

This is a published notice on the Find a Tender service: <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Notice/060200-2025>

Planning

## **Pathology services**

COUNTESS OF CHESTER HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-060200

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05a355

Published 26 September 2025, 2:30pm

### **Section I: Contracting authority**

#### **I.1) Name and addresses**

COUNTESS OF CHESTER HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

Liverpool Road

Chester

CH21UL

#### **Contact**

Thomas Parsonage

#### **Email**

[t.parsonage@nhs.net](mailto:t.parsonage@nhs.net)

#### **Country**

United Kingdom

#### **Region code**

UKD63 - Cheshire West and Chester

**NHS Organisation Data Service**

RJR

**Internet address(es)**

Main address

<https://www.coch.nhs.uk/>

**I.3) Communication**

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

**I.4) Type of the contracting authority**

Body governed by public law

**I.5) Main activity**

Health

---

**Section II: Object**

**II.1) Scope of the procurement**

**II.1.1) Title**

Pathology services

Reference number

G/0996

**II.1.2) Main CPV code**

- 85111800 - Pathology services

**II.1.3) Type of contract**

Services

#### II.1.4) Short description

In 2019 the NHS Long Term Plan set out the key ambition that all pathology services in England would be part of a pathology network by 2023 (now April 2025). In response to this the Cheshire & Merseyside Pathology Network developed an Outline Business Case which detailed an ambitious Target Operating Model which consists of developing 3 pathology hubs which would work together to make the best use of the assets and capabilities available, and to deliver on the benefits to patient care that are available by working more closely together. These three hubs cover the following geographical areas:

North Hub - Liverpool

East Hub - Sefton, Knowsley, St Helens, Warrington & Halton

South Hub - Cheshire West and The Wirral

To meet the National and Local ambitions Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is seeking a provider to deliver the South Hub Pathology Service. This provider must be able to offer a single pathology service for the geographical area of the South Hub (see table above) delivered through a hub and spoke model. The provider must be able to deliver a single pathology service which consists of a Central Hub, situated in the geographic area, and Essential Service Laboratories (ESL) at Countess of Chester Hospital and Chester and Wirral Microbiology Services (Bromborough, Wirral). The provider must continue to maintain an ESL based at the Countess of Chester Hospital and an ESL at Chester and Wirral Microbiology Services.

The provider must be able to deliver all aspects of:

Cellular Pathology (Histopathology and Cytology), Mortuary Services, Blood Science (Chemistry, Haematology, coagulation and blood transfusion), Immunology, Microbiology and Point of Care pathology services within the Central Hub.

The provider must be able to deliver Blood science (Chemistry, Haematology and blood transfusion), cellular pathology (Histopathology, cytology), Point of Care and a small amount of microbiology Screening (COVID, Flu testing) at the ESLs. To provide the service all hospital sites will retain their current equipment from their current suppliers, and so the provider will not be required to provide any equipment as part of this service.

The Provider must demonstrate that they can fulfil the current Pathology service requirements and the future ambitions of the Countess of Chester hospital and our Stakeholders.

To provide the service all current sites will retain their current equipment from their current suppliers, and so the provider will not be required to provide any equipment as part of this

service. For the avoidance of doubt this is not a managed service equipment contract.

### **II.1.6) Information about lots**

This contract is divided into lots: No

## **II.2) Description**

### **II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)**

- 85111810 - Blood analysis services
- 85111820 - Bacteriological analysis services

### **II.2.3) Place of performance**

NUTS codes

- UKD63 - Cheshire West and Chester
- UKD74 - Wirral

### **II.2.4) Description of the procurement**

In 2019 the NHS Long Term Plan set out the key ambition that all pathology services in England would be part of a pathology network by 2023 (now April 2025). In response to this the Cheshire & Merseyside Pathology Network developed an Outline Business Case which detailed an ambitious Target Operating Model which consists of developing 3 pathology hubs which would work together to make the best use of the assets and capabilities available, and to deliver on the benefits to patient care that are available by working more closely together. These three hubs cover the following geographical areas:

North Hub - Liverpool

East Hub - Sefton, Knowsley, St Helens, Warrington & Halton

South Hub - Cheshire West and The Wirral

To meet the National and Local ambitions Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is seeking a provider to deliver the South Hub Pathology Service. This provider must be able to offer a single pathology service for the geographical area of the South Hub (see table above) delivered through a hub and spoke model. The provider must be able to deliver a single pathology service which consists of a Central Hub, situated in the geographic area, and Essential Service Laboratories (ESL) at Countess of Chester Hospital and Chester and Wirral Microbiology Services (Bromborough, Wirral). The provider must continue to maintain an ESL based at the Countess of Chester Hospital and

an ESL at Chester and Wirral Microbiology Services.

The provider must be able to deliver all aspects of:

Cellular Pathology (Histopathology and Cytology), Mortuary Services, Blood Science (Chemistry, Haematology, coagulation and blood transfusion), Immunology, Microbiology and Point of Care pathology services within the Central Hub.

The provider must be able to deliver Blood science (Chemistry, Haematology and blood transfusion), cellular pathology (Histopathology, cytology), Point of Care and a small amount of microbiology Screening (COVID, Flu testing) at the ESLs. To provide the service all hospital sites will retain their current equipment from their current suppliers, and so the provider will not be required to provide any equipment as part of this service.

The Provider must demonstrate that they can fulfil the current Pathology service requirements and the future ambitions of the Countess of Chester hospital and our Stakeholders.

To provide the service all current sites will retain their current equipment from their current suppliers, and so the provider will not be required to provide any equipment as part of this service. For the avoidance of doubt this is not a managed service equipment contract.

### **II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice**

5 November 2025

---

## **Section IV. Procedure**

### **IV.1) Description**

#### **IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)**

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

---

## **Section VI. Complementary information**

### **VI.3) Additional information**

This is a Provider Selection Regime (PSR) intended approach notice. The awarding of this contract is subject to the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023. For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 do not apply to this award.

The award decision-makers will be the Board of the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

The intention is to award a contract using the most suitable provider process.