

Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

8th June 2021

New 'NHS East and South East London Pathology Partnership'

Item No

7

OUTLINE

The issue of pathology services at the Homerton hospital and the need to respond to national changes to pathology provision has come up regularly over the past few years. In January 2020 the Commission last discussed the matter with the CE of the Homerton who described the plans for a new Pathology Partnership with Barts Health. Members asked for assurances that the autonomy Homerton and the quality of the service locally would be protected in the new proposed collaboration with Barts Health.

On 1 May 2021, the pathology services of three London NHS Trusts came together to form the **NHS East and South East London Pathology Partnership**. The new organisation, jointly owned by Barts Health NHS Trust, Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust will be one of the largest pathology providers in the NHS. Here is the press announcement from Barts Health who are the lead <https://www.bartshealth.nhs.uk/news/new-pathology-partnership-forms-to-serve-the-population-of-east-and-south-east-london-and-beyond-10606>

The partnership will operate laboratories across seven hospital sites: Homerton University Hospital, Newham Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Royal London Hospital, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, University Hospital Lewisham and Whipps Cross Hospital, with the Royal London as the hub.

We noted that a series of service changes are planned for the partnership, so that by Dec 2023 all laboratories will operate as a single network, on a single, shared laboratory information management system.

Since then, the HSJ has reported on 23 April that NHSE had just issued guidance on new diagnostic imaging networks:

"New diagnostic imaging networks will be of such scale that they will be 'significant operation businesses in their own right' and will 'need a distinct identity and arm's length separation from the trusts', NHS England has said".

<https://www.hsj.co.uk/commissioning/commercial-partners-could-take-over-entirety-of-planned-imaging-networks/7029943.article>

The Commission has asked:

Tracey Fletcher, CE of HUHFT/ ICP Lead for City and Hackney/ Chair of the Neighbourhood Health and Care Board for City and Hackney,

to attend to answer questions on how the new partnership is progressing, the impact on jobs and on turn-around times particularly for local GPs and the implications for Hackney of NHSE's moves to make diagnostic imaging networks into separate entities.

Also present will be:

Dr Vinay Patel, Local GP/Chair of City & Hackney Local Medical Committee
Dr Mark Rickets, Local GP/CCG Clinical Chair for City and Hackney
Siobhan Harper, Director of CCG Transition for City and Hackney
Cllr Chris Kennedy, Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care and Leisure.

Attached please find a copy of the Barts Health news release and the HSJ story on the wider national issue.

ACTION

The Commission is requested to give consideration to the briefing.