



Putting the public and
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Agenda Item
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Herefordshire
Clinical Commissioning Group

NHS Herefordshire CCG
22 St. Owens Chambers
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Mrs Angela Price
Town Clerk
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Dear Mrs Price

Thank you for your complaint dated 4 December 2019. I am very sorry to read about your concerns regarding the x-ray services at Ledbury Hospital.

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. We take all enquiries and concerns seriously as they provide us with valuable information that helps us identify how we can continually improve our services.

We can confirm that the provider, Wye Valley NHS Trust, reviewed its x-ray usage in 2019. As a result, a decision was made by Wye Valley NHS Trust to reduce the number of x-ray sites according to the overall activity, operational issues and rising costs. The service at Ledbury Community Hospital for plain film imaging ran one day per week on a Wednesday and saw on average 25 patients per week.

There were several reasons for the cessation of the service from the Ledbury location. The main reason is that the equipment was a mobile x-ray machine that is now obsolete and possible replacement of the equipment would require a larger clinical space. This would be a significant and costly refurbishment to accommodate a fixed and more flexible piece of equipment. There are also radiation dose issues to consider as the equipment at both Leominster and Ross for plain film imaging produce images at lower radiation doses. The configuration of the equipment restricts the service to a very minimal range of examinations such as chest x-rays and plain films of the appendicular skeleton. The level of activity at Ledbury for this type of work could be accommodated at other locations.

The likely impact on local residents was taken into account, acknowledging that for some people, access to the service may become more difficult. However, with alternative provision at Malvern, Leominster, Ross and Hereford, it was decided that the continuation of the once weekly service was not justifiable. Patient safety improvements and overall cost of the updating the service were important factors in the decision.

We supported the decision not to renew the equipment and continue with the service for the reasons outlined above. I would also like to take the opportunity to confirm that the ultrasound service is not affected.

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I sincerely hope that we have addressed the issues you raised. If you feel there are any outstanding issues please contact the Patient Services Team on 0800 030 4563 or by emailing MLCSU.PatientServices@nhs.net.

Yours Sincerely

Pp

Simon Trickett
Accountable Officer