

Paper 4: Email regarding breast screening services for people in Rutland, and UHL response

From: Tracey Allan-Jones
Sent: 22 October 2020
To: Brown Rebecca - Acting Chief Executive
Cc: Janet Underwood

Subject: Breast Screening services for Rutland

Dear Rebecca

Healthwatch Rutland has recently heard from two women that there is currently no breast screening available in Rutland. Although we understand there is a mobile unit operating in Melton Mowbray, these Rutland women were directed to the Leicester hospitals for their routine mammogram. So, instead of a 5-15 mile journey to Melton, Rutland women must travel 20-35 miles, depending on their place of residence and whether they are offered Leicester General Hospital or Glenfield Hospital.

Are you able to confirm if there indeed is currently no mobile service in Oakham, and if not, advise what the plans are to resume its visits to Rutland Memorial Hospital?

In the interim, we suggest that accessibility to the service could be improved for Rutland women, if the call handlers were to offer the Melton Mowbray service to Rutland residents as one of their choices for a mammogram appointment.

Best wishes
Tracey

Tracey Allan-Jones
Healthwatch Manager



Healthwatch Rutland
The King Centre, Main Road, Barleythorpe, Oakham, LE15 7WD
01572 720381

Response: 06/11/2020

To: Tracey Allan-Jones
CC: Brown Rebecca - Acting Chief Executive; Wightman Mark - Director of Strategy and Communications ; Korol Serina - General Manager

Dear Tracey

Thank you for your email and please accept our sincere apologies for the delay in responding to you. From discussion with the Breast Screening service we are now in a position to respond to your concerns.

The breast screening service was paused in March in response to the COVID pandemic. This was based on the need to ensure the safety of both our staff and the women who were invited for breast screening. This action has meant that we have a backlog of women, who are delayed their screening appointment.

In response to the pandemic NHS England & Improvement (NHSEI) and regional public health commissioning teams and Public Health England (PHE) set up a task and finish group to support breast screening services to restore and recover in a consistent and safe way.

I am sure you can appreciate Covid-19 has presented challenges to the way, and rate at which, our breast screening service operates. A huge amount of work has taken place by the service to ensure we are able to continue to offer screening on mobile facilities in terms of agreement on appropriate infection control measures and the ability of manufacturers to deliver timely modification requirements.

Aligning to national guidance the priority for the service has been to recommence screening for the women who had previously been invited but not screened. In order for the service to continue to adhere to national guidance it has meant the mobile unit at Oakham needed to be reallocated.

The service continues to determine strategies for dealing with the unprecedented backlog, which operationally has required careful consideration of how and where women are invited to attend. To ensure an equitable service across LLR, the service continues to be able to offer the women of Oakham a screening appointment, but appreciate and acknowledge travelling to the LGH is less geographically favourable for the women living in Oakham.

Unfortunately the service at this current time is unable to offer Oakham women appointments at the mobile unit at Melton this is due to the size of the immediate backlog in Melton. The service are planning to return the mobile to Oakham, but it is unclear when this will be.

The service continues to follow national guidance and engages with NHSE and PH commissioners.

We do hope that the above answers your concerns, however please do not hesitate to contact us should you need any further information.

Mandy
Mandy Johnson
Executive Assistant to Chairman & Chief Executive
On behalf of Rebecca Brown

University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust
0116 258 8940