

Chairman's bulletin

November 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.

Appointments to the board

At the board meeting I formally welcomed director of nursing, patient safety and quality Julie Lane and director of estates and facilities management Peter Mitchell to the board.

Sustainability and transformation plans (STP)

The last few months have very much involved taking forward the planning for the sustainability and transformation plans in the Durham, Darlington and Tees, Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby footprint.

The plan was submitted to NHS England on Friday 21 October and was due to be published mid-November following discussions about the submission with NHS England. However, it is disappointing that this has been published by Hartlepool Borough Council without agreement on their own web site on the link below:

https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/20081/health_and_well_being/611/sustainability_transformation_plan_stp

You may have read a lot about this in the media as we are starting to move forward. This submission is still a draft plan and shows the potential direction of travel which is subject to further refinement and public consultation. It is important to note that no decisions have been made at this stage.

The information contained within our STP is in line with the engagement work that has so far taken place across the footprint with stakeholders and public; this includes engagement on local plans, the Better Health Programme and Fit 4 the future - transforming our communities. These programmes have undertaken wide-reaching and informative engagement using a variety of inclusive mechanisms and channels where we have aimed to engage with people across the DDTHRW area.

We will continue to keep you informed once we have further information to share.

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, has shown a slight increase reported at 105.58, although this still remains inside the as expected range where the national mean is 100.

The latest SHMI (summary hospital level mortality indicator) has been released for the period of April 2015 to March 2016, with the value reducing to 113.19 from 117.31 in the previous period.

While there still remains further work to do, the trend is heading in the right direction.

Preventing the spread of infection

In September the trust reported three trust attributed cases of clostridium difficile infection, bringing the total up to 19 reported this year. This exceeds the trajectory for the month and also means we have exceeded the trajectory for the second quarter of the year. The trajectory for this year is a very challenging 13 cases.

There has been one case of trust attributed MRSA bacteraemia.

If you are in the hospitals you can help by:

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

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 achieved in the month of September, reporting at 95.06%. The trust performance has remained within or above the national and North East average, despite seeing an overall increase in attendances and admissions.

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 quarter 2, reporting at 83.19%, against the 85% standard. Nationally a number of trusts are experiencing pressures in delivering the cancer standards with the national average for the 62 day referral to treatment reporting at 82.6%.

Money

In her update to the board director of finance Caroline Trevena, reported at the end of September we were £599k in surplus, ahead of 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.

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 need to work together to make sure we can be as financially efficient as possible without compromising quality or patient care.

Winter planning

While the trust is well prepared for winter, each year brings new and unexpected challenges. We reflect on the previous year to plan for the future, working in partnership with our commissioners and stakeholders, as with dealing with any rise in demand, the whole system must work effectively to respond.

We are working with our partners in the rest of the health service and social care to ensure we can respond to the increases in demand.

Investing in services and equipment

It is vital to continue to invest in our estate, technology and equipment to ensure you have the best environment possible to provide patient care. In his report to the board, director of estates and facilities management Peter Mitchell reported that:

- The £5m electrical infrastructure work at UHNT has started
- There has been a significant investment in medical equipment
- The ICT and telephone exchange will be upgraded, bringing in digital technology
- The work on the integrated urgent care centres at the University Hospital of North Tees and the University Hospital of Hartlepool is underway
- A ward decant and refurbishment programme is continuing

Trust named best in the country in GMC survey

I was delighted to hear that the trust has been named as the best in the country for core surgical training following a survey carried out by the General Medical Council (GMC). The University Hospital of North Tees has the highest overall satisfaction in core general surgery training and is in the top 10 for every other indicator. We're the only hospital to achieve this.

This is a real accolade to the staff here, from the surgeons and all of the staff who support the training.

Consultants

We're delighted to announce the appointment of the following consultants:

Dr Subhan Christudas – consultant paediatrician
Dr Julie Barnsley – consultant in palliative care
Dr Stephen Mitchell – consultant gastroenterologist

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.