

# Agenda Item 8

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Dr Stephen Baird  
Chair and Clinical Lead  
Lincolnshire East CCG

County Offices  
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(via email)

18 October 2018

Dear Dr Baird

## **LOUTH COUNTY HOSPITAL INPATIENT SURVEY**

Set out below is the response of the Health Scrutiny Committee to the survey by Lincolnshire East CCG on in-patient provision at Louth County Hospital.

### Inpatient Options

At this stage, the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire is recording its preference for Option 2. This is based on the information so far presented by Lincolnshire East CCG.

The Committee accepts that the reduction from 50 beds that took place in June 2017 was for fire safety reasons and understands that was made on a temporary basis. As Option 2 includes a proposal for 20 beds (16 beds, plus 4 four flexible beds), the Committee would like to see the evidence that supports the rationale for a permanent reduction from 50 beds to 20 beds. For example, is the rationale based on the level of patient need, or is it for fire safety or staffing capacity reasons? With this additional information the Committee would be fully assured that Option 2 is the better choice. The Committee recommends that this additional information is made available in a report.

The Committee notes the developments at Louth County Hospital aim to ensure that "people have the right support to stay safely at home or are not unnecessarily admitted or re-admitted". The Committee supports this approach but would like assurance that the GP practices and community health services are able to provide the required health care and support to patients when they are discharged. This applies not only to Louth, but to the surrounding towns and villages, such as Alford,

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Mablethorpe, Saltfleet and Sutton on Sea. The Committee formally requests that the CCG make this information available.

### Arrangements for the Survey Period

The Health Scrutiny Committee notes that the CCG has stressed that the engagement with the public is a 'survey' rather than a consultation. The Committee understands that the NHS has a particular definition of consultation, which differentiates it from public engagement or a survey. Even so, good practice principles ought to be applied to a survey period as much as a consultation period.

The survey period was launched on 6 September with an initial closing date of 10 October. The dates for the engagement events were not available at the time of the launch on 6 September, and were subsequently arranged for 2 October (Louth) and 16 October (Skegness, subsequently changed to Mablethorpe). The Committee assumes that as one of these events was arranged to take place after the initial closing date, this was changed to 19 October. The Committee understands that the venue was changed from Skegness to Mablethorpe as Louth Hospital has more patients from Mablethorpe than Skegness.

The Committee would like to see public events planned and fixed at the time that any consultation or survey period begins. This would avoid any confusion and enable more members of the public to engage with the survey process. The Committee would like to have seen appropriately detailed evidence and supporting information issued with this survey. The Committee believes that a period of full consultation could address the Committee's concerns, which have been set out above.

### Other Services

The Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire notes that there are several other services provided at Louth County Hospital. For example, Lincolnshire Community Health Services provides the out of hours service and the 24/7 urgent care centre; and United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust provides a range of outpatient services, as well as day case surgery. As stated by Lincolnshire East CCG, Louth County Hospital is well used and liked by local people and clinicians. For the avoidance of doubt in the local community, the Health Scrutiny Committee would urge Lincolnshire East CCG continually to restate its commitment to the continuation of these important services in Louth.

### Louth Urgent Care Centre

Although not part of the inpatient survey, the Health Scrutiny Committee is aware of NHS England's drive to create a network of urgent treatment centres across the country, in accordance with a national specification. So far, the Committee understands that no definite plans have been developed in Lincolnshire, but would expect to see an urgent treatment centre established at Louth County Hospital, which in the Committee's view should operate 24/7, rather than open between 8am and 8pm, as indicated in the national guidance.

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### Views of East Lindsey District Council and Louth Town Council

Both East Lindsey District Council and Louth Town Council have put on record their views about Louth County Hospital. The Health Scrutiny Committee requests that the CCG responds to these views as part of its engagement with the local community.

### Future Provision

The Lincolnshire Sustainability and Transformation Plan (published in December 2016) referred to a proposal for between £25 million and £35 million of capital funding to support the remodelling of Louth County Hospital, including additional clinical services. Assuming this level of capital funding is made available, plans for any new build to replace the existing buildings in Louth would be supported. The Committee expects such substantial changes to Louth Hospital to be subject to full public consultation.

### Conclusion

The Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire requests that Lincolnshire East CCG provides information on the rationale for the selection of the number of beds in Option 2; and assurances that GP and community health services in Louth and the surrounding area are capable of providing the right care and support to assist patients in their homes. The Committee formally invites representatives from Lincolnshire East CCG to attend the Committee when the results of the survey are made available. At that point the Committee can advise whether consultation would be necessary.

Yours sincerely



**Councillor Carl Macey**  
**Chairman of the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire**

cc. Samantha Milbank, Accountable Officer, Lincolnshire East Clinical  
Commissioning Group  
Andrew Morgan, Chief Executive, Lincolnshire Community Health Services  
NHS Trust  
Jan Sobieraj, Chief Executive, United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust

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