

QUALITATIVE APPRAISAL

A primary consideration is the quality of care which can be provided in the BRI and/or BRCH in each of three available options.

OPTION A Continue to provide services at the current level.

There is national and local demand for increased cardiac services to meet *Health of the Nation* targets for a reduction in deaths from coronary heart disease. UBHT is a centre of excellence and is currently one of only two sites offering cardiac surgery in the South and West Region (the other being Southampton). If capacity is not expanded to meet increased demand, purchasers will place increasing numbers of contracts with Southampton or other out of Region providers eg Oxford, Cardiff, London, Birmingham. The establishment of a further cardiac surgery unit currently in planning stages in Plymouth will also present a further threat. In addition to loss of new work, UBHT may lose current business as its unit costs will not be competitive; it will lose expertise due to lack of experience in volume of operations performed (particularly in paediatric procedures); quality and outcomes which are directly related to numbers will fall; all of which could potentially lead to further loss of contracts and opportunities¹ for cardiac surgery.

This situation is counter to UBHT philosophy as a centre of excellence and a major teaching Trust at the leading edge of health care. It would remove all opportunity to develop existing services, and to introduce new treatment methods. The prospect of local residents having to travel out of the area to access cardiac surgery is also unacceptable in terms of quality of care.

This option is not considered viable.

OPTION B Relocate paediatric cardiac surgery to the BRCH.

The benefits of this option in relation to the quality of services which could be provided at the BRCH fall into four key areas :-

- a) patient focused care
- b) skills differences
- c) caseload management
- d) impact on waiting times

¹ For discussion only opportunities such as consideration of transplant centre: ablative surgery for dysrhythmia