

NHS England's Congenital Heart Disease Programme: an update

Board Decision

On 23 July 2015 the board of NHS England considered the final report of the new Congenital Heart Disease (CHD) review which described the conclusions of the review, based on the six objectives which were set.

The full report¹ can be found [here](#) with a video of the NHS England Board meeting [here](#).

The board agreed all the recommendations made by the review. Specifically, the board:

- agreed the proposed model of care and service standards and specifications
- agreed the proposals relating to earlier diagnosis and improvements in information
- noted the analysis of the required service capacity
- agreed proposals for commissioning the service and for implementation, including monitoring and management of adherence to the standards

The board's decision brings to a close two years of review and means that the standards and specifications against which NHS England will commission the service from 2016/17 have now been agreed.

New leadership

The board meeting also marks the point where responsibility for the work moves from one part of NHS England to another, and John Holden, who has led the work over the past two years, ceases to be involved. In his place the programme has a new senior responsible officer (SRO), Will Huxter. Will has been involved with the work on CHD for some time, as part of the previous programme board, and so is well placed to take over. He has a wealth of experience from existing and previous roles, and is currently the Regional Director of Specialised Commissioning (London), and Chair of the Women & Children's Programme of Care Board. Prior to joining NHS England in June 2014, Will worked in a range of commissioning roles within the NHS, and for five years at an NHS Trust. He has also spent eight years working in the voluntary sector.

¹ Please note: The full pack, with appendices, runs to over 300 pages. The main board paper, which is the first item in the pack, is a more manageable 30 pages.

Congenital Heart Disease Commissioning & Implementation Programme



Continuity is also provided by Michael Wilson who remains the Programme Director and is supported by his team.

New programme

NHS England has now established a new programme - the CHD Commissioning and Implementation Programme - to implement its board's decision. We are a commissioning organisation so commissioning will be our main tool to achieve this.

A new programme board has been established which officially received handover from the review at its first meeting on 9 September 2015. As before the programme board's papers will be published on the NHS England website.

The programme board reports to NHS England's Specialised Commissioning Oversight Group (SCOG) and board level oversight is provided by the Specialised Commissioning Committee (SCC).

Continued commitment to communication and engagement

We expect to continue our very active programme of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders including patients and their representatives, clinicians, the organisations providing CHD care, local government and Healthwatch, MPs and members of the House of Lords.

We will continue to communicate with stakeholders through a regular blog, now written by Will Huxter. The contact details to reach the programme team still remain the same: england.congenitalheart@nhs.net. Those who have opted to receive blog updates will continue to receive notifications from this mail box.

Working with hospitals

Clinicians and hospital managers have been considering how their CHD services might work together in future as networks, to deliver the new standards. Chris Hopson, CEO of NHS Providers, has facilitated a number of discussions for this group. That work is continuing, and in October NHS England will be taking stock of progress by asking for submissions describing the emerging proposals. This process will inform NHS England's thinking about the appropriate commissioning process. We will feedback to providers later in November 2015.