

Peter Homa, chief executive of Nottingham University Hospitals Trust said:

“Our bid to provide dermatology services from 2013 was not successful. NUH consultants were obliged to transfer their employment to Circle following award of the contract. More than half of NUH’s (11) dermatology consultants chose not to transfer to Circle. Over time, these workforce and associated changes dismantled Nottingham’s previously distinguished Dermatology service, including research and teaching to trainees and medical students. This situation was consistently raised and predicted by NUH consultants. Many of our most experienced consultants have left NUH to work at other centres. From July this year we will have one full-time and one part-time consultant.

“One of the contract’s features was the separation of emergency and elective and adult and children’s services. We were no longer able to integrate these elements. As a consequence, as the number of NUH consultants reduced, our paediatric and emergency services were increasingly stretched.

“Our attempt to set up a limited elective service for local adult patients which would have allowed us to retain more of our consultants was halted by commissioners last year on contractual grounds. This further limited our ability to retain and recruit consultant dermatologists to NUH. By February 2015, we were left with no option but to scale back our adult emergency service.

“Our priority has been to preserve the paediatric service which we are contracted to provide. Our immediate priority is to recruit an additional consultant to support the local children’s dermatology service.

“The report for NHS Rushcliffe Clinical Commissioning Group highlights many lessons from which the NHS can learn. Our interpretation of the report’s main finding is that a new model of delivery is required to achieve a sustainable and affordable Dermatology Service in the future. It is clear that without a more radical approach to commissioning and employment contracts that this is unachievable and will not recreate a service that NHS consultants wish to join. We remain determined to work constructively with our partners with the single aim of achieving the best results for patients.”