

Chair's Council of Governors Report

February 2020 – April 2020

Agenda
item

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PART ONE: PRIORITY ITEM

Priority Item

Covid-19 Update from the Chief Executive

For the past three weeks the pace of activity around the NHS and care systems response to the Covid-19 crisis has vastly increased. As part of this Bradford District Care has launched its pandemic plan and is now managing our activities around Covid-19 as an incident. This means that we have established a daily management approach based around emergency preparedness and resilience practices. The NHS is now operating in a command and control way to ensure that there is strong co-ordination across and between organisations and within them.

Phil Hubbard, Director of Nursing and Professions, now acts as Incident Director for Covid-19 as an incident. We have established the Incident Control Team (silver command) and an Incident Control Room. To facilitate our response, we have established a number of bronze command cells, and these are dealing with operational, clinical, HR and workforce, corporate and communication matters.

At the point of writing, the number of Covid-19 cases in West Yorkshire is relatively low. This has provided the opportunity for the Trust to do some thorough reviewing of Business Continuity Plans and our operational response in preparation. Staff have been working through a number of scenarios and adapting plans accordingly. A sub-group of Executive and Non- Executive Directors (led by the Chief Executive and the Chair) has sat on 19 and 26 March as an Assurance Panel when the business continuity plans were reviewed. Overall, the panel was assured with the Trust's preparedness and business continuity planning, and this was shared with the Board in the Private and Public Board meetings on 26 March and since then.

As a community and mental health provider we fully expect to be a key player in the system's response to Covid-19. We are assisting (alongside social care colleagues) with acute hospital discharge, supporting primary care, working alongside care homes and working with the voluntary and community sector on mental health and physical health and social care support. We are also working with colleagues on considering community resilience. It is now clear that for some groups there could be a protracted period of isolation, and we are considering the safeguarding aspects linked to this, as well as our role in promoting mental wellbeing. There are opportunities to use technology in this regard.

Governors have asked about volunteering opportunities available during this time, and further details on volunteering direct with Bradford District Care can be found here: <https://www.bdct.nhs.uk/get-involved/volunteering/> To register your interest, please email volunteer@bdct.nhs.uk

Finally, in terms of staff resilience, we have seen the fantastic response from our staff that we have seen before when the time comes to work together, be flexible, increase our focus on patients and work as a team. We are doing our best to maintain communication and to offer as much support as we can, including filmed updates and regularly sharing Frequently Asked Questions with all staff. We will keep this specifically under review as we progress through the incident.

Brent Kilmurray
Chief Executive, BDCFT

PART TWO: CHAIR'S UPDATE

Strategic

Flexibility Required in Council of Governors and Board Activities during covid-19 situation

Approach during Covid-19: As you appreciate, due to the covid-19 situation there is work taking place to gain a balance between the continuation of Trust business as usual work with the demands of the Covid-19 situation. Thanks go to our senior leadership team and all staff involved to achieve this fine balance and meet the demands of this situation, enacting business continuity plans to ensure we are able to maintain a level of service.

From the end of March we have proactively put on hold some Board, Committee and Council of Governor agenda items and projects which can be delayed, understanding the known consequences and plan well for them to become live again later this year, managing the workload for all; Trust Board Secretary team Paul Hogg and Fran Limbert are reviewing meeting workplans and agendas currently. However, all Board Meetings and Committees and Council of Governor meetings will continue to meet at this time, though with a reduced and prioritised agenda and typically via video conference (via Microsoft Teams online) to maintain good governance whilst managing the changing workload.

There may be new priorities that require Board time, such as for a new time-bound Board level Ethics Committee which was set up at the end of March (terms of reference appended). We will therefore remain flexible with our Board activities, stepping down or stepping up governance requirements, as required or dictated, such as due to NHS England/Improvement guidance and sickness levels. In addition, due to the Covid-19

situation, service visits linked to our meetings will be reviewed over the coming months, and alternative service engagement will be explored.

The Council of Governors is asked to support a flexible approach to these activities during the Covid-19 situation whilst maintaining good governance.

March 2020 Board Meetings: We went ahead with the Public & Private Board meetings on 26 March, though with a reduced agenda and time period, especially for senior staff leaders involved.

During our virtual March Board meetings we reviewed the Covid-19 preparations of our mental health and community services and corporate functions, approved the establishment of an Ethics Committee to support decision-making during Covid-19, such as necessary and considered policy change, and looked ahead as a Board to the next phase of the incident. The Board expressed its thanks to our Chief Executive Brent Kilmurray for his leadership at this time, to Director of Nursing, Professions and Care Standards Phil Hubbard as Incident Director and to our senior leadership team for leading us through this situation.

Alongside Covid-19 matters, we also discussed as a Board priority Trust business, including our developing strategic plans for the capital re-development of our Lynfield Mount mental health inpatient site.

Thank you to Public Governors Joyce Thackwray and Nick Smith and Staff Governor Linzi Maybin for joining the Public Board meeting to observe the meeting via video conference, and to Linzi for joining a short question & answer session with our Chief Executive Brent Kilmurray and me afterwards.

Further Reading for Governors:

- GOV.UK covid-19 guidance:

<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know>

Well-Led: Our One Year on Well-led Review with Deloitte and our internal governance team during a February 2020 Board development session was a welcomed opportunity to acknowledge the notable positive progress we have made as a Trust against the Well-Led Framework and be briefed on future plans nationally for Well-Led. Planning began in March on revising our Well-Led action plan for 2020/21 and preparing for our next Well-Led inspection, and thanks to Jenny Wilkes, Deputy Director of Nursing, Compliance and Risk, for guiding us through this so far.

Further reading for Council of Governors:

- National NHS Information on the Well-Led Framework:

<https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/well-led-framework/>

CQC Inspections during Covid-19: To note, due to the Covid-19 situation we understand from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) that they will be “stopping inspections from Monday 16 March”. The CQC states that “it may be necessary to still use some of our inspection powers in a very small number of cases when we have clear reports of harm, such as allegations of abuse. However, inspections and Provider Information Requests for health services will not be conducted during the period of the pandemic.” We understand the CQC will continue expected regular and routine Mental Health Act checks.

Workforce & Equality Committee: The new Committee held its first meeting on 2 March which included a staff story for learning, review of the Staff Survey and finalisation of the new Committee’s Terms of Reference. The next meeting will take place in June, chaired by Non Executive Director Simon Lewis, working with Director of Human Resource and Organisational Development Sandra Knight. The next two Committee meetings in 2020 will include in addition Reverse Mentoring between Board members and staff of protected characteristics, starting in June with LGBTQ+ staff who will volunteer to be part of the session.

Outcomes Focused

CQC View on Sustaining Improvement: Having attended the national Mental Health Network Conference in early March, the CQC highlighted a ‘sustaining improvement’ review for Trusts to consider and their short overview document can be found here: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications/themed-work/sustaining-improvement>

Partnerships

VCS ‘Conversation’ Event, 10 March: Our first ‘conversation event’ with voluntary & community sector (VCS) leaders and BDCFT mental health staff gained positive results of better working relationships, improved networks and solutions to problems in general, though with a focus on mental health. Around 70 people attended the session with approximately half from the VCS and half from BDCFT, plus representation from the Local Council, CCG and Bradford Care Alliance. Thanks to everyone involved in staging the event, including Governor Tina Butler and other VCS leaders. As an event partner, Power to Change will write up the results of the event to review and inform the next ‘conversation event’ which the Local Council has offered to host to help move actions forward.

West Yorkshire & Harrogate Partnership: I attended on 3 March the quarterly West Yorkshire & Harrogate Board meeting, representing the Trust, alongside other NHS Trusts and Local Authority leaders. The meeting covered operational planning, a developing population health project, and a national briefing on operating as a ‘system by default.’ There was a paper on increasing the diversity of our collection

regional leadership, and our Trust's current statistics on leadership diversity were not at the level we aspire to be in comparison to other Trusts. Therefore, I have invited

the regional team leading on diversity in leadership to connect with our team and Workforce & Equality Committee to help develop our work.

Attendance of the Mental Health Network Conference 2020: I attended this national conference with the Chief Executive early last month which provided a valuable learning and networking opportunity. Having engaged with the Chief Executive Sean Duggan of the Network last November and briefed him on our Lynfield Mount re-development plan, Sean has already briefed relevant national government representatives on our plans as a case study of a priority mental health capital plan. From this we will wait to hear of any national government or national NHSE/I visits to Lynfield Mount which will now be delayed due to the Covid-19 situation.

A continued national message of operating as a 'system by default' was shared at the conference, including from Claire Murdoch, NHS England's National Mental Health Director, who encouraged partnership working, including with housing associations and the voluntary & community sector.

Details on the Network can be found here:

<https://www.nhsconfed.org/networks/mental-health-network> and Care Quality

Commission Mental Health publications shared at the conference can be found here:

- Annual Report on the Mental Health Act: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications/major-report/monitoring-mental-health-act-201819>

- Evaluation of the Use of the Mental Health Act Code of Practice:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications/major-report/mental-health-act-code-practice-2015-evaluation-how-code-being-used>

People

Non Executive Director (NED) Recruitment: A preferred candidate has been offered the NED role, following a open recruitment process and will be formally appointed at the Council of Governors meeting on 2 April, subject to a satisfactory Fit & Proper Persons and pre-employment tests and checks. The new NED will become Chair of the Finance, Business & Investment Committee (FBIC), a member of the Workforce and Equality Committee and Audit Committee, and will have a number of NED remits, including for Leadership Development.

Thank you to all the Governors who took part in the recruitment process, and to NED Andrew Chang for taking on the interim FBIC Chair role, following NED Rob Vincent's retirement in February and until our new NED joins us in April, alongside Andrew's Audit Chair role.

Associate NED Opportunity: With Board, Council of Governors and NHSE/I support, the recent NED appointment process aimed to appoint a new Associate NED to support succession planning, enhancement of Board skills and to explore

greater diversity on the Board. The NED appointment panel, involving a staff & governor focus group and a service user panel, could not unfortunately identify in the

majority a preferred candidate for the Associate NED role. However, with support from a Keely Howard, Programme Development Manager from NHSI/E who has been involved in the recent NED recruitment process, we will explore an alternative open recruitment process to appoint an Associate NED later this year, referencing our Board Skills Matrix. I will keep the Council of Governors updated on plans.

Service Visits with Governors: At the last Council meeting the Governors welcomed my suggestion of focusing on a service at each of our Public meetings, linking to a service visit with a small number of Governors, alongside me; this is following the positive Governor reaction to have a focus on the First Response Service at our February meeting. We will explore this for future Council meetings, subject to the Covid-19 situation.

Cathy Elliott
Chair of the Trust
BDCFT

Trust-wide Matters

Preparations for leaving the EU

The UK officially left the European Union on 31 January 2020, however the current agreements and procedures remain in place with the EU until 31 December 2020 during the current 'transition period'. It is during this time that the UK government has the opportunity to make formal arrangements across all departments, including Department of Health, with the EU on future arrangements. If agreement cannot be reached by 31 December 2020, then the UK departure reverts to a "no deal" exit from the EU. However, Brexit planning has been put 'on hold' of late, whilst Covid-19 pandemic arrangements are concentrated on.

Champions Show the Way

Following presenting Champions Show the Way at a Kings Fund conference in September 2019 on 'Community is the Best Medicine' we were asked by Public Health England to submit BDCFT's Champions Show the Way as a community centred approaches best practice example.

Champions Show the Way have 150 volunteers who deliver over 70 health and wellbeing activities in the community every week locally. The activities support people to be more physically active, be more socially active and reduce the impact of loneliness and isolation and provides support for people with long term physical and mental health conditions. Many of our volunteers and group participants say Champions Show the Way has changed their life for the better, some even say it's been lifesaving!

In 2018/19, 1716 individuals accessed a Champions Show the Way activity over 26,500 times and we are on track in 2019/20 to surpass those numbers. The case story can be found here <https://phe.koha-ptfs.co.uk/cgi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=61796>

For more information about Champions Show the Way activities contact 01274 321911; champions@bdct.nhs.uk; www.bdct.nhs.uk/services/cstw

Brent Kilmurray
Chief Executive
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