

Chairman's bulletin

January 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.

Integrated urgent care service in Stockton and Hartlepool

Work is underway on site at the University Hospital of North Tees and the University Hospital of Hartlepool to deliver a new integrated urgent care service.

From 1 April the new GP led urgent care service will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. It will include GP out of hours services (where patients can see a GP for urgent care needs on evenings and weekends) and minor injuries. These appointments will be available by calling 111.

The trust will deliver the service across the University Hospital of Hartlepool and the University Hospital of North Tees, in alliance with Hartlepool and Stockton Health (the local GP Federation) and the North East Ambulance Service.

This is a very exciting development for the trust and we're looking forward to working together with partner organisations to provide this facility, which will be a huge benefit to all patients.

Over the next month, the urgent care mobilisation team, from emergency care services will be speaking to staff across the trust to explain how these services will benefit patients and what it means for the organisation.

Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs)

As I told you last year, the NHS England has asked NHS organisations to work together on improvement plans for their area, called Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) to improve health and wellbeing, quality of care and efficiencies in the NHS.

This week chief executive Alan Foster was due to be at a development session for all leaders of the 44 STP footprints which will be led by NHS England chief executive Simon Stevens to get additional feedback and I look forward to updating you about this next month.

The draft plan for our footprint can be viewed here www.nth.nhs.uk/news/sustainability-transformation-plan

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 106.45, a slight increase but still within the 'as expected' range.

The latest SHMI (summary hospital level mortality indicator) has decreased to 111.84 from the previous value of 113.19 which places the trust back into the 'as expected' range.

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

Preventing the spread of infection

In December the trust reported two more attributed cases of clostridium difficile infection, bringing the total up to 24 reported this year. This exceeds the very challenging trajectory for the year of 13 cases.

The trust reported no trust attributed cases MRSA bacteraemia in December.

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

If you are in the hospitals or in 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.

Again we have had a very busy winter so far and additional pressure on our services and an increase in the number of attendances in accident and emergency has meant our performance against the emergency care standard was not achieved in the month of December, reporting at 90.71% against the target of 95%. This also unfortunately meant we fell just below the target for the third quarter of the year – achieving 94.21%. In this last quarter we treated over 400 more patients through ambulatory care than we did in the same period last year, which shows how much busier we have been.

As we've said on many occasions the four hour target does not only belong to accident and emergency. The whole trust and health system needs to be working effectively for this target to be achieved.

Cancer services

The trust continues to experience significant pressures in achieving the cancer pathway standards. However, in the third quarter the trust achieved compliance against all cancer standards at a time when trusts across the country are experiencing pressures in delivering the cancer standards. We have also not cancelled any cancer operations.

It's a tribute to all staff involved that they have achieved these targets.

Money

In her update to the board director of finance Caroline Trevena reported that in December we were £709,000 in surplus, in line with the planned figure agreed with NHS Improvement.

While the trust's cost improvement programme of £7.9m for 2016/17 is on plan, there are some difficult times ahead with a high percentage of the savings having been delivered non-recurrently.

We have done much to achieve the efficiencies required of us over the years, however the longer we are required to make these levels of savings the more challenging they become to achieve.

Capital programme

Director of estates and facilities Peter Mitchell updated the board on the trust's capital programme.

The trust has a long lease agreement for the site of the former Hardwick Health Centre, opposite the University Hospital of North Tees. Work is now under way to turn it into a new car park for patients – generating money which will go back into patient care.

Work on the two new urgent care centres is well on its way and are on track to be completed on time. As part of this work, a new children's outpatients area has been created at the University Hospital of North Tees.

Work to replace the infrastructure of the building at the University Hospital of North Tees is progressing well and due to be completed by April. The first phase of work, upgrading the electrical infrastructure, is well under way and the second phase of work to develop the new energy centre has received full planning permission.

The NHS Leadership Recognition Awards

Congratulations to assistant director of transformation Gary Wright who was nominated in the 'emerging leader' category and to the transformation and organisation development teams who were nominated in the 'leading systems transformation' category at the NHS Leadership Recognition Awards last week.

The awards celebrate leaders at all levels and across all professions.

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.