

Notice of initiation of investigation

Case reference: CCD 05/13

Monitor has decided to initiate an investigation into the commissioning of elective services in Blackpool and the surrounding area by Blackpool CCG and Fylde and Wyre CCG.

This follows a complaint by Spire Healthcare Limited (Spire) that Blackpool CCG and Fylde & Wyre CCG (the two CCGs) are breaching their regulatory obligations in relation to the commissioning of elective care. In particular, the complaint alleges that the two CCGs have sought to direct patients requiring elective care away from Spire Fylde Coast Hospital (Spire FCH) and towards Blackpool Victoria Hospital (BVH).

Monitor will consider whether there has been any breach of the National Health Service (Procurement, Patient Choice and Competition) (No 2) Regulations 2013, which came into force on 1 April 2013.

As part of our investigation, Monitor will examine:

- the arrangements which the two CCGs have in place in relation to elective care;
- the arrangements made by the two CCGs to ensure that patients are offered choice of provider for their first outpatient appointment for elective care; and
- the arrangements made by the two CCGs to ensure that patients are offered choice of alternative providers where treatment has not commenced within 18 weeks of referral.

We invite submissions from interested parties on the matters raised in the complaint. The case is at an early stage and Monitor has not reached a view as to whether there has been any breach of the rules.

Outline timetable

Initiation of investigation	10 October 2013
Information gathering (information requests and parties' responses)	October – December 2013 (estimated)
Review and analysis of evidence	October – December 2013 (estimated)
Meetings with parties	October – December 2013 (estimated)
Publish an update on the progress of the case	December 2013
Publish final report (if necessary)	August 2014

10 October 2013