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Decision by the OCCG to continue with the closure of consultant-led maternity service at the Horton General Hospital for the foreseeable future

I'm writing to thank you for your letter of 2 December 2019, to Secretary of State (SofS) for Health and Social Care, concerning Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group's (OCCG) decision to continue the closure of consultant-led maternity services at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury for the foreseeable future. I would like to apologise for the delayed response, this is due to the work on Covid-19.

Maternity and related services at the Horton have been the subject of referrals to the SofS and the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP) in 2008 and 2017. The IRP provided advice and recommendations on these referrals to the then SofS for Health which were accepted in full.

After careful consideration of the information presented in your letter, in relation to the relevant legislation (the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013), SofS has concluded that it does not constitute a valid referral under the regulations as there does not appear to be a substantial variation or development in the health service since the last referral in 2017.

The consultant-led unit has been closed since October 2016 as the unit could not be adequately staffed in a safe and sustainable manner. The decision of the OCCG is to continue the closure and keep it under review annually and maintaining a midwife-led unit at the Horton.

I hope this reply is helpful.

EDWARD ARGAR

