

Chairman's bulletin

May 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.

Demand for services

The trust has been under sustained pressure through the winter and spring. Our priority is to deliver safe care to patients and while this can be challenging, we know that all of our staff are doing their best to support this.

The board has thanked everyone, who is involved in caring for our patients, whether in the community or in hospital for the excellent care and services they provide. Their continued support in responding to the pressures, to ensure our patients receive a safe and quality service is very much valued.

Licensed fertility treatment

In February the trust through its solicitors wrote to Hartlepool Borough Council offering consultation regarding the provision of licensed fertility treatments at Hartlepool Hospital. However the Council decided to take legal action in the High Court and this matter was decided at the beginning of April. The position as agreed by the High Court was on the same terms as included in our February letter other than fixing an agreed date for completion of the consultation.

This agreement was approved by the High Court, on substantially the same terms as proposed by the trust in February, although it is disappointing that the council felt the need to resort to litigation, which was unnecessary and a waste of public funds.

Engagement and consultation will be led by the Hartlepool and Stockton Clinical Commissioning Group who will be supported by the trust. In the meantime, the current service will remain in place until a final decision about the future of the unit is taken, providing it is clinically safe.

Sustainability and transformation plans (STPs)

We're really fortunate that chief executive Alan Foster has been appointed to lead the sustainability and transformation programme in the Durham, Darlington and Tees, Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby footprint.

It was announced last month by NHS England that there are 44 footprints across the country being led by CCG accountable officers, NHS providers and local authority chief executives.

These geographic areas will bring local health and care leaders, organisations and communities together to develop local blueprints for improved health, care

delivering the NHS Five Year Forward View.

STPs are an exciting move towards transforming health and care at a local level with the active engagement of the clinicians and staff who actually deliver it. To develop care integrated around the needs of patients and users, our partners in local government will help us understand what our communities need.

The vision of sustainability and transformation plans is to ultimately bring about a situation where people stay healthier for longer and, if they do become ill, supporting them to manage their conditions in the community, avoiding the need where possible for hospital admissions.

Alan has taken up this role in conjunction with his role as chief executive.

Junior doctors' industrial action

Last week saw further industrial action by junior doctors. Thanks to good planning and help and cooperation from staff across the trust, contingency plans which were put into place, ensured that there was minimal disruptions for anyone visiting hospital during that time.

The board of directors would like to thank all staff who stepped up to the mark to ensure that the trust was safely providing the right level of care for our patients.

Better Health Programme

The NHS Better Health programme is holding a series of 17 public engagement events across Darlington Durham and Tees this month, to talk to patients and the public about how health services could be provided in the future.

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 three foundation trusts operating across County Durham, Darlington and Tees, and compliments the work of the sustainable and transformation programme.

Details of the 17 events and a background to the programme are available at www.nhsbetterhealth.org.uk and at <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/nhs-better-health-programme-9505048832> or those interested can get in touch by emailing nescu.betterhealthprogramme@nhs.net. Please come along and have your say.

New deputy medical director appointments

These appointments follow the recently announced changes to the role of medical director with Deepak Dwarakanath taking on this role in June 2016 when David Emerton retires.

I am delighted that we have announced that Jane Metcalf and Chris Tulloch have been appointed to the roles of deputy medical director. These roles are new to the trust and will provide support to the medical director in delivering the trust's agenda in relation to the medical workforce and clinical services strategy.

Jane and Chris are long serving trust colleagues and have a wealth of experience in their specialist areas and as clinical director for medical education and clinical director for orthopaedics.

Quality

Preventing the spread of infection

In March there were five cases of clostridium difficile infection. For 2015/16, a total of 36 cases of CDifficile have been reported which exceeds the trajectory for the year. It is disappointing to see the

number of cases significantly more than last year but a great deal of work is going on to ensure that we keep any infection rates to a minimum.

There was no cases of MRSA bacteraemia in March. However, to date the trust has reported two cases of MRSA which exceeds the zero tolerance trajectory.

We are reminding all members of the public if you are in the 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 dress code

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 March we just missed the target of 95% of patients being seen, treated, admitted or discharged from accident and emergency within four hours.

It is important to recognise that the trust has consistently performed within or above the national performance throughout the year, ultimately affecting the year end position.

Regional pressures have significantly impacted on this with our trust having to accept patients from other areas. 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

Thank you to the hard work of our staff the trust achieved all but one of the cancer targets. We have targets for two week, 31 days and 62 days; we did not achieve the 62 day target, which reported at 82% against the 85% standard.

These targets are always challenging to achieve because many are shared between us and the specialist centre.

Money

In her report to the board acting director of finance Caroline Trevena reported that at the end of 2015/16 financial performance was behind where we planned to be, with a deficit of £7.396m, which is in line with the control total agreed with Monitor.

Investing in services and equipment (the capital programme)

We continue to invest in our estate, technology and equipment to ensure we have the best environment possible to provide patient care.

In her report to the board director of finance, ICT and support services Lynne Hodgson reported that:

- eight surgical diathermy units within the operating theatre had been replaced
- fourteen electric surgical saws and drills have replaced the aging models currently used in the operating theatres

- three replacement ultrasound units for use in women's health, which can provide an image of the unborn baby and have the capability of producing a 4D image for expectant parents
- Seventeen electric profiling beds within critical care have been replaced
- a new cancer information centre has opened, on the ground floor, next to cashiers at the University Hospital of North Tees
- the re-development of the lecture theatre, which offers the adaptability of a standard lecture theatre to be converted easily into a multi-functional meeting room has been completed
- the Trakcare programme continues

Medical education

In her report to the board, director of human resources and education praised the medical education team following recent quality visits by external bodies.

The University of Newcastle Medical School and the Northern Foundation School visit the trust annually to assure the provision of education and training the trust provides for medical students and foundation doctors.

The report following the visit commended the support and delivery of the medical education strategy and allocation of education supervisors for all final year students.

Continuing excellence award - North East Better Health at Work Award

It was excellent to hear that the occupational health and wellbeing have received recognition of the trust's success in achieving their third year continuing excellence award organised by North East Better Health at Work Award.

The North East Better Health At Work Award was developed in line with national and regional frameworks and this local scheme was set up to improve the health and wellbeing of employees within the workplace.

Trust research and development and education learning and development conference

The research and development and education, learning and development department joint conference was held last month.

There was some fantastic work on show which is being done across the trust. The event was a great success.

Achievements

I wanted to share with you some of the excellent achievements of our staff.

Data quality hero

Data manager/clinical educator John Lewandowski was recognised as a data quality hero at the National Intensive Care National Audit and Research Council annual event this month.

We were one of four trusts given the award as recognition of the high standards of data quality.

Queen's Nurse award for Barbara

Respiratory nurse specialist Barbara Thompson, who works at One Life Hartlepool has been recognised with the prestigious title of Queen's Nurse.

The award is given to community nurses who have shown outstanding commitment to high standards of practice and patient care while also acting as a mentor to colleagues and student nurses.

Recognition for stop smoking lead Pat Marshall

Stop smoking service lead Pat Marshall has been awarded a mayors good citizens award for her contribution to health and wellbeing to the Borough of Stockton since 2004. She was presented her certificate by the Mayor of Stockton Mr Dalgano at the mayors civic awards.

Sharing good practice

Our trust was involved at a recent national event about sharing good practice.

Consultant in obstetrics and gynaecology Dolon Basu, teaching fellow William Taylor and specialist registrar Elizabeth Hanson had their work recognised. The three were shortlisted for display at a recent national UK Foundation Programme Office/ National Association of Clinical Tutors event in London.

Dolon, William and Elizabeth gave a presentation about *best practice in supporting doctors with differing needs*.

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.