

Pathology services Community Diagnostic Centres

Briefing to Southend-on-Sea City Council
People Scrutiny Committee

Single pathology service operating model

Background

- Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust currently has differing models of pathology service provision across our hospitals
- Pathology First, a commercial joint venture between the Trust and Synlab, was established in 2014 and provides pathology services in Basildon and Southend
- We have an in-house laboratory service at Broomfield Hospital
- Since the Trust's merger in 2020 we have sought to align these two service models better, but there are limits compared to full-service consolidation.

A single pathology service model

- The Trust has made a commitment to establish a single integrated pathology service model across our hospitals. This is consistent with national policy from NHS England
- This follows recommendations drawn from research by Lifecycle, a specialist independent management consultancy, with key clinical stakeholders
- Having a single service will support our wider Integrated Care System by offering:
 - Better value for money
 - A more joined-up service that benefits patient experience
 - Simplification of the model across mid and south Essex.
- This will not change where patients access tests, and there will continue to be a variety of pathology services in the community and acute hospitals.

Stakeholder engagement

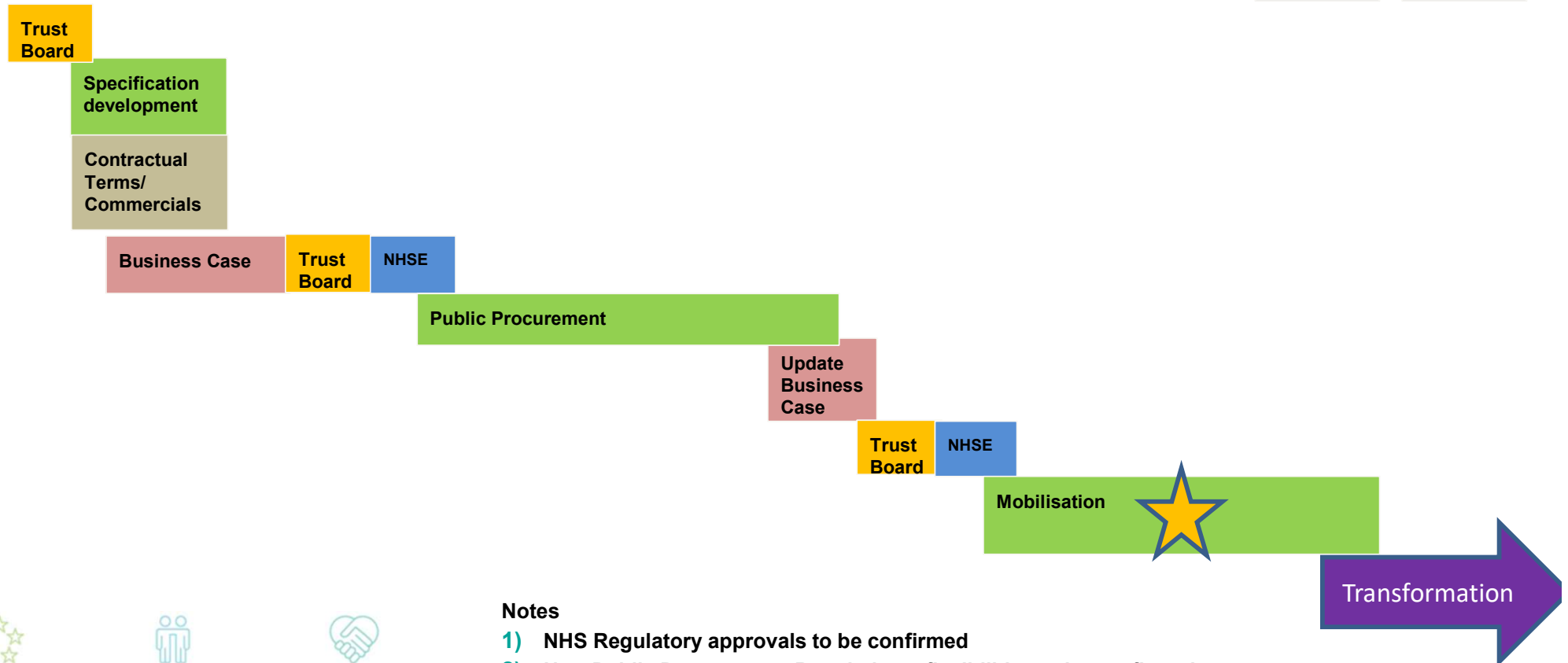
- We are now engaging with stakeholders, including:
 - Clinical teams at our Trust
 - The ICS
 - Primary care and community providers
 - Patient representatives including the three Healthwatch organisations.
- We also have shared a survey at phlebotomy clinics for service users
- We are keen to ensure staff are supported during this period and we hope they continue to support the service in this new operating model
- The risks of staffing losses, increased staff turnover and its potential impact on service performance have been identified, and mitigations put in place
- These include arranging staff-side conversations, regular briefing sessions with affected staff, and the opportunity to shape the new pathology service.

Next steps

- We intend to take a full business case to our Trust Board for approval by late Spring. If approved, this then enables the launch of a competitive market engagement process in June 2023, with the aim of completing this by spring 2024. We then aim to move to a new integrated service by the end of 2024.

Future Programme Dates

| 2022 | 2023 | | | | 2024 | | | | 2025 | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Oct to Dec | Jan - Mar | Apr - Jun | Jul - Sep | Oct - Dec | Jan - Mar | Apr - Jun | Jul - Sep | Oct - Dec | Jan - Mar | Apr - Jun |



Notes

- 1) NHS Regulatory approvals to be confirmed
- 2) New Public Procurement Regulations, flexibilities to be confirmed

Get in touch

There is a dedicated contact email for all questions related to the pathology service specification and developments:

mse.pathology2024@nhs.net

Community Diagnostic Centres – mid and south Essex



Background

- The Trust has been working to ensure we increase our diagnostic capacity in mid and south Essex
- Community Diagnostics Centres (CDCs) are a nationally funded programme to increase diagnostic capacity
- They are new one-stop shops for checks, tests and scans in the heart of local communities will make services more accessible and convenient for patients
- An engagement survey was completed last year by residents from across mid and south Essex about the location and facilities on offer at the CDC. Feedback from these surveys helped to develop our plans.

The benefits of CDCs

- CDCs will deliver new ways of working, increasing diagnostic capacity so we can provide earlier diagnosis and ultimately treatment for patients. This will improve health outcomes
- Separating elective and emergency care will improve patient experience, reduce the number of cancelled clinics, and ensure patients are seen in a setting that is most appropriate to meet their care and diagnostic needs
- This is also an excellent opportunity to transform services and use new technology.



Our CDCs

There are business cases developed for three CDCs in mid and south Essex to date.

Our largest planned CDC is in **Pitsea**, and we are awaiting a funding decision from NHS England. If approved this will have the capacity to support residents across all of south Essex. The location was selected following an options appraisal. A key reason was its central location, and the space we needed to develop a larger centre.

This will provide more services including endoscopy, blood tests and lung and heart checks, as well as CT, MRI, ultrasound and x-ray.

Two smaller centres have recently received funding:

- **Thurrock CDC** will be based at Thurrock Community Hospital and is set to open in spring 2024
- **Braintree CDC** will be based at Braintree Community Hospital. We expect to open this site in autumn 2024

Staffing the CDC

- Like many parts of the NHS, our challenge will be recruiting the additional staff needed for the CDCs, so we are starting to look at staffing plans now
- Recent success with international recruitment will be part of our plan, alongside training programmes to introduce new roles into the centres and more training opportunities for staff
- We know some services will be harder to recruit than others. For example, there is a shortage of sonographers (who operate ultrasound scanning) nationally
- If we find ourselves struggling to fill these roles, we'll work with a local community providers to build in extra resilience
- Further employment opportunities will come from the CDCs, including through the Anchor programme.

What additional services will the CDCs offer?

Thurrock will offer

| | | |
|------------|-------------|----------------------|
| X-ray | MRI | CT |
| Ultrasound | Blood tests | Heart and lung tests |

Braintree will offer

| | | |
|------------|-------------|----------------------|
| X-ray | MRI | CT |
| Ultrasound | Blood tests | Heart and lung tests |

Pitsea will offer

| | | |
|------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| X-ray | MRI | CT |
| Ultrasound | Blood tests | Heart and lung tests |
| Endoscopy | Bone density scans | |

Final remarks

- If the Pitsea CDC receives approval for funding, we will be holding a number of engagement events with residents across south Essex
- This will include surveys and face-to-face opportunities in local shopping centres and halls
- If the Pitsea CDC is approved our ambition is to have this opened by spring 2025.