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Maternity services to get independent review

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Maternity services to get independent review

Posted on Wednesday 12th November 2014

An independent review of Cumbria's maternity services gets under way next week with a fact-finding visit from a team of experts.

Ensuring top quality maternity services is a priority for NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Along with Lancashire North CCG, it has invited the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists to undertake a review of maternity services in Cumbria and the Morecambe Bay area.

The Royal College will provide independent, objective, expert clinical advice, to support the local NHS in making the best decisions.

The review team, headed up by Dr. Anthony Falconer, retired consultant Obstetrician at Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust and former President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, will visit maternity units in Barrow, Whitehaven, Carlisle, Penrith, Kendal and Lancaster on November 18, 19 and 20.

The review team is tasked with hearing as many views as possible while gathering evidence for its review. Clinical consultants, midwives, GPs, health service managers, paramedics, members of the public and representatives of maternity service users will be among a wide range of people whose opinion will be sought.

NHS Cumbria CCG medical director Dr David Rogers said: "This essential independent review will help inform our commissioning intentions for Cumbria's maternity services. The review will give us guidance on the best arrangement of services to deliver the safest and best service possible.

"The CCG has made it clear that it wishes to see consultant-led maternity services in Whitehaven and Barrow providing they can be delivered safely and sustainably."

The review team is expected to report back to the CCG's early in the New Year.

The review will consider the best way to provide maternity services across each of Cumberland Infirmary Carlisle, West Cumberland Hospital, Penrith Community Hospital, Furness General Hospital, Westmorland General Hospital and Royal Lancaster Infirmary. No decisions have been made about any potential changes to maternity services.

The Royal College will provide a report from the review, which is not expected until early 2015. At that stage NHS Cumbria CCG and Lancashire North CCG will work with the Hospital Trusts to determine the best course of action.

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