

COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

22 JANUARY 2013

BY THE CHAIRMAN

1 Introduction

Since the meeting of the Council of Governors on 16 November 2012, the Board of Directors has held one formal monthly meeting.

2 Business conducted by the Board of Directors

2.1 The Board of Directors considered the following standing items at that meeting:

2.1.1 Clinical Quality;

2.1.2 Care Quality;

2.1.3 Infection Control;

2.1.4 Finance & Activity; and

2.1.5 Performance & Clinical Quality Indicators.

2.2 The Council of Governors has received similar standing reports in regarding these items. Thus, this report will focus on the other issues discussed by the Board of Directors.

3 Clinical Quality

3.1 Dr Foster published its annual Hospital Guide on 3 December. The Trust was reported as an outlier for two mortality indicators, the HSMR and a new Dr Foster indicator, so-called Conditions of Low Clinical Risk.

3.2 The Trust had issued a press release, re-stating the view that the HSMR is widely considered to be unsuitable for use as a comparative indicator between hospitals. Further, Dr Foster has yet again changed the methodology of the HSMR. If their current methodology is applied to the data two years ago, the last time Dr Foster declared the Trust as an outlier, then the Trust would not have been an outlier then. However, if the methodology used two years ago was applied to current data then the Trust would not be an outlier this year.

3.3 The mortality indicator relating to Conditions of Low Clinical Risk also

appears to be deeply flawed. It is based on data covering 56 patients, of which 32 had a secondary diagnosis of disseminated cancer. Further, one of the patients identified by Dr Foster to be in this category was a patient admitted into one of the Trust's specialist services with a condition called Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis, which is known to have a mortality in excess of 50%. Under Dr Foster's methodology, this condition is classified as an allergy and therefore treated as "low clinical risk". Another patient was diagnosed as suffering from a condition known as Pemphigoid, a group of uncommon and rare autoimmune blistering skin diseases with significant mortality. Dr Foster classified this as a simple skin rash.

3.4 Media interest has been very low – the Trust will continue to make its argument regarding these issues through appropriate channels, such as individuals within the DH and the media.

3.5 The Directors have undertaken a governance visit to Ward 513, which had been very good.

4 Monitor Quarterly Governance Declaration

4.1 Early December saw a significant increase in activity (18%) in A&E, impacting on admissions. On Monday 3 December, there had been a record number of 147 admissions through A&E, compared with, say, 80 to 90 four years ago, and 122 ambulances. Whilst this was, in part, reflected in hospitals across the city, the Trust had also observed a change in flow, with patients either choosing to attend the Trust's A&E or being brought in by WMAS. Major trauma flows were of particular note, as other trusts were sending what they considered to be trauma cases to UHB, although, on analysis it is apparent that not all of such diversions were appropriate. Additional exacerbating factors include the impact of block contract arrangements in place at HEFT and elsewhere, which create an incentive for those trusts to reduce attendances at their A&E departments.

4.2 Performance in November had improved and was above target for the month. Additional capacity was put in place for December, with an additional 36 beds being brought on line and the commencement of surgical clinics will commence next week. It has been recognised that the level of activity can impact adversely against other performance measures such as cancellations and infection control.

5 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS ANNUAL REPORT 2011-12

5.1 A review of processes for visitors has been undertaken, following concerns raised at other hospitals in connection with the investigations surrounding Savile. The processes for CRB checks have also been reviewed, in the light of reduced opportunities to undertake such checks as a result of new legislation.

5.2 Discharge procedures at the Kenrick Centre, have been the subject of an

enquiry from the CQC. A full review of the cases has been undertaken which has identified a small number of minor issues, all of which have been addressed.

6 UPDATE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- 6.1 The Trust experienced two major power outages in November, both resulting from problems at external sub-stations. Incident control rooms were set up on both occasions and both incidents were managed with a minimum of disruption to patient care. During the first incident, the Trust had been unable to accept trauma cases for one to two hours.
- 6.2 Debriefs for both incidents have been held to identify any additional mitigating actions for future incidents and each element is being reviewed with Divisions. Western Power have been asked to inform the Trust in advance when they are aware of changes to the power network.
- 6.3 The DoP reported that Consort and BBWP had responded well, although there had been some difficulty in identifying where power had actually been lost. The generators had come online as planned, but there had been some failures of downstream components. Fault on certain control panels had been identified quickly. Investigations are underway with the manufacturer to determine whether these are known faults. All the control panels in question have now been replaced.

7 Other Business

- 7.1 In addition to the business set out above, the Board of Directors has approved:
- 7.1.1 The appointment of a Renal Medicine Consultant
 - 7.1.2 The appointment of three Consultants in Cardiac Surgery
 - 7.1.3 The appointment of a new substantive Consultant in Ophthalmology
 - 7.1.4 The appointment of a new substantive Consultant in Dermatology (Skin Lymphoma)
 - 7.1.5 The Sealing of a Performance Bond in respect of the Haemophilia Refurbishment works at QEH
 - 7.1.6 The Sealing of a Deed of Variation relating to two contracts for the Sexual Health Services software provided by Axsys.

Sir Albert Bore
Chairman

9 January 2013