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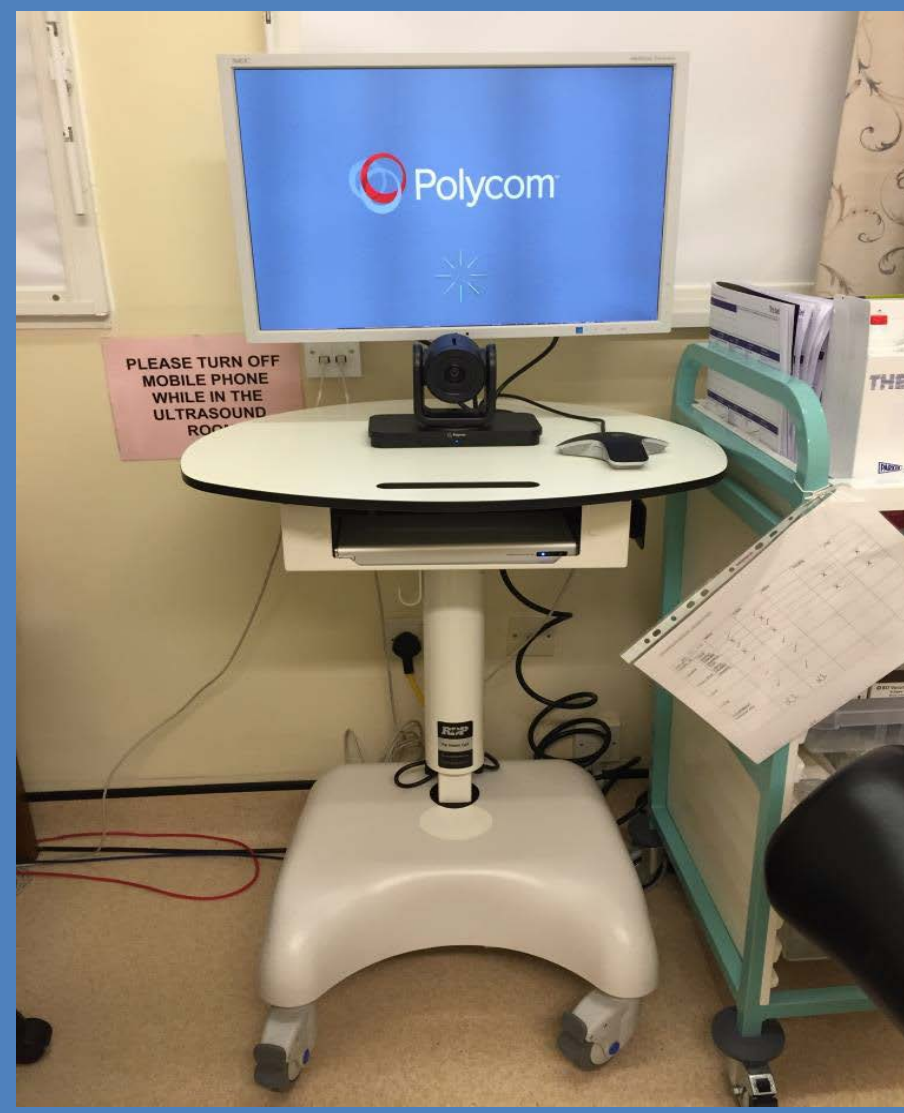
Improving Prenatal Diagnosis and Management in Cumbria by Telemedicine

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Background

- Women are referred for consultation with a fetal medicine specialist when a problem (small baby or fetal anomaly) is detected during an antenatal scan.
- Three consultant-led units in Cumbria currently refer women to Newcastle for specialist fetal medicine care.
- For some women, this can involve travelling for up to six hours, at their own expense.
- Telemedicine has previously been used to transmit good quality obstetric ultrasound images [1,2] and has the potential to provide specialist obstetric ultrasound and consultation to women in Cumbria.



Aims

- To establish a videoconferencing infrastructure between the obstetric ultrasound unit at West Cumberland Hospital and the Fetal Medicine Unit in Newcastle.
- To determine the technical success of the service.
- To evaluate the success of utilising the telemedicine to provide ultrasound training and competency assessment in uterine artery and middle cerebral artery Doppler measurement.
- To assess women's views of using a telemedicine ultrasound service, including family costs.
- To assess the benefits and barriers to adoption of the service across Cumbria.

Progress

- A telemedicine link has been successfully established.
- Fetal ultrasound images have been transmitted via the link and are of good quality.
- Sonographers from WCH have commenced a programme of training via the telemedicine link to gain competency in advanced fetal Doppler techniques.
- Fetal medicine scans will be undertaken from October 2015.