

# Chairman's bulletin

April 2017

Dear member,

I am pleased to update you after our latest board of directors' meeting.

I hope you find this bulletin informative. If you have any comments about the format or content please contact the private office.

## Thank you from Jeremy Hunt

The chief executive Alan Foster and I received a personal letter from Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Health, congratulating staff after the trust was judged to be the best performer in the country in identifying patients who come into A&E who have dementia. This is an incredible achievement at a time when the trust has been so busy. I am extremely proud to be chairman and to see our staff's hard work acknowledged at such a high level is a wonderful achievement.

## New integrated care centres

On Saturday 1 April the new integrated urgent care service for minor illness and minor and including out of hours GP services injuries was launched in Stockton and Hartlepool. The new services were well received with approximately 500 attendances at the North Tees site and around 350 at the Hartlepool site. We have thanked all staff who have helped with the launch of the service, both behind the scenes and front line staff who will work in the centres, the hard work to implement this has certainly paid off.

Walk-in services at Tithebarn House in Stockton on Tees and the walk-in service and minor injuries service at One Life Hartlepool have now closed. These walk-in and minor injuries services are now being provided in the new integrated urgent care centres at the University Hospital of North Tees and the University Hospital of Hartlepool.

For more information go to [www.nth.nhs.uk/news/changes-urgent-care/](http://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/changes-urgent-care/)

## Perfect operating list

We recently held an event to mark the first 30 days of the trust's perfect operating list, 90 day improvement programme. The project involves five work streams which aim to improve the patient's journey and experience in addition to the objectives to become more efficient and provide value for money.

The event included feedback from each of the work streams on the achievements made so far as well as providing details of future improvements to be implemented with the 60 and 90 day targets. The project work is being supported by NHS Improvement and Organisation Development, who are providing guidance and education on the completion of PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) cycles.

The next section of the project will see those improvements implemented within the 60 and 90 day targets, this will then see the end of the implementation phase 1 of the programme and will move the programme into phase 2 on the perfect operating list continuous improvement journey, a journey for life. The next event will be held on 26 April, 09:00 – 13:00. We will keep you updated as to the topics discussed and any actions and /or improvements which are communicated from the various work streams.

## Research

The National Institute for Health Research network for the North East and Cumbria has written to the trust to congratulate us on achieving all seven of the improvement criteria.

It is also worth noting building work has begun in the Middlefield Centre at the University Hospital of North Tees to help provide an improved research facility. This facility will be opened in June and officially launched in September at the annual Research and Development Conference.

## Information governance

In his report to the board, chief information and technology officer Dr Graham Evans provided an update about information governance in the trust.

The trust has appointed deputy director of nursing, patient safety and quality Lindsey Robertson as deputy Caldicott guardian, whose role is to be responsible for protecting the confidentiality of patient and service-user information.

We have also reduced the number of incidents at level two (medium/high risk) and above from 13 in 2014/15, to two in 2015/16 and just one this year.

### *Audit*

The trust was audited by the Information Commissioners Office in January. The audit identified many good areas of practice and overall we have been awarded high assurance, which is the highest available rating.

## Quality

In her report to the board, director of nursing, patient safety and quality Julie Lane provided an update on how we are continuing to improve quality for patients.

### *Mortality*

The latest HSMR (hospital standardised mortality ratio), which measures the amount of people who actually die compared to the number who might be expected to die in our hospitals, was reported at 106.77, which remains in the 'as expected' range. We have seen a dramatic improvement in our ratio over this last year.

The latest SHMI (summary hospital level mortality indicator) has increased slightly to 111.95, which places the trust in the 'as expected' range.

We all recognise that the care provided has previously not been reflected in the figures but now it is. There remains further work to do, but the trend is heading in the right direction.

## Preventing the spread of infection

In February the Trust reported two attributed cases of clostridium difficile infection. This brings the total up to 35 reported to February of this year. This exceeds the very challenging trajectory for the year of 13 cases.

The Trust reported no trust attributed cases MRSA bacteraemia in February.

We must do everything we can to keep these cases to an absolute minimum and continue be vigilant.

If you are in the hospitals or other clinical areas across the trust you can help us by making sure you wash or clean your hands appropriately.

## Our performance

Chief operating officer and deputy chief executive Julie Gillon updated the board on the Trust's performance.

While key operational standards remain very challenging across the Trust, performance against the emergency care standard was not achieved in the month of February, reporting at 92.62%. The Trust performance has remained above the national and North East average, despite seeing an overall increase in attendances and admissions and the trust remains in the top 20 for performance in this standard in the country.

### *Cancer services*

The Trust continues to experience significant pressures in achieving the cancer pathway standards.

We have under-achieved against the cancer 62 day referral to treatment standard in January, reporting at 79.38%, against the 85% standard but we are seeing this recover in February.

Like Trusts across the country, we are experiencing increased system wide pressures which are having an effect on our level of performance.

## Money

The Trust's financial position currently shows £2.98million behind plan at month 11, an in year deficit of £1.58m. Planned cost reductions have not materialised this month and as you will know it has been very busy across the trust which has made it a challenge to deliver these savings. However, we are trying to resolve a number of issues with our commissioners.

As we come towards the end of the financial year we have not been able to meet the target we were set. This is something many Trusts across the country have had to report as we all work to cope with winter pressures and maintain the best care we can for our patients.

## Workforce

Deputy director of human resources Alan Sheppard updated the board on the Trust's workforce.

In the third quarter of this year the staff headcount has risen by 25 to 5,508 and the sickness absence

rate is 4.89%.

### *Training*

Weekly inter-professional simulation sessions are still being held in accident and emergency and the emergency assessment unit, while regular sessions continue in paediatrics, in surgery and obstetrics and gynaecology. All second year foundation doctors have also completed their simulation training for pneumonia, sepsis and acute kidney injury.

### *Staff survey*

The response rate to this year's NHS staff survey was 61%, a significant rise from the 45% we achieved last year and the highest return significantly when compared to neighbouring Trusts, an achievement I am extremely proud of.

### *Medical education*

Medical education is making progress and has had positive feedback from quality assurance visits about the training and supervision of medical trainees. We will be focusing in the coming year on understanding why we fell back in the overall rating in the General Medical Council national training and making improvements.

## Guardian of Safe Working

As part of the new junior doctor contract, medical director Deepak Dwarakanath will be providing a quarterly update to the board around the safe working of doctors.

As part of this, we have appointed Mr Pud Bhaskar as the guardian of safe working hours whose role is to work as a champion for safe working hours and act independently of the trust.

## Council leader visits urgent care centre

We welcomed the leader of Stockton Council, councillor Bob Cook, to the trust recently. During his visit, we went to the new paediatric outpatients department and to the new urgent care centre at the University Hospital of North Tees.

## Mayor of Hartlepool visit to elective care unit

Mayor of Hartlepool councillor Rob Cook visited the University Hospital of Hartlepool recently where he was taken on the patient journey through the access lounge, operating theatres and the elective care unit where he met with matron Linda Wildberg and her team. Cllr Cook has had two knee joint replacements in our care and had nothing but praise for the care he has received.

## New consultants

The following consultant appointments have been made:

Dr Rachel Miller, Consultant General Medicine and Respiratory

Mr Venkatesh Shanmugam, Consultant Colorectal Surgeon

Dr Kishore Sajjanraj, Consultant Paediatrician

Dr Adnan Zafar, Consultant Paediatrician

Dr Janaki Mahadevan, Consultant Paediatrician

Mr Nigel Brewster, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

## The board papers

The board papers from the last board meeting are posted on our website when the minutes of the previous meeting are approved. If you would like to read the board papers please go to <http://www.nth.nhs.uk/about/board-meetings/>

Board meetings are held in public and you are welcome to attend. To confirm your attendance please contact the private office on 01642 624060.