

Foundation

Feedback

Keeping Members up-to-date

Here we are in the first quarter of the new financial and operational year 2007/8.

I do not want to dwell on last year 2006/7 but I should point out that we ended the year in good shape, in surplus (£2.7 million) and targets with the exception of MRSA achieved. Although the MRSA target set at 19 cases was not achieved, as a total of 34 cases were recorded, it is important to put it into context. A considerable proportion of the cases (15) were not hospital acquired but community acquired but have to be recorded by us as the rules demand. If it was not for this requirement we would have been on target.

So it is important to underline that we are a successful hospital, financially secure, providing a quality service to our community and with the will and commitment to take us forward into greater success. We have just been presented with an award for being in the top 40 hospitals in the country. This particular award has been in existence for the past seven years and we are one of only seven Trusts who have appeared in the top 40 for the whole of that time. A significant hallmark.

All of this can only be achieved through the dedication and commitment of the staff and everyone involved in the running of the hospital. The Board of Governors representing Members has worked hard in supporting the Board of Directors and the Trust and we are grateful to them for their contribution. It is truly a team effort by all concerned.

Looking ahead we can build on solid foundations. In the next year we will be investing more in coping with the challenge of infection control and also in enhanced cleaning practices. Significant new investment will go into these areas. The first stage of a comprehensive refurbishment programme of all our wards will start this year with 4 wards earmarked for attention. This will be a three/ four year programme.

The hospital is going from strength to strength and can look to the future with confidence. Thank you for your support


Jim Sharples
Chairman



To: All Members
From: Helen Clifton,
Elected Governor
helen.clifton@coch.nhs.uk

I was elected to represent Trust members from the Chester and Rural Cheshire constituency last September. Little did I realise how much there would be to immerse myself in and to learn!

After two induction sessions when we heard a lot about the history of the NHS and Foundation Trusts in relation to the Countess of Chester Hospital, I felt I knew better what a Governor doesn't do but not enough about what we do do! It seemed to me the best way to find out would be to become as involved as possible in as much as I could. So I have joined the two main sub-committees.

The Strategy sub-committee meets fortnightly and I have specifically contributed to developments and changes to the structure of Governors' meetings, and also the Communications and Membership sub-committee which meets regularly and produces this newsletter.

These are challenging times for the Trust, combining the Government's wish for hospitals to be run more like businesses, with the paramount desire to provide first class care for its patients and to be their hospital of choice. It's almost as challenging for me too and very exciting!



To: Ellesmere Port and Neston Members
From: Pat Clare, Elected Governor
pat.clare@coch.nhs.uk

Since my last letter to members, another Governor and I have been appointed to represent the Governors on the National Foundation Trust Governors Forum.

I continue to chair the Membership and Communication sub committee as well as attending the fortnightly Strategy committee meetings. I hope you enjoyed the last edition of Foundation Feedback. With input from a new team, we hope to improve the newsletter, contribute to the design of the new hospital website as well as come up with some different and interesting topics to appeal to members. I will also be involved in helping at the next Hospital Open Day which is on September 15th so I hope to meet you all then.

The healthy financial situation in the new financial year means that The Countess of Chester Hospital can look forward to a period of development and improvements to patient services. The Governors will continue to have input into the discussions about future plans for the hospital as well as being able to comment about the present quality of service. If you want me to pass on your comments, please contact me directly.

Messages from your
Elected Governors



To: All Members
From: Dr David P. Britt,
Elected Governor
david.britt@coch.nhs.uk

I am grateful to the constituents who voted me in as a representative three years ago. It has been interesting to participate in the development of a Foundation Trust Council of Members/Board of Governors and I am pleased to have been given the opportunity.

There are many ways in which the local community can contribute to the success of their hospital. Becoming a member of the Trust is a good start and it is a distinguishing feature of Foundation Trusts that active involvement of the public is of paramount importance. If we are to have healthcare provision fit for purpose in the 21st century, it is important that this opportunity is not eschewed by members of the public.

The Board of Governors must continue to evolve. There are residual doubts in my mind about its impact and effectiveness and serious worries about the value for money it represents. These are issues that must be confronted. I will not be standing for re-election, but I hope there will be many willing to take my place.



To: Flintshire Members
From: Gordon Donaldson,
Elected Governor
gordon.donaldson@coch.nhs.uk

Foundation Trusts are funded by charging the Primary Care trusts the going rate for treatment carried out, called Payment by Results. By running efficiently, Countess of Chester makes a surplus and re-invests in improvement of the hospital. Foundation Trusts cannot go cap-in-hand to Government when they are short of money!

Wales has no Foundation Trusts, but Welsh patients are served by a number of FTs in border areas, most prominent being Flintshire patients, over 20% of Countess activity. Flintshire patients crossing the border have the benefit of improved English waiting times and care standards, better in some respects than Welsh standards.

The bad news is that the Flintshire Local Health Board has never paid "PBR" and actually pays little more than the Welsh norm. Three years of negotiations between the Trust and the LHB have failed to solve a problem which leaves the hospital millions of pounds short of its proper income.

I feel the Trust has been let down by Whitehall's failure to plan for cross-border patients and that the Flintshire LHB has been let down by the Welsh Assembly Government failing to ensure that LHBs in border areas are funded adequately to pay "PBR" for treatment in English hospitals.

The Office of the Monitor of Foundation Trusts now demands that the Trust achieves PBR for all patients. Negotiations seem to have gone as far as they can – Flintshire LHB genuinely pays all it can – but cannot afford the full rate. Over to the politicians – can they solve the financial problem while ensuring that Flintshire patients continue to have their hospital of choice?



Spotlight on...

the Respiratory

Anne Riches, Lead Respiratory Nurse and Lynne Podmore, Lung Specialist Nurse, are part of the Respiratory Team at the Countess of Chester Hospital.

Patients needing admission are initially assessed in the Medical Assessment Unit, although Ward 51/Watergate Ward is the designated respiratory ward. However, as up to 30% of adult emergency admissions are attributable to respiratory conditions patients can be cared for and managed in other medical wards.

Respiratory illness covers a very wide spectrum of diseases from asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and lung cancer to pneumonia, tuberculosis (TB) and occupational lung diseases such as asbestosis. All of these conditions can be treated at the Countess of Chester Hospital, to assist GP's and practice nurses in providing the best possible care.

The multidisciplinary team can deliver pulmonary rehabilitation for those patients with COPD whose activities are restricted by their condition. This six week programme involves a series of exercises, education and support

that improves stamina, quality of life and reduces the length of time spent in hospital.

Whilst issues such as smoking have a direct relationship to many respiratory conditions the team understand that lifestyles are difficult to change, patients are never turned away because they continue to smoke. However with support, empathy and education it is possible to stop smoking.

As respiratory conditions are diverse, services must reflect this. The Countess of Chester Hospital provides services to patients at home that previously would have required a hospital admission,



Team

Sue Elphick interviews the Respiratory Team and learns about common respiratory illnesses and problems.

such as the administration of intravenous antibiotics at home.

Advances in technology have meant that some patients with specific conditions do not have to be cared for in the Intensive Care Unit (ITU). The use of a closely fitting facemask, tubing and a small ventilator means that patients are assisted in their breathing. This means that patients are awake, can talk, eat and drink.

The Countess of Chester Hospital also offers a fast track clinic for those patients who have had an abnormal chest x-ray. A chest consultant will see patients within a week, with most tests and investigations being completed at that appointment. Reassuringly, at least half of the patients who attend this clinic will be discharged following these investigations.



Anne Riches with patient and Bipap machine

Capital Projects

The Trust remains actively engaged in capital projects both large and small, complex and simple, routine and special. All these projects are helping to maintain and improve the environment for the benefit of staff and patients.

The projects are at various stages of development within the Trust's process, known as the 4Cs (Conceive, Create, Construct and Commission).

Projects currently at conception include plans to improve the wards, develop critical care, review the main entrance, and improve out-patient reception/waiting areas. Part of the brief to our external advisors is to come up with interior designs that are warm and welcoming and introduce a corporate theme. With this in mind careful thought is given to

the selection of furniture that is comfortable, stylish and functional.

At the same time innovation is being applied at the creation stage to bring improved efficiency into services that can benefit from the latest technology. The pharmacy and pathology automation projects are examples of this. As current contracts come up for review the opportunity has been taken to introduce mechanised dispensing and analysis.

Projects currently under construction include the replacement of the roof covering to the Women and Children's building, interior improvements to the theatres and a new Fertility Unit. Construction work within a working hospital environment is always challenging and plans



New Haematology and Oncology Suite

and risk assessments are continually reviewed to avoid disruption to services and minimise inconvenience. The Haematology and Oncology Suite was commissioned in March and the Trust welcomes the delight that patients and staff have shown in the improvements and extension to Ward 60.

Now you can contact your Elected Governors by email, letter or fax:

Email Public

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Allied Health Professionals/Technical/Scientific

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Letter

Please address your letter to:

The Foundation Trust Secretary, Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Countess of Chester Health Park, Liverpool Road, Chester. CH2 1UL

Fax

Please address your fax to:

The Foundation Trust Secretary
01244 365292

Healthcare Commission



The annual health check is the Healthcare Commission's system of assessment and replaces star ratings and is designed to provide a fuller picture of the performance of a Trust against the core and developmental standards that were set by the Department of Health in July 2004.

The Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is declaring compliance of all the Core Standards.

Members of the public can access a full copy of the Declaration by the Trust website: www.coch.nhs.uk. There is a directory on the left hand side of the front page called 'Patient Information.' The Declaration for 2006/2007 can be found on this page.

All NHS organisations are required by the Healthcare Commission to make public their Declaration of compliance of the Core and Developmental Standards towards the Annual Health Check.

Should anyone require a paper copy, please contact: Millie Bradshaw, Risk and Clinical Governance Manager, Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Countess of Chester Health Park, Liverpool Rd, Chester, CH2 1UL.

Dates for your Diary

Please check the local press and the web site for further details nearer the time. We'd love to see you at one of these meetings. As a Foundation Trust the Governors and hospital are keen to keep in touch with the local community and would welcome your views and any suggestions you may have.

Please address these to the Secretary to the Board and post to:

The Foundation Trust Secretary, Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Countess of Chester Health Park, Liverpool Road, Chester. CH2 1UL

Board of Directors Public Meeting
Board of Governors Meeting
Board of Directors Public Meeting
Board of Governors Meeting
Annual Members Meeting
Board of Directors Public Meeting
Board of Governors Meeting

3rd July 2007
10th July 2007
4th September 2007
25th September 2007
9th October 2007
6th November 2007
4th December 2007

No Smoking at the Countess of Chester Hospital

The Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust recognises that smoking causes lung cancer, bronchitis, heart conditions and other diseases. Cigarette smoking in the UK is responsible for more than 120,000 premature deaths per year.

The sight of patients with drips, amputations and a range of other illnesses continuing to smoke outside the Main Entrance plus pregnant ladies outside the Maternity Entrance were increasingly becoming more unpalatable to the majority of the general public. This, along with the associated litter caused and an increasing number of complaints, made the Trust decide to extend the ban on smoking to the totality of its site. This included all staff, patients and visitors.

This ban came into force on 1 January 2007 with publicity that included a programme 'Real Story with Fiona Bruce' on BBC devoted to staff giving up smoking at the Hospital. Whilst the total effect on individuals is unanimous since the site wide ban was imposed the absence of smoking in all prominent areas i.e. outside main entrances promoted a far more positive and healthier perception of the Trust by the general public. It also establishes the Trust as a leader in health promotion across the community.

Finally as a result of stopping smoking, especially at entrances, the environment has improved, with visitors not having to pass through a "smoke smog" to enter the building and the resources that needed to be inputted into cleaning/tidying has been reduced.



A light hearted recipe for healthy lungs



Ingredients

A good genetic inheritance
Minimal pollution
Good blood supply
Regular exercise
Fresh air

To maintain

Exercise that involves deep breathing
Correct posture with relaxed neck and shoulders
Good blood supply through healthy eating

Environments - not too hot and stuffy

No smoking and try to avoid smoky atmospheres

Welcome



Solicitor, Stephen Cross recently appointed as Foundation Trust Secretary.

Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Liverpool Road, Chester. CH2 1UL

Designed by the Medical Photography and Illustration Department, Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust