



Emma Lewell-Buck MP

Member of Parliament for South Shields
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

The Rt. Hon. Matt Hancock MP
Secretary of State
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

20th February 2020

Dear Secretary of State,

In early December last year you made a commitment to look closely into future health service provision in my constituency of South Shields. This was reported via our local media outlets.

I was very pleased to hear of your commitment to review the current plans (Known as the 'Path To Excellence'), as I have been campaigning with my community for many years to save our very-much-needed services at South Tyneside Hospital from their removal and downgrading as proposed by the 'Path to Excellence'. Indeed, I have also raised the matter numerous times in Parliament myself.

South Tyneside District Hospital serves over 150,000 residents. We have lost our Stroke Services, our consultant-led Maternity Unit, our Special Care Baby Unit and our Children's A&E (Night-time) Services so far via the 'Path to Excellence'. There are further plans to downgrade our remaining critical services, which again I am strongly opposing.

I would really welcome an update on the progress of your investigation into the Path to Excellence Programme and the future of our local health services if you could provide that please?

As part of your investigation, I wonder if you could please gain clarity for me on the following vital questions please?

1. How many mothers have presented to South Tyneside Hospital for an 'uncomplicated birth' and have then been transferred to another hospital for birthing since 5th August last year?

Constituency Office

19 Westoe Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE33 4LS

Constituency Enquiries Tel: 0191 427 1240

Parliamentary Office Tel: 0207 219 4468

e-mail: emma.lewell-buck.mp@parliament.uk website: www.emma-lewell-buck.net

2. Have any babies died during birthing or immediately after birthing at South Tyneside Hospital since 5th August last year?
3. Have any babies died during or immediately after birthing at another hospital or in transit between hospitals following initial presentation at South Tyneside Hospital for birthing since 5th August last year?
4. What is the longest time, since 5th August last year that any mother has waited for ambulance transfer to another hospital after presenting at South Tyneside to give birth but finding that she needs to go elsewhere?
5. How many mothers have chosen to give birth in the Midwife-led Unit since the new arrangements were launched last August? What is the target for the number of births in in that Unit for the first year of operation of the new arrangements?
6. Since last August, where have mothers who would have previously been able to give birth in South Tyneside Hospital actually given birth?
7. Have any incidents occurred, since last August, where a baby or mother has been at risk whilst waiting for an ambulance transfer from South Tyneside District Hospital to another hospital?
8. Can assurance be given that the Ante-natal services at South Tyneside Hospital will not be taken away from South Tyneside?
9. How many children have been presented to South Tyneside District Hospital A&E since 5th August 2019 during the hours of Children's A&E night-time closure?
10. Has any child (or children) died (At South Tyneside District Hospital or at another hospital) after presenting initially at South Tyneside Children's A&E during the closure hours since 5th August last year?
11. Has any child been put at risk as a result of Children's A&E being closed at South Tyneside District Hospital since 5th August 2019?
12. What data has been gathered on waiting times for transfers by ambulance of children, babies and parents presenting to South Tyneside District Hospital during closure hours and also for mothers presenting at the Midwife-led Maternity service who then require ambulance transfer? What method is used to monitor the waiting times for patients awaiting ambulances?

13. Can you please provide the findings of post-implementation assessments in relation to Stroke Services, Stroke Rehabilitation Services and the handovers between the two?
14. What measures are in place to support people who don't have access to transport , or the means to pay for transport, to services that have been moved to Sunderland Royal Hospital from South Tyneside Hospital?

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Emma Lewell-Buck". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and flourishes.

Emma Lewell-Buck MP
Member of Parliament for South Shields