Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills, the Director Responsible for Democratic Services

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<th>Report to</th>
<th>Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>21 May 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject:</td>
<td>New Review of Congenital Heart Services - Standards</td>
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**Summary:**

This report provides information on the draft standards for Congenital Heart Services, which are being developed as part of the New Review of Congenital Heart Services. It is understood that these standards will form the basis of the national consultation, which is anticipated during the summer of 2014.

**Actions Required:**

1. To note the standards being developed for the future commissioning of congenital heart services, in particular the two standards for:
   - the number of operations to be performed by a surgical centre each year; and
   - the number of operations to be performed by each surgeon.
1. Standards

Development of Draft Standards

NHS England's Clinical Advisory Panel, which supports the activities of the New Review of Congenital Services, has developed draft standards for three tiers of hospital services for congenital heart services. These standards have been developed in consultation with the relevant clinicians. The three tiers of services are:

- Specialist Congenital Heart Surgery Centres
- Specialist (Children's Cardiology/ Adults with Congenital Heart Disease) Centres
- Local (Children's Cardiology/ Adults with Congenital Heart Disease) Centres

The New Review is therefore defining the standards for all levels of service for congenital heart services.

This report is focusing on the standards for specialist congenital heart surgery centres, as a reduction in the number of these centres was an intention of the earlier Safe and Sustainable Review in 2011.

Standards for Surgical Centres

The full list of draft standards for the new review of congenital heart surgery sites is listed on the NHS England website at the following link:


The standards are grouped under the following headings:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Paediatric - Number of Standards</th>
<th>Adult - Number of Standards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specialist Surgical Centres</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiological Interventions</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Cardiac Surgery</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>External Relationships</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telemedicine and IT</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-Disciplinary Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Network Leadership</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing and Skills: Specialist Centres</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staffing and Skills: Surgery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staffing and Skills: Cardiology</td>
<td>13</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing and Skills: Intensive Care</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing and Skills: Nursing</td>
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<td>4</td>
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It is understood that these standards will form the basis of the national public consultation exercise, which is anticipated during the summer of 2014.

This report highlights two standards

- the number of surgeons required at each surgical centre; and
- the number of operations performed each year by each surgeon.

The Number of Surgeons Required at a Surgical Centre

The Safe and Sustainable review identified that surgeons should work in teams of at least four to ensure resilient 24/7 service delivery with a reasonable work-life balance. Not all paediatric units have four surgeons. A report to the Clinical Advisory Panel states that teams of four surgeons would ensure:

- availability of a team of surgeons with a range of skills to be able to deal with the great majority of congenital heart surgery and concentration of expertise;
- coverage of all activities during the working day;
- enhances training, mentorship and succession planning: four surgeons in a group allows for dual consultant operating and a process of professional development; and
- most surgeons would prefer a 1:4 rota which will give a better work-life balance. Patients are entitled to receive their care from a surgeon who is fresh enough to give of his/her best. Taking account of annual leave, research commitments, conference attendance and so on, each surgeon is available to participate in the on-call rota for approximately 42 weeks per year. On a 1 in 3 rota there would therefore be 30 weeks of the year
when one of the surgeons was unavailable and the others were therefore working a 1 in 2 rota. This is not considered acceptable.

Following discussions with surgical representatives, the chairmen of the two standards groups developed the following standard, which has been presented to and discussed by the review's clinician group and the Clinical Reference Group. The draft standard states:

A Consultant Congenital Cardiac Surgeon must not partake in an on-call rota more frequent than 1:4 (requiring a minimum of four surgeons). In centres with three surgeons, there will be the potential for commissioners to agree a 1 in 3 rota for a defined period while working towards a 1 in 4 rota.

Number of Operations Performed by a Surgeon

Safe and Sustainable set a standard that each surgical centre should deliver at least 400 paediatric operations annually, sensibly divided between the four surgeons. The Adults with Congenital Heart Disease standards included a standard that each surgeon should undertake at least 125 operations per year (paediatric or adult).

The following standard has been developed, which all surgeons now support and some surgeons believe should be the absolute minimum:

Congenital cardiac surgeons must be the primary operator in a minimum of 125 congenital heart operations per year (in adults and/or paediatrics), averaged over a three-year period. Only auditable cases may be counted, as defined by submission to the National Institute for Cardiovascular Outcomes (NICOR).

2. Conclusion

The Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire is requested to note the standards being developed for the future commissioning of congenital heart services, in particular the two standards for:

- the number of operations to be performed by a surgical centre each year; and
- the number of operations to be performed by each surgeon.

3. Consultation

This is not a consultation item. However, a national consultation is expected during the summer of 2014 on the New Review of Congenital Heart Services.

4. Appendices - None
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 Simon Evans, who can be contacted on 01522 553607 or simon.evans@lincolnshire.gov.uk