



Commissioning Alliance  
(South Place)  
Brighton and Hove CCG  
High Weald Lewes Havens CCG

The following text **in bold** is a question received from a member of the public for the Governing Bodies in Common meeting being held on 3 April 2019.

The response from the CCG is below each question in italicised non-bold text.

**With reference to the CCG reply to the public question submitted to the January 2019 meeting (see below in blue), please could the CCG explain:**

**1) How many fewer hip and knee replacement operations are now performed? How are you monitoring this reduction in terms of making sure patients are not finding it more difficult to access treatment, and how it impacts on health inequality across the Brighton and Hove population.**

*With regard to hip and knee replacement specifically, there has been an 11% reduction in patients going on to knee and hip surgical procedures in 2018 compared to 2016. In the same period, there has been a 25% reduction in the number being sent to independent hospitals. A reduction in overall number of patients going on to surgery does not mean they are not able to access appropriate treatments – for example, more patients, as a consequence of Shared Decision Making, are opting for conservative treatments such as physiotherapy as opposed to surgery and this is part of the pathway is provided by Sussex MSK Partnership.*

*There has been an overall reduction in the quantum of MSK activity year on year due to the impact of improvements such as Shared Decision Making; conservative management and better adherence to evidence based clinical pathways. This is likely to be a continuing trend with the implementation of national Evidence Based Intervention policies for back pain and shoulder surgery, First Contact Practitioners in Primary Care and patient choice.*

**2) If the CCG has asked SMSKP to increase the proportion of patients referred to BSUH (Brighton & Sussex Universities NHS Trust), why has this not happened?**

**A Freedom of Information request (FOI) last autumn showed the total number of hip and knee replacements performed on NHS Brighton and Hove CCG patients in private hospitals in 2017-18 continues to rise.**

**Is there a problem with the way the contract has been written? Could the contract be re-written to ensure the sustainability of our NHS hospital is not under threat?**



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*Since August 2018, when SMSKP and BSUH actively began working together to increase the proportion of patients going to BSUH, there has been an increase of 4.5% of knee and hip patients going to BSUH compared to the previous year. It is important to note that both providers have to work in the context of the NHS constitution, which requires that patients have the right to choose their hospital provider. BSUH's waiting times for surgery have improved significantly and are now comparable with independent sector hospitals and all patients are made aware of this before exercising choice. Even so, some patients may still choose to go to another provider, for example, the Montefiore in Hove and one factor that may influence this for patients in Brighton and Hove is that BSUH only deliver elective orthopaedic surgery in Haywards Heath and not the Brighton area.*

*SMSKP and BSUH are continuing to work together to provide patients with more information about what to take into consideration when choosing their hospital and it is envisioned that this will make BSUH a more attractive choice.*

**3) You acknowledge that: "this shift has had an adverse impact on the critical mass of the service within the trust with a potential impact on the sustainability of the service and BSUH as a major trauma centre".**

**Please explain in what way the orthopaedic department at BSUH is now diminished as a result of more NHS patients being treated by private providers than by our local NHS hospital. How long can the current trend be allowed to continue before BSUH would become unsustainable as a major trauma centre?**

*SMSKP are actively working with BSUH to increase the number of patients that are treated at BSUH, we are already seeing a shift in the proportion of activity going to the independent sector and it is expected that the measures outlined above will have a further positive impact.*