

# Chairman's Note

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**Trust Board paper D**

Dear Colleagues

I have been thinking about three issues recently and I hope we can have an opportunity to reflect on them together in various meetings.

The first is the messages that we are increasingly receiving from our regulators and other national commentators about the need for all bodies operating in the health and social care sphere to work increasingly closer together. This has to be in the best interests of our local communities and patients with some obvious opportunities for efficiencies for how the public pound is spent within our locality but there will be challenges such as existing patterns of service provision, expenditure and resource allocation that will only be addressed through changes in mindsets and behaviours in our respective organisations. Reports later on the Board agenda will highlight this financial year as the last year in which individual organisations will have their own financial control totals before we move to a system control total. Governance, public engagement and transparency at both an organisational and system level will also be pertinent issues to address. We have a responsibility to make as positive a contribution as we can to these system developments and look forward to engaging with our local partners.

The second is the theme highlighted in a number of recent national reports which is the subject of continuing workforce shortages in the NHS. A number of risks, including the obvious one of ensuring patient safety and giving confidence to our patients and their carers and families, are linked to this. We know that these shortages have to be addressed with an appreciation of the nuances in relation to the different components of our workforce. We also have to consider not only how we can recruit to, retain and develop our workforce to meet existing challenges but also think about the future as the labour market locally, nationally and internationally becomes increasingly competitive. We need to consider how we can utilise our links with higher and further education institutions so that their students can perceive us (and our local health and social care system) as their preferred employers of choice. I look forward to seeing some further and tangible outcomes in these areas.

The third is to think what we can do to ensure that we are aligned (within our diverse and complex organisation) to the themes outlined within the quality framework adopted by the Board at an earlier meeting. A critical aspect here is ensuring there is a common sense of purpose within the senior leadership in the Trust about what the focus needs to be on in order to ensure that we can deliver the highest possible quality of services to our patients and the public. This will entail a common understanding of the risks and opportunities which need to be addressed if we are to make tangible progress in this area. As part of this process of engagement, I look forward to a forthcoming session at a Board Thinking Day attended by senior leaders within the Trust.

I look forward to seeing you at our next Board meeting on Thursday 2nd May 2019.

Regards,

Karamjit Singh  
Chair, UHL