

Non-Obstetric Ultrasound (NOUS): Harmonic Medical Sonography Closure

Frequently Asked Questions

11 February 2026

The ICB wishes to update patients on developments relating to Harmonic Medical Sonography who are commissioned to provide NHS non-obstetric ultrasound services for people living in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Below is a series of Frequently Asked Questions which aims to help and support queries that may arise relating to the development.

What is this development?

On the 02 February 2026, Harmonic Medical Sonography (HMS) wrote to the ICB to formally notify us that they will be ceasing operations effective 06 February 2026. This means they no longer provide NHS non-obstetric ultrasound services (NOUS).

How will this impact me?

If you were a patient referred to HMS for an NHS NOUS scan and did not receive this on or before 06 February 2026, HMS has returned your referral to your GP. This means your GP will now refer you to one of our other NHS NOUS providers to undertake your scan. This new referral may be to Health Harmonie or to your nearest hospital.

Who is Health Harmonie?

Health Harmonie is an organisation which the ICB already commissions to provide NHS NOUS as well as a number of other health services. They are very experienced in providing NOUS for our population and they currently see around 10,000 patients per year from across Staffordshire. If you are referred to Health Harmonie, we are certain your experience with them will be a good one.

I have an appointment booked with HMS which is after 06 February 2026. What should I do?

All HMS appointments scheduled to be undertaken after 06 February 2026 will not go ahead. This is because HMS no longer operate the service. HMS has returned your referral to your GP who will refer you to one of our other NOUS providers.

Will I get a new appointment?

Yes. Your GP will refer you to one of our other NOUS providers. This new provider will contact you to advise your new appointment date and where this will be.

Do I need to contact HMS about my appointment?

No. The process of referring you to a different provider will be managed by your GP so you do not need to contact HMS.

My health has worsened since I was originally referred for NOUS, what should I do?

If you have a health concern or you feel your health has worsened, please contact your GP, call NHS 111 for advice or visit an urgent treatment centre. For severe, life-threatening symptoms, call 999 or go to your nearest emergency department.

Will my NOUS appointment be delayed because of this development?

Because of the extremely short notice given by HMS that they were to cease operations, it will mean some disruption to appointment schedules and some delays may occur. The ICB is very sorry for this

and is working with HMS, GPs and our other NHS NOUS providers to ensure appointments are rescheduled as quickly as possible.

Why didn't the ICB do something sooner to reduce the impact to patients?

HMS notified the ICB on the 02 February 2026 that they were ceasing operations effective 06 February 2026. We have responded to this development as quickly as possible and taken steps to ensure other NHS NOUS providers are available. Your care is of utmost importance to us and we have communicated with GPs to make them aware of the development and that they process your referral to another provider safely and as quickly as possible.

Has HMS written to patients to advise them of this development?

As part of NHS contracting requirements, providers wishing to end a service are required to give several months notice to the ICB. This notice allows us to develop a structured exit plan which would require the provider to write to patients. However, the circumstances under which HMS has ceased operations and the 5-day notice given has not allowed us any time to ensure HMS write to patients. The ICB understands the importance of keeping patients informed of their care and we have prepared this summary to help answer questions you may have about this development.

I've been waiting a long time for my appointment with HMS. How much longer will I have to wait?

The ICB has identified that some patients who were referred to HMS have waited longer than 6 weeks for their appointment and some even longer. HMS had not reported this to us previously and it has only come to light because of this development. We apologise for the delays you have experienced and have asked GPs to ensure those who have waited longer than 6 weeks, or require an urgent scan, are clearly identified when they refer to one of our other NHS NOUS providers. This will help the new provider to prioritise new appointments for these patients.

Will the new appointment be local to me?

It is likely that most HMS patients who have been returned to GPs will now be referred to Health Harmonie. Health Harmonie already hold clinic space in Staffordshire and are in the process of expanding this. If you are referred to Health Harmonie, they will aim to offer you an appointment as local to you as possible. Some patients may be referred to their local hospital e.g. Royal Wolverhampton Trust (Cannock Chase Community Hospital or New Cross Hospital), University Hospitals of Derby and Burton (Sir Robert Peel Hospital in Tamworth).

What can I do if I have a query or wish to complain about this development and/or the delays I have experienced?

The ICB is extremely sorry for the inconvenience this development has caused to all of our patients. The ceasing of services by HMS is out of our control. We continue to work hard to ensure patients are being supported in the best way possible and your appointment is rescheduled as quickly as possible. If you have any queries about this or wish to complain, you may write to the ICB PALS team

PatientServices@staffsstoke.icb.nhs.uk