

Agenda Item 6

Supplement to Agenda Item 6

		THE HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LINCOLNSHIRE	
Boston Borough Council	East Lindsey District Council	City of Lincoln Council	Lincolnshire County Council
North Kesteven District Council	South Holland District Council	South Kesteven District Council	West Lindsey District Council

Open Report on behalf of Thames Ambulance Services Limited (TASL)

Report to	Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire
Date:	13 December 2017
Subject:	Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service for NHS Lincolnshire CCG – Thames Ambulance Service Limited (TASL)

Summary

Thames Ambulance Service Limited (TASL) was awarded the NHS contract for delivery of Non-Emergency Patient Transport for the four Lincolnshire CCGs following a competitive procurement process. The contract commenced on 1 July 2017 and is five year contract with potential extension of two further years. The contract covers all non-emergency patient transport journeys commissioned by the Lincolnshire CCGs.

Actions Required:

The Health Scrutiny Committee is asked:

- (1) To consider this report and the actions which TASL are taking to make the changes required to deliver the contract performance and to improve the patient experience of the service being provided.
- (2) To consider what future update reports the Committee would like to receive to enable oversight of the contract improvement requirements and future service delivery improvements around this non-emergency patient transport service.

1. Background

Thames Ambulance Service Limited (TASL) was awarded the NHS contract for delivery of Non-Emergency Patient Transport for the four Lincolnshire CCGs following a competitive procurement process. The contract commenced on 1 July 2017 and is five year contract with potential extension of two further years. The contract covers all non-emergency patient transport journeys commissioned by the Lincolnshire CCGs.

The contract is a block contract to cover activity between the hours 7.00 am and midnight Monday to Friday and weekends; and bank holidays between the hours of 7.00am and 8.00 pm. Journeys outside of these hours are included in the contract but are classified as Extra Contractual Journeys and paid for on a cost per journey basis. TASL currently undertake between 450 and 500 journeys per day.

The contracted service was mobilised (established) in a relatively short time frame. This involved the process of handover from the previous provider, NSL, the securing of vehicles and premises and TUPE processes.

Since the 'go live' of the service there has been significant noise around the performance of TASL in line with contract requirements with issues around journey planning, significant delays in answering calls and liaison with hospital services. This resulted in patients not arriving on time or being collected on time for appointments and patients not being collected in a timely manner on discharge. TASL accepts that this level of service has been far from acceptable. The service in Lincolnshire has been adversely affected by the distraction of management capacity to support the start of patient services in Leicestershire and TASL also accepts that this is not acceptable. The TASL Executive has agreed not to bid for any further work until performance in current TASL contracts is at the required level.

Since the commencement of the new contract there have been concerns that patient experience has not been controlled in a manner to enable appropriate feedback to patient complaints and concerns. TASL also acknowledge this issue.

The Lincolnshire CCGs issued a formal Contract Performance Notice on 17 November 2017. This was due to the fact that TASL reported non-achievement of each of its key contract performance targets in September 2017. Reported performance for October has deteriorated from the September position. This deterioration is a result of changes to Voluntary Car Driver arrangements, changes to the planning processes in the Lincoln control and data issues. In accordance with the contract TASL have submitted a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) to the CCGs and this is being worked to.

The RAP is being monitored via the Contract Management Board and on a weekly basis with meetings scheduled with Lincolnshire West CCG who are the lead commissioner. TASL are also attending system meetings in Lincolnshire to seek to provide assurance of improvement and robust delivery. This includes at the weekly Winter Task Force meetings which are in place to mobilise rapid actions in response to winter pressures.

An initial Quality Forum meeting is scheduled for Thursday 7 December 2017 to review the current patient complaints processes and agreement on next steps to ensure all patients receive feedback on their enquiry or complaint.

TASL have commenced an internal KPI trajectory expectation and this will be shared with the commissioners during the weekly meetings.

Following Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection visits to the TASL sites at Canvey Island, Grimsby and Scunthorpe, TASL have received a Section 29 Warning Notice from the CQC requiring immediate improvements in governance processes. TASL welcome scrutiny by CQC, accept the details in the notice and have submitted an action plan and evidence of changes being implemented to the CQC. TASL is waiting to hear whether the CQC has accepted the action plan.

TASL is committed to a long-term relationship with all of its commissioners and to providing the best possible service under the contract to patients in Lincolnshire. In response to the issues with the service in Lincolnshire TASL has implemented the following changes and will continue to work to the RAP with full delivery expected no later than February 2018:

- Appointment of a dedicated Interim Improvement Director with particular focus for booking and planning activities, started week commencing 13/11/17.
- Appointment of Quality & Clinical Advisor who commenced week commencing 30/10/17
- As from week commencing 20/11/17 call routing options have been implemented through the telephone booking system – options being 1 for new patient bookings, 2 for changes to bookings, 3 for Healthcare Professionals and 4 for Patient Experience.
- Additional permanent call centre staff have been appointed to replace temporary and agency staff, who have received specialised training. New staff started week commencing 27/11/17.
- Patient eligibility has been reinforced with all new bookings in-line with the Lincolnshire contract
- Creation of patient categorisation introduced to support priority patients who have regular bookings i.e. renal and oncology journeys and discharge journeys. Introduced week commencing 20/11/17.
- Introduction of on hospital site Patient Transit Coordinators (PTC's) working with the hospital teams to support patient discharges alongside dedicated discharge vehicles. Note PTC's based at Lincoln, Boston and Peterborough hospitals.
- Review of base locations incorporating vehicle and staff requirements, decision made to temporarily close the Heckington base and move staff to other bases.
- Staff rota reviews for different service models and recruitment commenced and new staff starting from week commencing 18/12/17.
- New staff training model introduced with ongoing supervisions and mentorship launched from week commencing 4/12/17
- Patient experience team decentralised as from week commencing 30/10/17 with a dedicated Patient Experience Officer appointed for Lincolnshire contract who starts week commencing 4/12/17.
- Local ownership and management of all patient complaints linking into Area Management teams to support service change requirements.
- Data capture controls have been put in place to input this data manually from Voluntary Car Drivers and any 3rd party contractor i.e. taxis

TASL are implementing a new management structure which commenced in August 2017 which has incorporated a regional devolution process enabling more local control. Unfortunately, due to ill health the Chief Executive Officer has recently resigned and so

external recruitment has commenced to replace. There is an interim Executive Board and Operational Board structure in place and additional support being given to the UK organisation from the European investors.

3. Consultation

This is not a consultation item

4. Appendices

Nothing attached

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Sue Flintham, Regional Director, TASL, who can be contacted on 07799 909397 or by email Sue.Flintham@thamesgroupuk.com