

# Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Update

Mobilisation of the Chorley  
Emergency Department and Urgent  
Care Centre

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# Background

- The Emergency Department at Chorley District General Hospital was temporarily closed in April 2016 due to an inability to have safe staffing levels
- An urgent care centre operated following the temporary closure. This opened on April 18 2016 and ran from 8am till 8pm.
- An independent review was undertaken to consider the future of the service.

# Independent Review – Key Findings

An NHS England and NHS Improvement independent review was undertaken in 2016, and the key findings were as follows;

*“having the emergency department reopened at the same time as the opening of the new 24 hour urgent care centre, integrating the two services will provide additional resilience. This is an opportunity to enable the service to reopen without compromising patient safety.”*

*“it would not be practical or safe to open the department before then, because it could require staff to work excessive hours, and would compromise the major trauma centre at Preston”*

*“Isn’t feasible to reopen on a 24 hour a day basis”*

# Current Situation

- As of 18 January 2017, a new urgent care service opened at Chorley, operated by Go to Docs, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It brought extra staff, and provides appropriate care and treatment for many patients - minor but urgent illnesses and injuries, such as fractures, sprains, dislocations and minor head, chest and back injuries, which frees up the emergency department staff to deal with people with life-threatening emergencies
- At the same time, the Emergency Department at Chorley District General Hospital reopened 12 hours a day from 8am till 8pm.
- We are continuing to work on recruitment for the department to ensure a full staffing quota. The CQC report in April 2017 noted that *'Medical staffing was a significant challenge to the trust which was clearly recognised and plans were in place to improve the recruitment of relevant medical staff.'*

# Recruitment Issues - July 2017

- Middle grade doctors position
  - 17 middle grade doctors are required to staff Royal Preston Hospital 24 hours a day and Chorley District General Hospital 08:00- 22:00 hours a day
  - There are a total of 6.2 whole time equivalent vacancies plus additional shifts
  - We have 5 locums currently working in the department
  - Since April 2016, we have interviewed 43 candidates – and made 22 offers of which 3 accepted, 1 has started and 2 are due to start in August 2017. From the remaining, 4 are awaiting passing the international English language tests and 15 have withdrawn for various reasons including location, change in circumstances etc.

# Recruitment Issues - July 2017

- Junior doctors position
  - 22 Junior doctors are required to staff Royal Preston Hospital 24 hours a day and Chorley District General Hospital 08:00- 22:00 hours a day
  - There have been significant shortages on the junior rota since February 2017 rotation with between February and August the department having 10.6 gaps. The position will change at the next rotation on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August and the staffing following this date is below.
  - There are a total of 4.4 whole time equivalent vacancies
  - We are under significant pressure due to large numbers of vacancies and have become dependant on locum doctors
  - We have 3 agency locums working in the department
  - Recruitment – we have made 7 offers to international candidates, 3 through NHS jobs and are working on bank contracts

# Agency Locums

- There are currently 5 middle grade agency locums and 3 junior doctor locums
- Issues with locums;
  - unexpected loss of staff (e.g. 4 left in June and this resulted in 230 essential shifts vacant which had to be managed through a variety of means which are unsustainable, such as existing staff being spread thinner across both sites, ad hoc locums covering many of the shifts, other grades of staff acting down, nurse clinicians working junior shifts and doctors working additional hours after their shifts have finished)
  - cancelled shifts (141 since February)
- Cost of temporary staffing – 1.8m in 2016/17. Overtime/bank work – 0.3m in 2016/17.

# Key Messages

- The current model of delivery for emergency care services in Central Lancashire is unsustainable on safety, workforce, patient experience and financial grounds
- The Trust is looking to providing sustainable services for the future through working at a Lancashire & South Cumbria level (STP) and at a Central Lancashire level via Our Health, Our Care (LDP)
- In the interim the Trust is committed to developing innovative workforce solutions to ensure patient safety and the optimal service within the current resource limitations. These solutions include:
  - Innovative recruitment methodologies
  - Expanding our non-medical work force
  - Ensuring viable alternatives to ED for patients / maximising patient flow in the hospital / reducing delays in discharge ( A&E delivery board)