



**North Tees and Hartlepool**  
NHS Foundation Trust

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21<sup>st</sup> July 2020

**Private and confidential;**

Jennifer Metcalfe  
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Dear Jennifer

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the report's findings. North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust are committed to providing excellent care and service to our service users and the Organisation welcomes the opportunity to comment on the feedback from the Healthwatch Stockton report 'Living with Covid-19 Public Engagement- April-June 2020'. We would like Healthwatch to consider the following responses on behalf of the trust, for services provided by North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust:

Recommendation	Actions
1. North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust to consider providing residents with health and wellbeing guides. The guides in booklet format can be delivered through the post to residents homes.	<p>North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust is happy to work in conjunction with our partners to provide public health and mental health signposting throughout the Stockton-on-Tees area. Mental Health services are provided in conjunction with Tees, Esk and Wear Valley (TEWV) NHS Trust. The North Tees and Hartlepool website provides signposting to Self-help guides and support available via the TEWV website. Health and Wellbeing services are a public health function and the trust works cooperatively with the council and CCG.</p> <p>The Trust Psychiatric Liaison team have produced booklets aimed to provide similar forms of information and helpful advice and guidance during the peak of the crisis and into recovery. However, we have made clear on all of these the link to the TEWV recovery college for information as well as numbers for psychological services and CRISIS teams.</p>

	<p>The Trust is reviewing the communications plan for sharing of the document in line with the trust communications requirements. The booklet is available on SharePoint and staff could provide these to patients and others as needed. The booklet was also sent via an email contact at the CCG to cascade for community healthcare workers not employed by the Trust and those in care homes and opened up our helpline to them as well.</p> <p>The trust is committed to delivering robust signposting to mental health support and working in conjunction with mental health services. Work within this area is ongoing with the Trust Psychiatric Liaison team, Clinical Governance, communications and our external Organisations.</p>
<p>2. Those delivering health and social care services need to make it clear why appointments, treatments and service provisions are being cancelled.</p>	<p>The Trust continues its committed to providing safe, effective care and quality care for all of our patients, due to the ongoing pressures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the trust is taking all necessary steps to keep disruption for patients to an absolute minimum and maintain the quality of care for our patients.</p> <p>As the Chief Medical Officer advised, routine NHS services inevitably came under pressure as the coronavirus spread. The NHS has well-established escalation protocols to respond to situations such as this and hospitals were advised on what steps they could take at a local level. This included the need to reschedule some appointments.</p> <p>All patients who had appointments cancelled or rescheduled were contacted by letter from the department responsible highlighting why the decision had been taken to cancel or rearrange their appointments. The trust also provided an apology to these patients and empathised with the frustration patients may feel.</p> <p>The trust is continuing to review all patients with clinically urgent conditions and symptoms via telephone, video consultation and face-to face where appropriate.</p> <p>The trust is continuing to recovery plan for restarting routine appointments and will contact patients as required.</p>
<p>3. Services need to be in regular contact with all women receiving antenatal and postnatal care.</p>	<p>North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust follow the national guidance from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Royal College of Midwives and NHS England. Maternity care is being delivered following NICE guidance either virtually or by face to face contact. All women have hand held notes which contain contact details for their named midwife/hospital.</p> <p>The trust has a dedicated support/advice line for all women to contact if they have any concerns regarding themselves or their baby. The contact number for this is provided to women at the point of booking.</p>

	<p>North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust has commenced recovery of the maternity services and are introducing more face-to-face contacts in line with the national guidance. Limitations are included in the number of people who are able to be present at each appointment, however reasonable adjustments are made for those women who require family or carer support.</p>
<p>4. Maternity services to promote and encourage the use of mental health support services and information and guidance to support mothers and those who are expecting with their mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>The Trust has updated the document 'Maternity Care During Coronavirus; Information for Service users' to represent the ongoing changing guidance. The updated document is attached to this letter for your review. Within the document there are multiple links for women to access mental health self-help guides produced by the mental health trust who provide services regionally.</p> <p>All women at booking have a mental health questionnaire undertaken and acted upon if required, the trust utilises a GAD-7 methodology to assess if women require further support or referral. This is revisited during the antenatal period and early postpartum and services are engaged and referral made if indicated.</p> <p>All women are asked routinely at all contacts whether virtual or face to face about their emotional and mental health. Community midwives refer or guide the women to resources as required. This is documented in the patients notes.</p>

In summary, we would like to reiterate our thanks to the Healthwatch team for the time invested in undertaking this important piece of work and we have noted the recommendations. It is extremely useful to receive feedback to enable us to improve and enhance our services and we look forward to working closely with the team in the future.

Yours sincerely

Julie Lane

Chief Nurse/Director of Patient Safety and Quality

On behalf of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust