

5 March 2020		ITEM: 8
Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Specialist Fertility – Thurrock CCG		
Wards and communities affected: Thurrock Residents and those registered with a Thurrock GP.	Key Decision: HOSC are asked to note the changes to the Specialist Fertility Policy for Thurrock CCG.	
Report of: Helen Farmer, Assistant Director of Integrated Commissioning Thurrock CCG		
Accountable Director: Ian Stidston Interim Director of Commissioning Thurrock CCG		
This report is for Public		

Executive Summary

Infertility is when a couple cannot get pregnant (conceive) despite having regular unprotected sex. Around 1 in 7 heterosexual couples in the UK may have difficulty conceiving. This is approximately 3.5 million people in the UK. About 84% of couples will conceive naturally within a year if they have regular unprotected sex. For couples who have been trying to conceive for more than 3 years without success, the likelihood of getting pregnant naturally within the next year is 25% or less.

The paper attached was presented and approved by Thurrock CCG Board and the new policy and criteria applied from the 1st April 2020. The paper provides a review of our local offer in context to the national and regional picture and concludes with considerations for Thurrock CCG Board members to in relation to amending the current policy.

The new policy outlines the offer for couples on the NHS which will be 2 cycles of IVF opposed to the current 3 IVF cycles. Thurrock CCG remains one of only 23% of CCGs offering 2 cycles with 62% offering 1 IVF cycle and recognises the importance and significant impact for those couples who require support with fertility.

The anticipated outcome would be greater clarity for service providers, consistency of approach within Thurrock and improvement to pre specialist intervention information and advice available for couples facing fertility concerns.

Local variations in treatment funding decisions are clearly undesirable, but there is little guidance at national level on the process of setting priorities for funding in regards to fertility. Development of policy which describes criteria and processes clearly will however provide and ensure consistency in decision making and approach for Thurrock residents.

