

Report to:	Board of Directors	Agenda item:	7
Date of Meeting:	29 April 2020		

Title of Report:	Transforming Maternity Services Together
Status:	For Approval
Board Sponsor:	Rebecca Carlton, Chief Operating Officer
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Appendices	None

1. Executive Summary of the Report

This briefing provides an update to the previously approved changes to maternity services across BSW following a three year service reconfiguration programme.

The proposed changes have been driven by operational changes required as part of the BSW maternity Covid-19 response.

2. Recommendations (Note, Approve, Discuss)

Board of Directors is asked to support the following recommendations:

1. To postpone the ceasing of births at Paulton and Trowbridge Freestanding Midwifery Units (FMUs) until June 1st 2020. This change is currently planned for 4th May 2020.
2. To temporarily close all community postnatal beds with immediate effect for clinical safety reasons. The beds in Paulton will remain closed permanently (as per the original plan). Any changes to the initial longer term plans to retain the postnatal beds in Chippenham for up to 12 months will be brought back for discussion.
3. To support the change in overnight staffing in Chippenham and Paulton in line with the other two Freestanding Midwifery Units.

These recommendations will be presented to the BaNES, Wiltshire and Swindon Governing Body for approval on Thursday 30th April 2020.

3. Legal / Regulatory Implications

Wiltshire CCG sought legal advice throughout the public consultation.

4. Risk (Threats or opportunities, link to a risk on the Risk Register, Board Assurance Framework etc)

1573 - Maternity Services Redesign - adverse publicity / reputation

There is a risk that any changes may be perceived as an opportunity to reopen the decision making process and agreed plans.

5.	Resources Implications (Financial / staffing)
<p>The financial objective of this transformation plan, supported by STP partners, is to maintain cost neutrality in relation to these service changes, but to create efficiencies in some areas, which can be reinvested to improve the quality of service provision.</p> <p>Major investment - STP capital bid (c£6.46m) to develop AMUs.</p> <p>The minor investment includes refurbishment of the birth environment within the remaining freestanding midwifery units, funding from savings within this programme.</p>	
6.	Equality and Diversity
<p>An Integrated Impact Assessment was completed as part of the consultation programme. This included an Equality Impact Assessment and Travel Impact Assessment.</p>	
7.	References to previous reports
<p>Briefing to BoD, 16th January 2020</p>	
8.	Freedom of Information
<p>Private and Confidential</p>	

Transforming Maternity Services Together

1.0 Introduction

This briefing provides an update to the previously approved changes to maternity services across BSW following a three year service reconfiguration programme.

The proposed changes have been driven by operational changes required as part of the BSW maternity Covid-19 response.

BSW CCGs Governing Bodies approved the following recommendations on February 16th 2020.

Create an Alongside Midwifery Unit at the Royal United Hospital

Create an Alongside Midwifery Unit at Salisbury District Hospital

Continue to support births in two, rather than four, of the Freestanding Midwifery Units.

Improve and better promote the Home Birth service

Enhance current provision of antenatal and post-natal care

Replace the five community post-natal beds in Paulton FMU and the four community post-natal beds in Chippenham FMU with support closer to, or in women's homes.

Timeframes for the implementation of these agreed changes were agreed, however, changes are now proposed to these timeframes due to the impact of Covid-19. The Board of Directors is asked to review and approve these changes.

These proposed changes will be presented to the BaNES, Wiltshire and Swindon Governing Body for approval on Thursday 30th April 2020.

2.0 Rationale for proposed changes

The following provides an update on the current position in relation to the implementation of these changes.

Births were due to cease in Paulton and Trowbridge FMUs on May 4th 2020 as per the agreed proposal. Plans were in place to work with staff and local women to prepare for these changes. However, there has now been the requirement to implement significant changes to all services across BSW in response to the Covid-19 pandemic including maternity services.

The Maternity service at the RUH has seen an increased request for home birth as a result of changing needs and wishes of local women. To reduce the risk of covid transmission, there has been a revision to the way antenatal and postnatal pathways are provided as well as risk stratification of women during and after pregnancy. Maternity teams have also been working together to manage an increase in pregnant women from out of area transferring to BSW during the Covid-19 period to mitigate clinical risk and provide support to these families.

There is national guidance in relation to both commencing new reconfiguration and transformation work during the Covid-19 period and for the implementation of temporary changes to services. However, the maternity transformation programme has been running for over three years and public consultation was completed prior to the pandemic so it not a new programme of work. It is felt that as the decision to cease births was agreed prior to the Covid-19 period; the risk of any associated challenge is limited.

There was significant feedback during the decision making process, particularly from local councillors in BaNES, challenging why the birth provision in Paulton and Trowbridge could not remain open until the agreed Alongside Midwifery Unit opened at the RUH. This option was discounted due to the identified reasons why births should cease at these units namely:

- Safety
- Parity of access and provision
- Delivering services in the most efficient way and meeting the changing needs and wishes of local women and families

There is a concern that if the ceasing of births was delayed for a sustained period of time, there could be further challenge to keep this provision open for longer.

3.0 Proposals for consideration

The Local Maternity System (LMS) has worked collaboratively to co-create the following proposals:

1) Ceasing of births at Trowbridge and Paulton

Due to our current covid response across BSW, it is proposed that the ceasing of births in Trowbridge and Paulton FMUs is delayed for one month until **1st June 2020** to allow additional time to support staff and local women through this period.

Birth activity levels at Trowbridge and Paulton remain low. There were four births in Paulton during March 2020 and six in Trowbridge. On average, there have been around 39 FMU births per month over the last quarter, across all four FMU sites.

However, we have seen a doubling of requests for home birth across RUH and SFT during the Covid-19 period. Homebirths have currently ceased at GWH due to workforce constraints (34% of trained midwifery staff currently off sick or self-isolating) but the situation is being reviewed this week. RUH and SFT are currently able to maintain homebirth services as staffing levels remain good. This is being monitored on daily and weekly basis to ensure safe staffing levels continue to support this service.

2) Community Postnatal Beds

A further change agreed as part of the maternity services transformation programme was the closure of community postnatal beds in Paulton and Chippenham. It was agreed that the beds in Paulton would close at the same time as births would cease but that four postnatal beds would remain in Chippenham for up to 12 months. This was to allow further time to co-create new postnatal models of care and support with local women and families.

To reduce the clinical risk of having postnatal mums and newborn babies in hospital environments during the Covid-19 period, based on clinical safety reasons, it is proposed to close all community postnatal beds until the end of May 2020. It is felt that admitting mums and babies to the community postnatal beds creates an additional risk exposure.

Mums and babies in acute obstetric units are receiving required medical input whilst the support provided through the community postnatal beds can and is being provided virtually or through home visits in the postnatal period. Mums not requiring any further medical intervention are choosing to discharge from hospital quicker than the pre-covid period.

After this time, the postnatal beds in Paulton will remain closed, as per the original proposal but the LMS will review the impact of the evolving response to the Covid-19 pandemic and assess whether the original plan for a phased closure of the postnatal beds in Chippenham is clinically appropriate. If there are any further changes to the initially agreed recommendations agreed by BSW Governing Bodies, these will be brought back to the RUH Board of Directors and BSW Governing Body for review.

3) Changes to overnight staffing in FMUs

Currently there is overnight staffing at both Chippenham and Paulton FMUs whereas in Trowbridge and Frome, the FMUs work on an 'open on demand' system to support women birthing at these locations.

With the proposal to close the community postnatal beds it is also recommended that Chippenham and Paulton move to an 'open on demand' system to support births. This will mean parity of staffing across all four FMUs and also release staffing to create more flexible rotas to support birth in any chosen community location including being able to support the increased homebirth requests.

4.0 Recommendations

The Board is asked to approve the following recommendations:

1. To postpone the ceasing of births at Paulton and Trowbridge until June 1st 2020
2. To temporarily close all community postnatal beds with immediate effect for clinical safety reasons. The beds in Paulton will remain closed permanently. Any changes to the initial longer term plans to retain the postnatal beds in Chippenham for up to 12 months will be brought back to Board for discussion.
3. To support the change in overnight staffing in Chippenham and Paulton in line with the other two FMUs.