

Public questions and answers: Integrated Care Board meeting, 19 July 2023

Questions received from the public with responses from the ICB

Question 1

Does the SE London ICB have plans to reduce the unequal treatment faced by LGBT+ couples and single women in SE London by removing the requirement to self fund three cycles of inter-uterine insemination before access to NHS-funded fertility treatment is possible? We still have to pay up to tens of thousands of pounds to try and conceive, and this presents a real barrier to family formation - made more acute by the deepening cost of living crisis which compounds pre-existing financial inequalities faced by women and LGBT+ people.

Response

Thank you for your question and matters of equity of access is something we take seriously in SE London ICB. As part of our planning process for the coming financial year 2024/25 we are intending to review our assisted conception treatment and preservation pathways for all eligible people, this will include inter-uterine insemination for same sex couples and single women.

Question 2

In response to my FOI query (FOI.22.SEL193) I was informed that monitoring data relating to the SEL Pathology Network contract was not available to the public. Following an internal review of that FOI response, I was additionally informed that the monitoring data was exempted from publication under Section 43 which relates to commercial confidentiality. I have not received a response to my further request for clarification on whether Sect. 43 applied not just to financial monitoring but also to monitoring data relating to the quality of the service delivered.
Does the Board consider it is right that the public are denied information regarding the quality of the service they receive under a contract costing £2.25bn of public money?

Response

Pathology services form part of the ICB's overall contracts for acute services and as for all services the ICB's contract monitoring and management processes are focussed on ensuring that services are being run efficiently and effectively, including oversight through the Board and its Committees. On the FOI request received the decision was that the detailed financial and performance information about this service was exempt from disclosure under the FOI act due to commercial sensitivity. The ICB will continue to monitor the service closely whilst ensuring that information is not disclosed that would contradict its duties under the FOI act.