

Chairman's Note

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Trust Board paper C

Dear Board Member,

Key considerations

Since we last met the key things on my mind have been:

- Given the pressures on our emergency services and national expectations about future performance in this sector, how do we ensure that the opportunities and challenges presented by the new floor this are responded to appropriately?
- Given the financial and other pressures which the NHS in general and our Trust faces , how do we ensure as a Board that there is an appropriate focus on quality, innovation and enhanced performance against a background canvas of continuing constraints?

Priority Items & Questions

In preparation for our next Board meeting I would like to highlight the following priority items and a few specific questions to consider.

I have previously drawn attention in my last report to the Board to the continuing pressures on emergency services, the challenges in achieving targets such as the four hour barometer and the implications this has for elective services in other parts of the Trust. The Board has to continue with its focus on this issue (which is not being experienced by this acute Trust in isolation from others within the NHS) and which has been underlined by recent public comments by the Secretary of State setting out his expectations of future performance in this area during the next year. Later this month we will be see the opening of Phase I of the new Emergency Floor which will underline the need for new mindsets and modes of working in order to deal with the opportunities and challenges which this increase in physical space will provide. This area of activity will continue to remain under close scrutiny by our national regulators and as a Board we need to ensure that through our usual constructive confirm and challenge processes we are satisfied in efficiency, value for money and productivity matrixes we are performing at least as well as or even better than our peers.

Last week I was present at meetings with two of our national regulators. The first which focused on safety and quality was with the Care Quality Commission and arising from the inspection last year. The second meeting was with NHS Improvement and focused on quality, performance and quality issues. The Chief Executive can provide a more detailed

account in his comments but there are two broad themes that I would wish to draw to the attention of this Board. The first theme is that against a background canvas of continuing financial pressures facing the NHS in general and the acute provider sector in particular, as a Board we have to ensure there is an explicit and sustained focus on ensuring that we are capable of adopting an appropriate stance towards immediate and longer term financial targets. The second theme is that as a Board we have to demonstrate the ability to make judgements and take decisions which strike an appropriate balance between the conflicting pressures of finance, quality and performance with an explicit focus on outcomes and milestones against the possibility of minimal or no additional resources.

As a Board we will have an opportunity to consider our strategic focus and effectiveness in responding to a changing external environment at our May Board Thinking Day where we will be hosting and engaging with the Price Waterhouse Health Practice team (at no cost to ourselves).

I have previously mentioned how impressed I was by the mindset (and examples) that I saw during my visit to the AIIMS hospital in New Delhi where there was a clear focus on innovation and raising quality of clinical services within resource constraints. I am pleased to report that Dr Balram Bhargava (one of the AIIMS Directors) has agreed to visit Leicester and give a public lecture on April 26th. I think this is an opportunity for the Board and senior leadership within the Trust to engage with a thought leader who is a doer and also has a global reputation.

I think the overarching theme for next year should be a continuous focus on achieving the utmost efficiency in order to deal with immediate pressures and adopting an innovative stance towards investment decisions focusing on the longer term.

I look forward to seeing you at our forthcoming Board Meeting on 6 April 2017.

Regards,
Karamjit Singh

Chairman, University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust