

Creating a pathology network for West Yorkshire and Harrogate

Staff update – 20 May 2019

Developing service models

We have now held two meetings with collaboration group members and staff representing the different disciplines from each trust to look at the data collected so far and continue discussions around the potential models. Particular areas of focus have been confirming which functions will be provided at the AHLs (acute hospital laboratories) and the hubs, and starting to consider where hubs could potentially be sited.

These discussions have brought us to a number of conclusions, which we thought would be helpful to share with all staff in advance of the workshops taking place this week.

Laboratory types

We have agreed there will be 3 levels of laboratory:

- **Acute hospital laboratories (AHLs)**
As a minimum, each acute hospital will have an AHL to support its services, particularly the urgent testing requirements.
- **AHL+**
To make best use of their capacity, some of the AHLs will be an “AHL+”, which means they will also do some routine testing, potentially including GP testing.
- **Hubs**
In addition to having an AHL, at least one hospital will be a ‘hub’ for each discipline. These laboratories will provide the AHL function for their site but will have greater testing capacity so they can deliver the remaining routine testing work for the network. One of the hubs will also provide the specialist testing in each discipline on behalf of the network.

The following table shows which functions would be carried out at each laboratory type:

	AHL	Hub	Specialist
Blood sciences	Blood Transfusion Urgent Blood Sciences (Direct Clinical Engagement)	Automated Haem/Bio; Routine Blood Sciences	Biochemical Genetics Genetics HMDS, Hb electrophoresis Immunology, Manual Chemistry
Cellular Pathology	Frozen Sections Other Intra Operative and Procedural Tests Transplant	IHC / Enzyme Histochemistry Histology main lab Histology cut up & prep Consultant screening & reporting	Andrology Gynae Cytology Molecular Cell Path
Microbiology	Microbiology POCT Infection testing CSFs Blood Culture incubation	Bacteriology Mycology TB Positive blood culture Gram staining	Virology (serology, molecular)

At the meetings, we also discussed whether the hubs for any of the disciplines had to be co-located but it was agreed that this should not be an essential consideration. However, it was felt that there are interdependencies with specialist services that will need to be taken into account.

Laboratory configuration options

At the meetings, we also discussed which sites could potentially accommodate a hub. Key considerations included the current laboratory space and potential for expansion, whether the laboratory is already a form of 'hub' (ie carries out testing for other hospitals), and if the laboratory already provides specialist services. The general consensus was that hubs could potentially be accommodated by ANHSFT, CHFT, LTHT and MYHT but this will need to be confirmed once all the data has been analysed.

This has given us a 'long list' of potential laboratory configuration options, which we need to discuss further and work with staff to develop a short-list for detailed modelling and scoring. As discussed at the staff meetings, the criteria for assessing the options will include quality, resilience, value for money and workforce sustainability, and we will be working with staff to determine the key points to consider for each aspect.

Staff feedback

We will be looking at the benefits and risks of potential options at the staff workshops next week so if you would like to contribute, please get permission from your manager and register using the links below:

- [21 May - 1.30 - 4.30pm - Bradford City Football Club](#)
- [22 May - 1.30 - 4.30pm - Wakefield Cedar Court Hotel](#)
- [24 May - 9am - 12pm - Leeds Marriott Hotel](#)

You can also send us comments directly by emailing us at wyaatpathology@nhs.net