

Chair's Board Report

Trust Board paper D

I am delighted to be working with the Board and staff at UHL as Interim Chair. I have had a really warm welcome and am keen to meet as many people over the next few weeks.

I have set out a few of my initial reflections below. But before doing this, I would like to thank Karamjit Singh for the leadership and service he has given to the Trust and the people of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and beyond over the last seven years. We owe him a huge thanks for his contribution and commitment and for what he has done.

The last year has been a challenging one for the NHS and UHL is no exception. The pandemic has given us in our work and personal lives, our patients and their families challenges and for many great sadness and loss. The Trust has done a fantastic job in responding to the pandemic but we have a legacy as we face the future. Our staff have worked very hard and shown great resilience but many are understandably tired. Many patients have waited and will wait longer for treatment than either we or they feel is right. And we know that sections of the population we serve have been adversely affected with resulting increases in inequalities and restricted opportunities in the future.

Our immediate focus must be on recovering and restoring services which have been affected by the pandemic. This will not be easy given the impact of Covid-19 on our patients, the services we provide and our staff. We also face considerable financial challenges and we need to be clear how, over the next few years we will move to a more financially sustainable position. But the measures we have already put in place leave us stronger and more able to meet these challenges. Underpinning this work is the importance and absolute requirement to continue to provide high quality services and to recognise where we need to improve.

There have also been some real positives from the experience over the last 18 months. We are working differently and more collaboratively. We have delivered major change in a very short time as we responded to the pandemic and we have supported each other through very challenging times.

The move towards working collaboratively as a health and care system and to develop integrated care is a direction that many of us have felt was right. There are also opportunities to work with our partners to support the wider socio economic strategies across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland in addressing the wider determinants of ill health. In doing this we need to engage with our communities, to listen to them and to work with them in more meaningful and different ways.

Our reconfiguration and transformation programme is a once in a generation opportunity to secure much needed investment in our buildings and equipment. It also gives us the opportunity to recognise how providing integrated care will change the way in which we use our assets. We must take full advantage of the opportunities technology offers us and to learn the lessons from the pandemic to design facilities which can be used flexibly.

I am really excited about the future. UHL provides some fantastic services, we have great and committed staff and partners who we can work with. And in the people we serve, we can work with them to deliver sustainable, high quality care.

John MacDonald
Interim Chair