

Chairman's bulletin

June 2016

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.



Cath Siddle

As you may know, after a period of illness Cath Siddle passed away on 20 May.

Cath worked at the trust for over 40 years, beginning her career in Hartlepool as a student nurse, working her way up to director of nursing, patient safety and quality.

The board expressed their deepest condolences to Cath's family and friends at this sad time. She will be missed by all who worked with her.

Public consultation launched on fertility services

A public consultation has been launched by NHS Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to seek the views of local people on three different options for the future location of assisted reproduction services.

The trust informed the CCG they were unable to continue to deliver safe and clinically effective assisted reproduction services in the future due to the inability to recruit adequate staffing levels. The CCG and the trust are therefore working together to establish the best way forward and are seeking the public's views to help inform the future decision regarding the location of the service.

The options that the CCG are consulting on are:

- Option 1: A comprehensive assisted reproductive service including HFEA licensed and unlicensed provision remains at Hartlepool delivered by an alternative provider.
- Option 2: Unlicensed assisted reproductive services continue to be delivered at Hartlepool and patients requiring licenced provision choose to go to an alternative site e.g. James Cook University Hospital, Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Gateshead and Newcastle Fertility Centre at the Centre for Life.
- Option 3: A comprehensive assisted reproductive service including HFEA licensed and unlicensed provision will no longer be available at Hartlepool but will be delivered at other sites in the region.

It is recognised that this may cause concern and we are working together to be able to provide a safe and sustainable service in the future.

The public consultation will run for six weeks until Friday 15 July. More information is available on the consultation website www.haveasay.org.uk

Better Health Programme

You will have seen that a number of public engagement events have been taking place across Darlington, Durham and Tees to help people understand what the Better Health Programme means to the local community.

The Better Health Programme is looking at how local hospitals achieve the standards which local people have a right to expect from their services, and how the NHS meets its aspirations to provide more care in the home and in community based settings.

It is being led by clinicians including senior hospital consultants and GPs from the clinical commissioning groups and the three foundation trusts operating across County Durham, Darlington and Tees.

Quality

Acting director of nursing, quality and patient safety Julie Lane updated the board on how we are improving quality for patients.

SPEQS

Staff and patient experience and quality standards (SPEQS) panels, where staff as well as patients are asked about their experience are continuing to take place across the trust, in hospital and in the community. It means any areas of concern are raised immediately and also means we can share areas of good practice.

This year the system has been updated to provide more in-depth analysis and ability to monitor trends.

In the first month of this new system (April) the overall score was 95.97%, with 100% being achieved in 12 of the 36 areas visited.

Preventing the spread of infection

In April there were two cases of clostridium difficile infection. This equals the trajectory for the month and is an improvement on the same month last year when four cases were reported. The trajectory for this year is a very challenging 13 cases.

There were no cases of MRSA bacteraemia in April.

The infection prevention and control team is targeting wards considered high risk based on last year's cases, and is concentrating on the basics of good infection prevention practice such as hand hygiene and environmental cleanliness and use of standard precautions.

The trust is also taking part in an NHS improvement 90 day programme, which focuses on the reduction of clostridium difficile. The trust will also have the opportunity to learn from good practice from the other 29 trusts who are also taking part in the programme. A team of five from the trust, led by the acting director of nursing and patient safety will facilitate the projects for this improvement programme.

You can help, if you are in hospitals or in other clinical areas across the trust by:

- making sure you wash or clean your hands appropriately
- following our bare below the elbows policy

We have been incredibly successful at tackling the spread of infection in the past. Let's get back to where we want to be by working together.

Performance

In her report to the board chief operating officer / deputy chief executive Julie Gillon reported on the trust's performance.

Emergency care

Disappointingly in April we have not achieved the target of 95% of patients being seen, treated, admitted or discharged from accident and emergency within four hours (we reported 93.6%).

The North East position underachieved in March, with the latest position reported at 90.9%, and while all North East trusts underachieved against the expected standard, the trust continues to remain above the national average.

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

We achieved all but one of the cancer targets in March, thanks to all of your hard work.

The trust under-achieved the breast symptomatic two week rule reporting at 92.49% against the 93% target as a result of patient choice.

These targets continue to be increasingly challenging to achieve due to significant pressures and because many are shared between us and the specialist centre.

Winter planning (operational resilience)

We have seen unprecedented pressures across the whole of the trust, and we have learned lessons from the winter to implement in readiness for the next one. However we also know that the whole system has to work effectively together and we will be continuing to work with our health and social care partners to improve care and services.

Money

We are now in the new financial year. At the end of April we were £622,000 in deficit, just ahead of the planned deficit figure agreed with NHS Improvement.

The trust has a total cost improvement programme for 2016/17 of £7.9m.

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.

We have a track record of good performance, but the whole healthcare system is under pressure.

We will work together across the organisation to make sure we can be as financially efficient as possible without compromising quality or patient care.

NHS staff survey

In her report to the board director of human resources and education Ann Burrell reported the outcomes of the recent staff survey and how the trust is engaging, rewarding and recognising the work of its staff. Developments include:

- actively engaging with staff in focus groups to address the issues raised in the staff survey
- launching the employee of the month award, which came from a suggestion at the focus groups

- the launch of the golden ticket reward scheme
- actively taking part in the I make a difference campaign

Volunteering at the trust

I would like to announce the appointment of volunteer co-ordinator Paul Wharton. This appointment is a first for the trust and will enable us to recruit and expand development opportunities for the trust's very much valued volunteer services.

Medical director David Emerton

I would like to thank David Emerton, who will retire as Medical Director next month.

During his six years as medical director David has provided excellent leadership to the medical staff and we wish him well in his retirement.

Congratulations

Employee of the month

Health visitor Clare Woodhouse is the first staff member to be presented with the employee of the month award. Clare was nominated by her colleague Vicki James for showing outstanding support to a family under tragic circumstances.

Clare was touched after hearing of a families loss so organised and took part in fundraising events that helped plant a tree in a local park in memory of their loved one.

Vicki said that Clare took no recognition for this and was just happy to make a difference to a family in need. Clare is a very caring and compassionate person who has shown how far she will go to help and support others. I know associate director of out of hospital care Julie Parkes has already congratulated Clare and I would like to do the same.

Outcome and performance team award

Congratulations to senior clinical matron Alison Coates and senior clinical nurse Tess Moore who were recently presented with the trust outcome and performance team award by deputy medical director Jane Metcalf and non-executive director Kevin Robinson.

The award is recognition of their valuable contribution towards the improvement of care and the reduction in mortality rates.

Bright Ideas in Health Awards finalist

Congratulations to consultant in palliative medicine Jane Bentley, Macmillan clinical nurse specialist Jason Black and Macmillan clinical nurse lead John Sheridan on becoming finalists in the Bright Ideas in Health Awards, with their entry in the service improvement category for the new role of the Macmillan clinical end of life co-ordinator.

OBE awarded

Congratulations to Mark White, Elected Governor for Stockton who has been awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to education.

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.