS service in November 2013 and published their findings in January 2014; they inspected the service again in March 2014 and finally published this second report on 29th July. West Kent CCG has raised concerns with CQC about the delay in publishing the second report as the findings are now four month out of date.
- The report recognised that significant improvements had been made since the initial CQC visit in November 2013 and acknowledged that they had received lots of positive comments from staff and patients during the inspection.
- The first report issued following the November visit found that NSL had failed to meet 4 out of the 5 standards inspected. In two of the areas Enforcement Actions were taken (warning notices issued); in the other two areas Enforcement Actions were not taken, but CQC advised NSL that action was needed.
- The second report following the March visit found the actions required by the warning notices had been taken and that improvement had been made in all areas. However, the level of improvement was not sufficient and NSL was still failing to meet 3 out of 5 standards. The impact of the failures was deemed by CQC to be minor and no enforcement actions were taken.
- NSL have now tackled two of the three areas (recruitment and training). The key remaining issue relates to getting patient to and from hospital on time. These are the same concerns we are tackling through the contract and which are documented above.

Actions

- With the support of all Kent and Medway CCGs West Kent CCG has taken the following actions:
 - Requested NSL replace existing local management with a new local manager as we had lost confidence in the existing manager.
 - Brought in Alan Murray, an ex NHS Ambulance Trust CEO to review NSL's recovery plan and support the CCGs and NSL to turn performance around.
 - Negotiated a financial settlement for first six months (July – December 2013) to remove any risk of litigation or early contract termination. This settlement split the additional costs incurred by NSL 50/50 between commissioner and provider. The additional cost to the commissioner was £1m.
 - Re-based the contract based on accurate activity data. Additional costs to Kent and Medway CCGs are £1.6m per annum
 - Commenced work to re-procure a service as soon as the contract expires in July 2016. No contract extension will be given.