



## **East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group**

### **NHS non-emergency patient transport**

You may be aware of recent concerns regarding the performance of Arriva Transport Solutions, the company which holds the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland contract for non-emergency patient transport to and from appointments for clinically eligible patients.

Please be assured that East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group (ELR CCG) take all performance issues very seriously and the safety and wellbeing of patients is of paramount importance to us. We would like to reassure you that we are continuing to apply a range of measures that we expect will see significant improvements in Arriva's performance by the end of October 2014.

The contract with Arriva began in July 2012 and was awarded by Leicester City and Leicestershire County and Rutland Primary Care Trusts for a period of five years. The contract value of £26 million (circa £5.3million per annum) was based on services for eight categories of mobility ranging from walking through to wheelchair and stretchers, all with appropriate performance targets such as the time limits for collecting patients before and after appointments. ELR CCG took over management of the contract on behalf of all three local CCGs, in April 2013.

Arriva's performance in the first year (July 2012 to June 2013) was poor, due mainly to their internal management and operational structures and processes failing to ensure delivery of the key performance indicators. The CCG's contract management team used various contract levers to try to improve performance including the imposition of fines totalling £34K.

In the second year (July 2013 – June 2014), we undertook two unannounced visits to get first hand patient feedback, staff feedback and to view the vehicles and patient environment. We identified a number of concerns and alerted the Care Quality Commission (CQC) who subsequently undertook their own inspection earlier this year. We are now monitoring Arriva's compliance with the actions required by the CQC.

In response to a comprehensive remedial action plan put in place by ELR CCG in October 2013, Arriva restructured their senior management and operational team. This process has been managed on an intensive basis over the last six months. Since that point, there have been improvements against key performance thresholds, albeit still not enough to achieve performance targets. However, there is a trajectory of compliance with targets by the end of October.

A critical factor in the delay to transport patients to and from hospital revolves around the clinical assessment requirement for significant numbers of non-ambulatory stretcher vehicles, the use of support staff from Arriva inconsistent with contractually

defined activity and subsequent substantial increases in higher acuity usage. As a result the CCG contracts team have been redefining the various mobility criteria to acknowledge the move downwards for ambulatory and upwards for complex wheelchair and stretcher journeys. These changes to meet the increase in complex mobility requests and the appropriate realignment of staff and vehicles in Arriva will make a major positive impact on Arriva being able to provide a better service to patients and to meet their performance targets.

Other agreed improvements include changes to rotas to ensure that the level of ambulance cover across the day reflects patients' needs, an increase in frontline Arriva supervisors and the recruitment of additional ambulance care assistants. There will also be more volunteer drivers, while planning and scheduling changes are underway which will identify delays at a much earlier stage and enable additional vehicles to be used much more quickly. To further support these developments Arriva now have dedicated staff working with hospital discharge teams to ensure that transport service provision aligns with the discharge process at all times. Daily visits to renal units are also taking place to ensure the timeliness of dialysis patients' journeys.

Many of the changes we've agreed have been directly influenced by what patients are telling us about their experiences. We are committed to listening to, and acting on patient views and we are supporting Arriva with their plans to hold a listening event for patients and their families enabling further opportunity for people to share their experiences and concerns. This will enable us to identify and address any additional areas where Arriva need to improve services as well as identifying areas where the service is working well and best practice can be shared. We will circulate further details regarding this event in the very near future.

In the meantime please be assured that we are keeping the service under close scrutiny. We are continuing to work closely with Arriva to ensure that our expectations as commissioners of the service on behalf of the three CCGs are clear, that performance issues are addressed and the potential consequences of ongoing performance issues are clearly understood. We are currently reviewing performance for the second year of the contract (July 2013 to June 2014) and will keep you informed of any further penalties and redress we impose. If performance continues to be unsatisfactory between now and the end of October, we will of course, explore all options available to us regarding performance improvement measures and the future of the contract.

If you have any queries or require further information please do not hesitate to contact me via email at [dave.briggs@eastleicestershireandrutlandccg.nhs.uk](mailto:dave.briggs@eastleicestershireandrutlandccg.nhs.uk) or via telephone at 0116 295 5105.

Yours sincerely,

Dave

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