

## Appendix A

### LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

#### COMMENTS ON THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS OF LEICESTER NHS TRUST QUALITY ACCOUNT FOR 2020/21

JUNE 2021

The Leicestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee thanks UHL for the opportunity to comment on the Quality Account for 2019/20. The Committee recognises that due to the Covid-19 pandemic it has been an exceptionally difficult year for the NHS and particularly UHL, and thanks all UHL staff for their commitment and dedication during this difficult period.

The Committee is of the view that the Quality Account gives a detailed and thorough assessment of the quality of services offered by UHL and the improvements that have been made during the year. The Committee welcomes the candour of the Account where it recognises that UHL has struggled to maintain consistently high standards of quality and performance. The Committee has particular concerns about the ongoing issue with ambulance 4 hour waiting targets being failed during 20/21, the growth in waiting lists for non-urgent treatment and also the growth in diagnostic waiting times.

In some areas, however, the Quality Account could go further and provide more detail. For example, whilst the Quality Account acknowledges the impact of Covid-19 on the performance of the Trust, insufficient emphasis is given to the large number of elected medical procedures which had to be postponed due to the pandemic. The Trust's performance against the cancer metrics has been a concern of the Committee for some time now but the Quality Account does not mention that some elective cancer treatment has been provided by private providers during the pandemic. Nevertheless, it is reassuring to learn from the Quality Account the actions that are being taken to ensure cancer and urgent care positions are recovered.

The Quality Account refers to the daily high number of patients in the Leicester Royal Infirmary Emergency Department but the Committee's understanding is that at the beginning of the pandemic there were less attendances at the Emergency Department for non-Covid related reasons. Therefore, the Quality Account would benefit from greater clarification on how the public's adherence to requests not to attend hospital unless it was urgent, impacted on footfall and the challenges of patient flow which the Quality Account states were exacerbated by Covid. It is reassuring that UHL continues to work with partners across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to improve the quality of care provided on the emergency care pathway

At the beginning of the pandemic Committee members became aware of concerns raised by patients and families regarding the impact Covid-19 was having on the accuracy of some performance data, for example it was noted that some families of

deceased persons had complained that Covid19 was recorded as the cause of death on the death certificate when they believed it was not the true cause. The Committee would be interested to know whether these issues have been resolved.

The Committee is aware that visiting for patients has been restricted due to Covid-19 and commends UHL for the initiatives detailed in the Account which help maintain communications between patients and their families.

The Quality Account states that UHL has been transparent about the financial challenges it faces but the Account makes no mention of the UHL Trust Board's decision not to agree the 2019/20 annual accounts as 'true and fair'. The Committee is of the view that the issues with UHL's accounts could have a significant impact on public confidence in UHL's performance overall and therefore deserves acknowledgement in the Account.

The Quality Account refers to the work of the Mental Health Liaison Team located at the Emergency Department and this initiative is welcomed by the Committee. The Committee considered this topic in detail at our meeting in January 2021 and learnt that the Team has a target to see patients within 1 hour of referral. The Committee would be interested to find out how well the Team is performing against this target.

The Committee has been concerned about the wellbeing of UHL staff during the pandemic and welcomes the variety of methods outlined in the Account which enable staff to raise issues of concern. Further updates on work ongoing to ensure the welfare of staff would be welcomed.

The Committee notes that UHL has not been inspected by the Care Quality Commission since the autumn of 2019, and given the events that have taken place since that time, limited weight can be placed on the overall rating of "Good" which UHL has as a result of that inspection. However, it is pleasing that UHL's Infection Prevention and Control procedures were reviewed by the CQC in August and September 2020 and found to be appropriate. The Committee also notes that UHL is now deemed to be compliant with the Section 29A warning notice issued by CQC in February 2020 in relation to Emergency Services but the Quality Account does not explain how it became compliant and what measures have been put in place to prevent further warning notices being issued. This information would be useful.

Going forward the Committee notes that UHL will increasingly work as an integral part of the new Integrated Care System structure and the Committee looks forward to scrutinising this partnership working over the coming years.

The Committee is aware of UHL's acute and maternity reconfiguration plans which have been consulted on over the last year and will be interested to see the impact the plans have on quality and performance but recognises that it will be some years before the plans come to fruition.

In conclusion, the Committee would like to thank UHL for presenting a clear Quality Account and, based on the Committee's knowledge of the provider, is of the view that the Quality Account is accurate subject to the comments made above.



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