

CenTre Neonatal Transport



Annual Report 2020-21

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Highlight of the year

What a year 2020/21 was for everyone!

- The main highlight for CenTre was that everyone was fit, well and healthy so we were able to continue to provide a full transport service for our 14 units.
- We saw the much welcomed return of Sophie, our educator after her maternity leave. She certainly hit the ground running to get everyone up to speed with the long awaited new transport systems.
- We also welcomed Dr Andy Currie as our Head of Service. Andy has been around the background as he has a long standing interest in transport.
- We were fortunate to relocate our transport office based at LRI just prior to the pandemic hitting with the first wave. Having so much more space than we previously had been working out of made a huge difference to the teams morale during difficult times.
- Unfortunately we were unable to host the annual UK Neonatal Transport Group conference due to the pandemic. However, we are going ahead with a virtual meeting later in 2021.

Head of Service Review

Welcome to the 2020/21 Annual report. I hope you find it interesting. As with previous reports we have aimed to include all relevant information looking at our activity. If you think there are things we have not included which you would like to see in future reports please send suggestions through to the senior team and we will happily look at these. It is important everybody feels this report represents the hard work and dedication the whole team put into making CenTre so successful.

It has been a very challenging year in more ways than one. COVID has had a profound affect on all of us; not just our working lives but also our personal lives. I have been immensely impressed and proud of the way the team stepped up to the challenge. At the start of the process it was not clear what was going to happen or how we were supposed to respond. PPE requirements, rules around patient care and social distancing seemed to be constantly changing. It felt like every week there was new guidance that often contradicted previous guidance. Despite this, through all of the frustrations, the whole team focused on what was the best for our patients and everyone played their part to ensure the service continued and we kept patient care at the forefront of everything we did.

It has been another busy year for us as a regional transport service. Total numbers are slightly down on previous years but we still continue to undertake volumes of retrievals well above that we were originally commissioned to do.

We finally took possession of our new patient trolleys. Each trolley is equipped for almost any scenario that neonatal transport might face. It has been a much longer process than we envisaged in developing and building these systems. Again I want to thank you all for your patience and also with the positive way you have taken on the challenge of working with different systems. Training has been completed for all clinical staff.

Head of Service Review

In the last 12 months we have been through an ambulance re- tender process. This was postponed in early 2021, but has subsequently been re started and is back on track. We expect the successful bidder to be announced this Autumn . This will mean new, purpose built vehicles hopefully from Spring 2022; which will be very welcome. In the meantime I want to thank EMAS who have continued to do a sterling job in working with us as part of the team; providing ambulances and working hard to keep the wheels turning.

In the last 12 months we welcomed Deepa Panjwani as our clinical lead for Leicester, Julia Edwards joined as the clinical lead in Nottingham and Arthi Lakshmanan joined Puneet Nath as joint clinical leads in Coventry.

Finally I want to say thank you to Nicky Davey who has been our Matron since CenTre started over 10 years ago and is leaving us later this year. She has done an amazing amount of work to lead and establish CenTre as one of the largest and busiest new-born transport services in the country. I cannot understate just how much time, effort and hard work this takes. Nicky will be retiring later this year and she will be much missed. On behalf of everyone in CenTre I want to wish her our sincerest best wishes. I know Nicky won't mind me mentioning we have appointed a new Matron, Emma Birkin to replace her. They will be working together as part of a transition period before she takes up the reins later in the year.

Please take the time to read this report. It has a lot of information and is only possible as a result of the hard work and dedication of all the staff involved with CenTre.

Andy Currie

Head of service

Education Review 1

This year presented many challenges for education, not least with Sophie being on maternity leave until September. Since then it has been a very busy with lots of in-house equipment training taking place for the new transport trolleys.

In House Education

The clinical team have undergone training for the new equipment on the new trolleys. This training has been hands on which has allowed the team to practice using the equipment and also practice manoeuvring and winching the trolley in to and out of the ambulance. Written equipment guides and training videos for each new piece of equipment have been produced. Grateful thanks go to Dr Abby Parish for her help with the videos.

Bitesize, multi-disciplinary monthly breakfast meetings and team training sessions have also been held with a focus on relevant topics at the time. Team members are encouraged to share their knowledge and experiences on these sessions by taking turns to deliver training to their peers, with guest speakers visiting sometimes.

We welcomed two new transport nurses, Amy and Zoe, and congratulate them on completing their 12 week inductions thanks to the support of their transport colleagues. Due to COVID several of the team were unable to fulfil their transport rotation but we are excited to see them start to return to the service after having refresher training days to update and refresh their knowledge.

We continue to use our Little Lives Big Journeys fund, held by Leicester Hospitals Charity, to support two team members to attend the Advanced Resuscitation of the New-born Infant Course (ARNI) run by UHL.

Education Review 2

Outreach Education

A series of virtual outreach training sessions started this year, the first session focused on HIE and therapeutic cooling. Future sessions are planned around ventilation, care of the surgical and cardiac infant. Virtual outreach support has been well received and well attended by nursing and medical staff across the network. Training materials will form part of a “learning library” accessible to network staff via the EMNODN website.

Recommencement of training sessions for the degree level neonatal modules at the Leicester De Montfort University and Nottingham Trent University on stabilisation and transfer of HDU / ITU infants have proved successful.

The CenTre Senior Team continue to facilitate virtual multi-disciplinary case review meetings with our local neonatal units to encourage collaboration and service improvement. Our unit link nurses play an important part in the organisation of these sessions.

Sophie Stephenson

Transport Educator

General Manager Review 1

Governance

CenTre Transport service covers a large demographic area within the Midlands, providing neonatal transport for 14 neonatal units as well as some out of area work as and when required. Ensuring robust clinical governance processes are in place is essential in ensuring safe practice when stabilising and transferring babies. Communication is a key factor in the patient journey as well as safe practice in transport.

Centre is hosted by University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust (UHL) with teams operating out of 2 sites UHL and Nottingham University Hospital (NUH). Both trusts, along with University Hospitals of Coventry and Warwick NHS Trust (UHCW), provide Consultant cover for the service.

University Hospitals of Leicester is the central point for collation of all governance activity.

During 2020/21 we improved our processes and strengthened our relationship with NUH. A positive from the pandemic and lockdown has been ZOOM and MS Teams, this enabled the team to access and take part in cross site and trust meetings, the downside of this is we are all ZOOM and MS Team fatigued. We now regularly attend the monthly Quality, Risk and Safety (QRS) meeting as well as senior management meetings. Sharing and learning from incidents has improved across the two trusts. Over the next year we hope to strengthen our processes and communication across trusts.

Weekly huddle meetings discussing the previous week's transports, any operational issues or incidents are now held and well attended by team members. Learning outcomes are shared with the team via posters in the transport office and via WhatsApp for those team members not currently on their transport rotation.

Monthly Senior Team meetings are held to review all operational and governance issues.

General Manager Review 2

NHS England Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for Neonatal Transport.

1. Dedicated Neonatal Transport Services transfer at least 95% of patients requiring transfer for uplift within its defined catchment area on an annual basis. **2020-21 = 99%**
2. **Mobilisation Time:** For **TIME CRITICAL** transfers the transfer team mobilises towards the patient within one hour from the start of the referring call (95% of retrievals annually). **2020-21 = 85%**
Issues influencing delays in mobilisation are multifactorial multiple referrals, cot locating and all teams committed to a transfer can affect dispatch times.
3. **Referral response time:** For ITU + Uplift transfers the transport team will arrive with the patient within 3.5 hours of the referring call on 80% of occasions (excluding any planned procedure uplifts e.g. PDA Ligation) **2020=21 = 83%** Similar issues affect response times as affect mobilisation times.

Finance and Commissioning

CentTre continues to be funded through NHS England, providing 2 acute teams and one planned team between 8am-8pm and 1 acute team between 8pm—8am, 7 days a week.

The call handling service is provided by 365 Response. This is commissioned separately through NHS England and supports Neonatal, Paediatric and ECMO transport services within the region.

East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust currently provides 4 dedicated ambulances, this is also commissioned separately through local commissioners. NHS England are currently re-tendering for ambulance provision and the preferred provider should be announced later this year. The successful applicant will provide vehicles for CentTre, COMET (paediatric transport), Adult Critical Care Transport and ECMO transfers. The total cost of CentTre Neonatal Transport Service is £1.9 million excluding call handling and ambulance provision.

Hilliary Killer, General Manager

Data / Activity 1

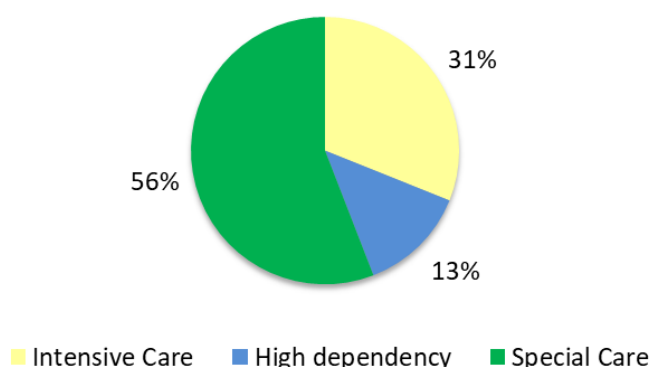
Table 1. Total Activity 2019/20 compared to 2020/21

TOTAL ACTIVITY	2019-20	2020-21	Difference
Total team dispatches	1554	1403	-151
Total completed transfers	1511	1365	-146
Total abandoned transfers	43	38	-5
Neonatal transfers	1507	1364	-143
Paediatric transfers where the journey neither started nor finished at a neonatal unit.	4	1	-3

Table 2. April 1st 2020 to March 31st 2021

BAPM Level of Care	Dispatched	Completed	Abandoned
Intensive Care	439	424	15
High Dependency	189	178	11
Special Care	775	763	12
Total	1403	1365	38

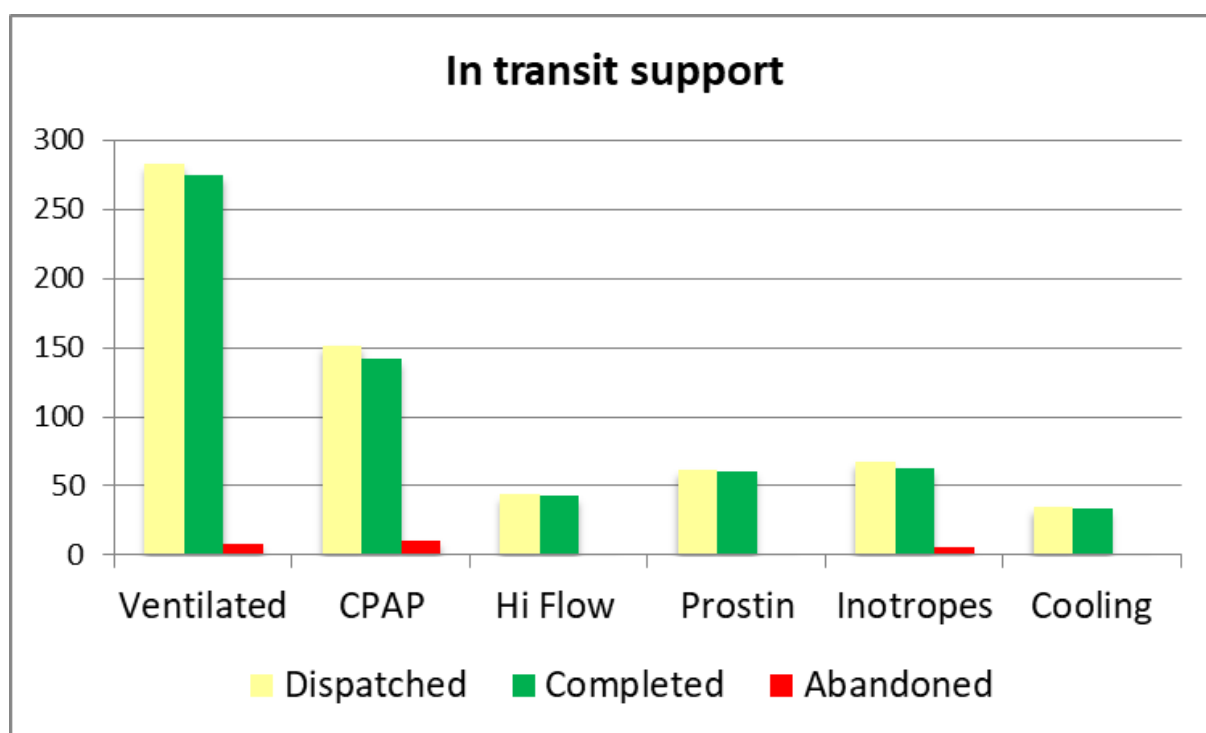
BAPM Level of care during transfer



Data / Activity 2

Table 3. In transit support April 1st 2020 to March 31st 2021

Level of support	Dispatched	Completed	Abandoned
Ventilated	282	274	8
CPAP	151	41	10
Hi- Flow	43	42	1
Prostin	61	60	1
Inotropes	67	62	5
Cooling	34	33	1



Data / Activity 3

Table 3 Completed transfers by clinical and operational reason

	Medical		Surgical		Cardiac		Neurological		TOTAL		Diff
	2019 2020	2020 2021	2019 2020	2020 2021	2019 2020	2020 2021	2019 2020	2020 2021	2019 2020	2020 2021	
Uplift	236	226	215	220	112	84	52	42	615	572	-43
Repatriation	728	649	0	1	0	0	0	0	728	650	-78
Resource	146	128	0	0	0	0	2	1	148	129	-19
OPA	10	8	0	2	10	3	0	1	20	14	-6
TOTAL	1120	1011	215	223	122	87	54	44	1511	1365	-146
Difference	- 109		+8		- 35		- 10		-146		

Table 4 Dispatch time* for time critical transfers

Dispatch Time	2019-20	2020—2021
Median despatch time (IQR)	NTG defined Median = 41mins (IQR 35.52 mins) LOCAL defined Median = 43 mins (IQR 30,69mins)	NTG defined Median = 45 mins (IQR = 30, 55 mins) LOCAL defined Median = 45 (IQR = 35, 60mins)

*Dispatch time = time from call receipt by CenTre to team leaving en-route to referring unit. The National Transport Group (NTG) benchmark for time critical team dispatch is 60 minutes.

Abandoned Transfers

There were a total of 38 abandoned transfers in 2020/21 (approx. 3% of all team dispatches.)

An abandoned transfer is one where the team were dispatched but may or may not have arrived at the referring unit before a decision was made to abandon the transfer.

Reason transfer abandoned	Number of transfers
Baby not fit for transfer	14
Team diverted to sicker baby	8
Transfer cancelled by referring unit	6
Cot lost	3
Baby died	2
Baby improved	2
Issues with ambulance	2
Parents refused transfer	1

Further review of those transfers where it was documented that the baby was not fit for transfer, identified that 9 were referred for repatriation to either a LNU or SC, 2 were for capacity from NNU to LNU, 2 were for surgical uplift which was no longer required as care was re-orientated for 1 baby and another transfer was no longer required as the baby passed urine. One baby remained in the NNU as was too unstable for the team to transfer despite several hours of stabilisation but still requiring nitric 20ppm and FiO₂ of 100%. This baby was subsequently transferred to LRI the following day.

Little Lives Big Journeys

Several members of the CenTre team, including our Head of Service Dr Andy Currie, our Matron Nicky Davey and our General Manager, Hilliary Killer, had plans to support our Little Lives Big Journeys fund by taking part in the Leicester Hospitals Charity Big Abseil. They were going to descent 100 feet from the top of the 6 storied Windsor building at LRI. Unfortunately due to the COVID-19 pandemic this was postponed several times. Plans are for the extreme event to take place in September 2021—watch this space next year for evidence of their bravery!

We received a very generous donation from a family in memory of their twin boys. Following discussion with the family we will be using their donation to fund “Parent Comfort Bags”. These will be small rucksacks containing such items as an insulated travel mug, a few snacks, toiletries as well as a baby muslin and a couple of baby books kindly donated by the Book Trust (www.booktrust.org.uk) The family were very keen for us to include a book as they found this a great comfort and a special way of bonding with their son during the short time they had with him. It now provides special memories for them as a family. The bags will also include our normal parent information leaflets and our popular Miles teddy bear. Initial packs will be given to mothers who deliver at 30 weeks or below and whose baby is moved in the first 48 hours.

We continued to use funds to support staff in attending conferences, albeit virtually this year. This did mean that more staff were able to benefit from online sessions as we were able to utilise the screens in each transport office to allow staff on duty to join in.

We have further increased the number of Neonatal Life Support (NLS) Course instructors we have in our team by using funds to train Julie Gallagher, our North Base Team Leader. She joins Richard Hall, our South Base Team Leader, Tim Styche and Sam Bird our South Base Advanced Nurse Practitioners as a fully qualified NLS instructor.



New Beginnings

As you will have seen from Andy's Head of Service review earlier in this report I will be retiring in July after working in both neonatal and paediatric transport for nearly 30 years, the last 15 years being here at Leicester Royal Infirmary. Initially I came to be the Transport Co-ordinator for the then Central Newborn Network (CNN). This very quickly turned into a project to develop a standalone neonatal transport service covering both CNN and the Trent Perinatal Network.

It has been my great pleasure to have worked with such an amazing team over the years. I am very proud of what we have developed and grown over the last 11 years that CenTre has been operational. I will be very sad to leave but I'm confident that I'm leaving a strong team who will continue to develop CenTre and provide safe, professional transport for our tiny patients. I hope that, Emma, my successor, will be as happy and proud as I have been in this position.

I particularly wanted to thank my two team leaders, Richard Hall and Julie Gallagher. We are the last 3 men standing (so to speak) from those first days of CenTre in 2010. Without their support, good humour and dedication our service would most definitely not be what it is today.

I also wanted to mention Patience Utsihwegota, our clerical lady. It is thanks to her that we have access to such vast amounts of data which enable us to produce our reports and allows us to contribute to lots of interesting research and audit projects to help improve our care.

The really wonderful people in life never realise how truly wonderful they are, sometimes they need to be reminded. Keep doing what you all do—it make a truly amazing difference to so many lives.

Nicky Davey

Matron