

CHAIR'S REPORT to the BOARD of DIRECTORS and COUNCIL of GOVERNORS

June to August 2015

Staff engagement, with particular emphasis on clinicians, has continued at pace with the pulse opinion survey responses now under consideration to enable us to sense check how staff at all levels are feeling. The concepts of a 'Values Driven Organisation' underpinned by 'Distributed Leadership' are fundamental to the Trust's overall intent to ensure that patients and staff are at the centre of all we do, together with ensuring that all staff understand their roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. The overall outcome of this work is starting to be seen in the improvements that are being achieved throughout the Trust.

We have also continued building our relationships with stakeholders improving openness and transparency, especially through data sharing and the quality of that data. That data also allows us all to understand the challenges to improving performance and associated outcomes as well as where we can improve, on a sustainable basis, across the health system as a whole.

Collectively we are continuing to work across the system through the Better Care Fund in Birmingham and ICASS in Solihull. A particular result of this work is national recognition with the Vanguard Project in Solihull relating to the provision of Emergency and Urgent Care. All of this work is leading to delivery of care at the point and place of need. This is better for the patient and results in a more effective and efficient use of resources.

Our strategic intent, which will shortly be published for wider discussion, will allow us to respond to the developing national context and the financial challenges we will continue to face. This will require us and our partners to innovate, use resources collectively and share with all staff, patients and communities how we will provide services across the care paradigm.

Our planned actions, as detailed in the Integrated Improvement Programme, are being undertaken and in nearly all areas we are meeting our targets, which indicates that the diagnosis of the wide range of issues that required action to build resilience and sustainability into the work of the Trust where right; as was the emphasis on patient care and safety, together with cultural change. However, one particular ongoing challenge is ensuring the well-being of all staff, whilst seeking to have the right number with the right qualifications in the right place at the right time. We are still overly reliant on the goodwill of staff coupled with over reliance of agency staff. This latter aspect places a direct and disproportionate financial pressure on the Trust.

Monitor continues to support the Trust whilst providing both challenge and advice. There is a great deal still to be achieved but, together, we are continuing to make positive progress with Monitor now expressing cautious optimism in relation to our progress.

The work of the Board, together with the Council of Governors, in terms of filling substantive leadership posts continues, thus ensuring that the future of the Trust is developed and sustained. To this end it is intended to announce the appointment of a substantive CEO early in October.

As many of you will by now know Professor Laura Serrant, who is in her fourth year as a Non-Executive Director, is leaving the Trust at the end of September and moving from the West Midlands. Laura has been a very important member of the Board and has latterly chaired the Workforce Committee of the Board. I would like to place on record my own and the Board's appreciation for her work on behalf of the Trust and wish her well for the future.

I am very pleased to report that a proposal is being put to the Council of Governors to appoint Professor Jon Glasby as a Non-Executive Director from October 2015. Jon is Professor of Health and Social Care and Head of the School of Social Policy at the University of Birmingham.

I appreciate that these continue to be challenging times for the Trust and I would like to thank everyone irrespective of where they work and in whatever role for their ongoing hard work, commitment and dedication. I would also wish on behalf of myself and the Board to thank the Council of Governors for their continuing support and challenge, which has been an enabling factor to the ongoing delivery of the actions embodied in the Integrated Improvement Programme. .

Internal and External Activities

- I am continuing to meet staff and volunteers throughout the Trust and continue to be impressed by the efforts and endeavour being undertaken to meet the needs of our patients, during what is and shows every likelihood of continuing to be an exceptionally busy period, safely with compassion and care. I continue to hold my drop-in clinics for staff together with attending various staff forums across the Trust.
- In October the second of the 2015 Chair Lectures will take place with Professor Jane Dacre as guest speaker. It will take place on 24th November in the Lecture Theatre at Heartlands Hospital, with video links to both Good Hope and Solihull hospitals. All are invited to what should be an interesting evening.
- I continue to participate in the work of the ICASS Board, as Vice Chair, which covers the whole of Solihull as part of the Solihull Together for Better Lives Programme.

This is an excellent example of joint working between Solihull MBC, Solihull CCG, the Mental Health Trust, Primary Care and ourselves together with Healthwatch and Patients by Experience. The next stages of the ongoing development relate to the “Share to Care” Project. This is a project designed to share information related to assessments, needs and outcomes across all partners involved in the care of individuals, subject to confidentiality and consent where appropriate.

- I also regularly attend meetings of the Birmingham Chairs Forum, NHS Providers Chairs and Chief Executives Forum, AUKUH Forum and the HMSC led NHS Towards 2030 Group.
- Other current work includes Chairing the Organ Donation Committee and Clinical Services Strategy Board together with the Fragility Programme Board, which is a cross health system group.

MPs

Work with those MPs who represent the communities covered by the Trust is now developing, covering a wide range of issues. This enables constructive conversations to take place to discuss how the whole health system can interact to assist their constituents to gain the best quality of care at the right time and in the right place. This will become ever more essential as the effects of the NHSE five year plan roll out; especially how we innovate and adapt our services in response to the plan, deal with financial constraints and marketisation, and as legislative programmes begin to be fully developed and implemented. We need to ensure they fully understand both the benefits and dis-benefits that all the changes will have to their constituents, the Trust and the staff who provide the services.

Local Authorities

I continue to develop links with all the Councillors for the areas we cover. This has already shown the extent to which they are an important conduit to the communities we serve, especially where issues directly related to Public Health and well-being are concerned. The areas of interaction currently relate to our surgical pathway changes, Better Care Funding Plans, service changes and the changing responsibilities under the recent Care Act together with the pressures on Social Care Budgets.

It is also important that we work closely with those Councillors who hold the Cabinet Portfolios for Health and Well-Being, Adults and Communities and Children’s Services to ensure we utilise resources efficiently and develop services within the communities we serve effectively.

As a result of discussions with Cllr Paulette Hamilton the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care on Birmingham City Council, Liam Byrne MP and Jack Dromy MP, work is

being initiated to hold a Summit on Health Inequalities at Heartlands with particular reference to the communities around the hospital.

Council of Governors

The work of our Council of Governors continues with plans for an ongoing programme of training and development being implemented. This will further enhance the work of the individual committees together with the Council itself further strengthening the knowledge, capacity and capability of Governors both collectively and individually.

Work continues to strengthen the committee structure, administrative support and executive association. This is in parallel with linking chairs of CoG committees with Board committees and NEDs with CoG Committees. This is also complemented by those NEDs who chair Board Committees formally reporting on the work of their Committees to the CoG. Additional opportunities for more informal networking between Governors and NEDs have been suggested, discussed and implemented.

These further developments are, in part, as a result of the recent Governor survey which also highlighted how we share information, when and in what form. Work on this is also being developed.

The support, including challenge where necessary, of Governors has been a significant element in the Trust being able to undertake the process of change. This is appreciated by myself, the NEDs and the Executives.

Finally I would like to place on record my personal thanks together with that of the Board to Liz Steventon for her service as a Governor. Her commitment to the role of a Governor was of a very high order and she will be missed. Liz will, however, still be involved with the Trust through her work with the Friends of Solihull Hospital.

Les Lawrence

Chair

4 September 2015