

Division of Women's and Children's Services

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23rd June 2016

Dear parents and carers

We are expecting a number of independent reports and findings about services in the Bristol Royal Hospital for Children to be published in June.

It is important to us that, as a family using, or about to use, our services you have confidence in our services and access to all the reports and information that is published. We want to make sure that you know where to find further information and support if you have any questions or concerns. This letter includes some further information about the reports in question and details of how you can talk to us, your local clinicians, and independent support groups.

A full list of the reports we are expecting is provided here and on our website (<http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/>), and we will post the reports and our responses to them on our website as they are published. These include:

- An independent investigation into our management response to allegations about staff behaviours related to the death of a baby at Bristol Children's Hospital in April 2015 – produced by Verita, an organisation that specialises in conducting independent investigations. In addition, the inquest into this baby's death is due to be heard in mid-June.
- An independent audit and review of the medical records of a sample of children who were in our care between January 2012 and December 2014 for surgical treatment for heart conditions they were born with. The review has been carried out by the Care Quality Commission, the health service's national quality regulator.
- The Independent Review of children's heart services in Bristol, led by Eleanor Grey QC, which was commissioned following complaints about our services by a number of families whose children we cared for between 2010 and 2014.

In addition to these reports, the Parliamentary Health Services Ombudsman has been reviewing two cases where children sadly died at our hospital. We will study all these reports in detail, with the clinical team and, we hope, with the help of families throughout the region, to ensure that we learn from the experience of the families involved.

We care deeply about providing the right care to every child and looking after and involving their families in the right way. We are very sorry that this has not been every family's experience and that there has been reason to review our service in such detail. We do expect there to be things that we could have done differently, and recommendations for our hospital. We are determined to learn from the reports' findings and work with our clinical teams, young people and families to continue to make improvements to our services.

Outcomes in our children's heart service are routinely audited by the National Congenital Heart Disease Audit report. The most recent report was published in April 2016, using data from the 2015 calendar year. This showed that we had delivered good clinical results for children, despite the growing complexity of the conditions we treat. You can look at the report via their website:

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/nicor/audits/congenital/documents/annual-reports/NCHDA2012-15>

You can also look at the following website for more information on the statistics and what they mean. This website has been developed by doctors and scientists involved in children's heart services; it is independent of the NHS and the UK Department of Health.

<http://childrenshearturgery.info/intro>.

Our services for children and young people were inspected in September 2014 by the Care Quality Commission and assessed as good overall. The full report can be viewed at <http://www.cqc.org.uk/location/RA7C1>

If you or your child have any questions and/or would like to talk further to us or your local teams, there are a number of options available to you:

If you or your child/young person would like to talk to us about any of our services:

In hospital, you may like to speak to:

- Your ward nurse
- The nurse in charge
- The ward sister
- The ward matron

If your child is an outpatient you may like to speak to:

- Your clinical team via the consultants secretary
- Your nurse specialist
- Your community paediatrician or GP

If you need help finding the right people to talk to you or your child and answer your questions, you can contact the hospital LIAISE team. You can telephone between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday on 0117 342 7444

If you have queries specifically regarding cardiac services or you would like to talk about your child's cardiac care:

To help you find the right person to answer your questions, you can contact:

- The Cardiac Nurse Specialist team
Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm
They are also available on Saturday 2nd July and Sunday 3rd July following the publication of the Independent Review of Children's Heart Services Report.
- Our LIAISE team are also available to you on our dedicated phone line , 10am to 5pm,

0117 342 8286


0117 342 7444

Monday to Friday	
Local and National Support Groups	
Heart Families South West	https://m.facebook.com/HeartFamiliesSouthWest/ http://www.heartfamilies.org.uk/
Little Heart Matters	0121 455 8982 https://www.lhm.org.uk/
Children's Heart Federation	0808 808 5000 http://www.chfed.org.uk/
South West Children's Heart Circle	0870 125 2307 http://www.heartcircle.org/

We recognise that much of the further information we have signposted you to within this letter is via the internet. If you do not have easy access to the internet but are interested in any of the information referred to here, please get in touch with us via our LIAISE team (contact details above). We will do our best to help you access this information in alternative formats.

Finally, we would like to reassure you that throughout this period of heightened media coverage, our focus remains on caring for you and your child. Please contact us if there is any further support that you need and we will do our best to help you.

Yours faithfully



Bryony Strachan
Clinical Chair
Women's and Children's Services