

Chief Executive's Report

National and system update

In August I wrote to the organisation following the unimaginable actions of Lucy Letby, and I have attached the letter all NHS organisations received from NHS England (Appendix 1). I am a firm believer that it is our role, and that of the NHS, to provide a place of safety and care to the most vulnerable in our community – a responsibility that we should put above all others. Our strongest defence against a similar event occurring here, is the culture within which we work – one that listens; values hearing feedback, no matter how good or bad; and strives, amongst all our competing priorities, to do the right thing as a result. The events are a reminder of the critical importance of having a culture of speaking up, and our Freedom To Speak Up Guardian (FTSUG) has conducted a gap analysis of our services against the five priorities outlined in the letter from NHS England. This will be reviewed by the Executive Management Committee this month, and subsequently reported at the next Strategic People Committee. Whilst this review identified no material gaps, there are areas we can further improve including more proactive outreach work with international and student nurses who are new to our organisation, and how the FTSUG team links in to the Board sub-committee focused on quality. We are also on track to adopt the national FTSU policy by January 2024.

There has also been significant national news regarding the risk of failure of RAAC (concrete) in public buildings including schools and hospitals. When this was first highlighted as a potential issue in hospitals, we undertook a detailed desktop review of all sites, and carried out intrusive testing at both Stoke Mandeville and Wycombe hospitals during 2020 and 2021 under NHS England guidance. We were also part of the NHS RAAC oversight group, one of 30 trusts in England. At the time we confirmed that none of our hospital sites have RAAC and the Trust Board received a report to this effect in September 2021.

Ongoing national industrial action by junior doctors and consultant bodies continues to have a significant impact on our services, contributing to delays in providing outpatient appointments or planned procedures. We would like to extend our continued gratitude to those that have been affected for their patience and understanding.

Colleagues will have seen the government's commitment to 'Martha's Rule' following the tragic death of Martha Mills and campaign by her mother, Merope Mills. Whilst patients or relatives can already request a second medical opinion if they have concerns about their care, we will review our processes to confirm we have a structure to ensure this takes place if requested.

Outstanding care

Key performance data are reported in the Integrated Performance Report with supporting narrative. It now includes a slide summarising the measures we are focusing on this year through our 'breakthrough' objectives (i.e. those which we are using to tell us if we are on track with our multi-year goals).

In terms of performance in urgent and emergency care (UEC) and cancer, we are starting to see some improvement overall in UEC metrics, which is particularly important as we head into the winter period. We are also seeing some improvement in our 62-day cancer performance, as well as in length of stay. We do continue to experience significant challenge on our diagnostic performance, and substantial planning is going in to driving improvements.

I am delighted to congratulate our Inpatient Pain Team who have won the Deteriorating Patients and Rapid Response Initiative of the Year at the HSJ Patient Safety Awards. The Mobile Block Unit provides rapid regional anaesthesia for patients admitted with traumatic rib fractures at risk of deterioration – the first for an NHS Trust in the region. Winning this award is fantastic recognition for a passionate team striving to deliver exceptional patient care.

The team are also shortlisted for this year's HSJ Awards alongside our breast unit who were one of the first in the UK to offer the MagTotal approach to improve the surgical process for treating some breast cancers. Read more about both services [here](#).

I am pleased to advise we have received funding to build a new unit at the Stoke Mandeville Hospital site to provide space for up to 21 additional inpatient beds to boost capacity. It is hoped this new unit will help to lessen the wait faced by patients arriving in our Emergency Department need to be admitted to hospital and is due to open early next year. The cost is coming out of £250 million of [government funding](#) allocated to NHS hospitals to increase capacity as part of the national [Urgent and Emergency Care Recovery plan](#).

Earlier this year we attended the Buckinghamshire Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee to seek approval to develop Wycombe as a centre of excellence for ante and postnatal care; the papers and webcast for this meeting on 11 May 2023 can be viewed [here](#). At its meeting on 20 July 2023, the HASC confirmed its support for this change and requested updates in due course on key performance data and service user engagement; papers and draft minutes from the meeting can be viewed [here](#).

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) National Adult Inpatient Survey report findings have been published from data collected in November 2022 and can be read [here](#). The survey involved 133 NHS acute trusts in England. 463 of our adult inpatients responded to the survey, which was equivalent to a 38.4% response rate. Our results were broadly in line with other trusts, despite November 2022 being a particularly challenging time for the organisation due to high demand for inpatient and emergency services. However, we were disappointed to score worse than most other trusts for: food; opportunity to give views on the quality of care; and being prevented from sleeping particularly due to hospital lighting. Actions to address these areas will be monitored and reviewed by the Quality & Clinical Governance sub-committee of the Board.

Earlier this year the CQC visited Stoke Mandeville Hospital paediatric emergency department to conduct an unannounced focused investigation following concerns raised around early detection of sepsis and the robustness of incident investigations. The inspectors found that children and young people were receiving safe care with leaders running services well. We were also pleased that they reported that our colleagues felt respected, supported and valued. However, whilst the overall findings of the inspection were positive, there were some areas highlighted for improvement which we are addressing. The full report can be read on the CQC website [here](#).

We also had a planned inspection from the CQC of our maternity services at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. We are currently awaiting the final report from their inspection and will update the Board when the results of their findings are published.

This month we celebrated World Health Organisation (WHO) World Patient Safety Day. This year the focus of this international day was 'Engaging Patients for Safety' with the slogan "Elevate the voice of Patients!" This was timely as we begin our transition to the new [Patient Safety Incident Response Framework](#) (PSIRF), a new approach to responding to patient safety incidents.

Healthy communities

Congratulations to our sexual health service which has been supporting the national response to the Mpox outbreak since June last year. I have appended a thank you letter from NHS England (Appendix 2).

Our Research & Innovation (R&I) team has close links with the University of Buckingham Medical School, and it was a pleasure to be involved in the final judging of the third year medical Student Selected Component on Clinical Innovation and Enterprise. The groups worked on real-life problems faced by colleagues working in fast-paced clinical research at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. My thanks to the R&I team for their time and energy in supporting the development of our next generation of clinicians.

Our new Bright Futures @BHT work experience programme has just been awarded the Silver Quality Standard by NHS England.

The new standard helps healthcare organisations to quality assure their work experience placements, assessing planning, delivery and evaluation. It also aims to ensure that all learners across the country can access high quality exposure to health careers



As awarded by NHS England

regardless of location or organisational interpretation. Since we piloted this in February this year, we have welcomed more than 250 students on individual work experience or small group workplace visits across the Trust. Creating an early talent pipeline – engaging and upskilling our local workforce supply – is vital to fulfil future workforce requirements. Work experience is also key to delivering the NHS Workforce Plan: we need to ensure enough young people are interested in pursuing a healthcare career if the expansion of training places is to be successful. The Schools Engagement Team are now developing plans to achieve a Gold Award, and applications for 2023/24 academic year placements are now open [here](#).

Great place to work

In line with the national vaccination programme, we have begun our internal campaign to offer COVID-19 and flu vaccinations to all colleagues.

Huge thanks to the 30 employees from Shirley Parsons recruitment, who spent the afternoon working in our gardens at Brookside Clinic in the centre of Aylesbury earlier this month. Brookside Clinic is where several of our community health services are based, and the gardens continue to go from strength to strength; it is wonderful to see a local business engaged in helping our colleagues and patients through improving their outdoor space.

Finally, it was an honour to be invited to join in and speak at the Bucks Kerala Nurses celebration this month, reflecting the Kerala Festival Onam. Our workforce is increasingly diverse and with this comes welcome opportunities for all of us to learn about beliefs and cultures that may be different from our own. My thanks to colleagues working in services across the Trust for putting on such a special and vibrant event.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – NHS England letter verdict Lucy Letby case

Appendix 2 – NHS England MPox Programme letter

Appendix 3 – CARE Value awards

Appendix 4 – Executive Management Committee and Transformation Board

Appendix 5 – Place & System Briefing

- To:
- All integrated care boards and NHS trusts:
 - chairs
 - chief executives
 - chief operating officers
 - medical directors
 - chief nurses
 - heads of primary care
 - directors of medical education
 - Primary care networks:
 - clinical directors

NHS England
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
London
SE1 8UG

18 August 2023

- cc.
- NHS England regions:
 - directors
 - chief nurses
 - medical directors
 - directors of primary care and community services
 - directors of commissioning
 - workforce leads
 - postgraduate deans
 - heads of school
 - regional workforce, training and education directors / regional heads of nursing

Dear Colleagues,

Verdict in the trial of Lucy Letby

We are writing to you today following the outcome of the trial of Lucy Letby.

Lucy Letby committed appalling crimes that were a terrible betrayal of the trust placed in her, and our thoughts are with all the families affected, who have suffered pain and anguish that few of us can imagine.

Colleagues across the health service have been shocked and sickened by her actions, which are beyond belief for staff working so hard across the NHS to save lives and care for patients and their families.

On behalf of the whole NHS, we welcome the independent inquiry announced by the Department of Health and Social Care into the events at the Countess of Chester and will cooperate fully and transparently to help ensure we learn every possible lesson from this awful case.

NHS England is committed to doing everything possible to prevent anything like this happening again, and we are already taking decisive steps towards strengthening patient safety monitoring.

The national roll-out of medical examiners since 2021 has created additional safeguards by ensuring independent scrutiny of all deaths not investigated by a coroner and improving data quality, making it easier to spot potential problems.

This autumn, the new Patient Safety Incident Response Framework will be implemented across the NHS – representing a significant shift in the way we respond to patient safety incidents, with a sharper focus on data and understanding how incidents happen, engaging with families, and taking effective steps to improve and deliver safer care for patients.

We also wanted to take this opportunity to remind you of the importance of NHS leaders listening to the concerns of patients, families and staff, and following whistleblowing procedures, alongside good governance, particularly at trust level.

We want everyone working in the health service to feel safe to speak up – and confident that it will be followed by a prompt response.

Last year we rolled out a strengthened Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) policy. All organisations providing NHS services are expected to adopt the updated national policy by January 2024 at the latest.

That alone is not enough. Good governance is essential. NHS leaders and Boards must ensure proper [implementation and oversight](#). Specifically, they must urgently ensure:

1. All staff have easy access to information on how to speak up.
2. Relevant departments, such as Human Resources, and Freedom to Speak Up Guardians are aware of the national Speaking Up Support Scheme and actively refer individuals to the scheme.
3. Approaches or mechanisms are put in place to support those members of staff who may have cultural barriers to speaking up or who are in lower paid roles and may be less confident to do so, and also those who work unsociable hours and may not always be aware of or have access to the policy or processes supporting speaking up. Methods for

communicating with staff to build healthy and supporting cultures where everyone feels safe to speak up should also be put in place.

4. Boards seek assurance that staff can speak up with confidence and whistleblowers are treated well.
5. Boards are regularly reporting, reviewing and acting upon available data.

While the CQC is primarily responsible for assuring speaking up arrangements, we have also asked integrated care boards to consider how all NHS organisations have accessible and effective speaking up arrangements.

All NHS organisations are reminded of their obligations under the Fit and Proper Person requirements not to appoint any individual as a Board director unless they fully satisfy all FPP requirements – including that they have not been responsible for, been privy to, contributed to, or facilitated any serious misconduct or mismanagement (whether lawful or not). The CQC can take action against any organisation that fails to meet these obligations.

NHS England has recently strengthened the [Fit and Proper Person Framework](#) by bringing in additional background checks, including a board member reference template, which also applies to board members taking on a non-board role.

This assessment will be refreshed annually and, for the first time, recorded on Electronic Staff Record so that it is transferable to other NHS organisations as part of their recruitment processes.

Lucy Letby's appalling crimes have shocked not just the NHS, but the nation. We know that you will share our commitment to doing everything we can to prevent anything like this happening again. The actions set out in this letter, along with our full co-operation with the independent inquiry to ensure every possible lesson is learned, will help us all make the NHS a safer place.

Yours sincerely,



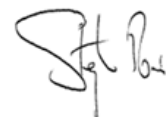
Amanda Pritchard
NHS Chief Executive



Sir David Sloman
Chief Operating
Officer
NHS England



Dame Ruth May
Chief Nursing Officer,
England



**Professor Sir
Stephen Powis**
National Medical
Director
NHS England

To: The Chief Executive of Buckinghamshire
Healthcare

NHS England
Public Health Commissioning
Hampshire and Thames Valley
South East Region
Oakley Road
Southampton
SO16 4GX

29 August 2023

Dear Neil Macdonald

Re: Mpox Programme

I am sure you will be aware that your sexual health service has been supporting the national response to the Mpox outbreak since June last year. Your teams have been working with us throughout that time to ensure that their highest risk clients were able to access vaccination to protect them from the disease. The programme has been unique in that it was in response to a national outbreak in a cohort that is largely invisible to the rest of the NHS and the programme had to be established with no advanced planning and very short notice. Your teams rose to the challenge, standing up the vaccination programme at pace, and responding flexibly and creatively to a continuously evolving situation.

Nationally, a total of 115,000 vaccinations have been delivered: 76,000 first doses and 39,000 second doses. By end June 2023 in our Hampshire Thames Valley sub-region, our five providers collectively delivered 3,112 first doses and 1,835 second doses. UKHSA stood down the outbreak.

There is no doubt that the programme was hugely important in terms of the UKHSA aims of reducing harm and suppressing UK transmission of the disease.

As the programme draws to a close on 31st July 2023, we wanted to take this opportunity to recognise the hard work, dedication, professionalism and patience of your service managers, clinical leads and teams and to thank them formally for the work they have done to protect vulnerable men. It has been a great pleasure to work with your teams.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Reid
Regional Director of Commissioning
SRO – Flu & Covid Vaccination Programmes
NHS England – South East



Nikki Osborne
Head of Public Health Commissioning
Hampshire and Thames Valley

Executive Management Committee and Transformation Board

Executive Management Committee 25 July to 12 September 2023

Executive Management Committee meets three times a month and covers a range of subjects including progress against our strategic aims, performance monitoring, oversight of risk and significant financial decisions. The meeting is chaired by the Chief Executive Officer and attended by Executive Directors and leads from the clinical divisions. The following provides an overview of some of the key areas considered by the committee over the last month:

Quality and Performance

Integrated Performance Report
 Operational run rate reduction measures
 Critical care outreach services
 Dementia rapid review cabinet recommendation response
 Patient Safety Incident Response Framework update
 Maternity staffing update
 Maternity safety quarterly report
 Safe Staffing
 Radiology services
 Infection prevention & control quarterly and annual reports
 Diagnostics performance and funding
 Cellular pathology
 Care Quality Commission (CQC) paediatric emergency department report June 2023
 CQC national inpatient survey report
 Research & Innovation quarterly report
 South 4 Laboratory Information Management System collaboration agreement
 Urgent & emergency care national survey results
 Progress against the Written Statement of Action for Special Educational Needs & Disabilities services
 Operation Flow business case

Governance

Quality governance oversight framework
 Internal audit reports
 Summary of internal audit work and actions
 Organisational risk report

Corporate performance reviews quarterly report
 Trust Policy sub-group ratification report
 Buckinghamshire Healthcare Projects Ltd contract oversight
 Minutes from EMC sub-committees

Money

Monthly finance report
 Monthly capital report
 Productivity and efficiency weekly updates
 2023/24 BOB ICB operating plan next steps
 Project initiation documents for major capital projects
 Waivers of Standing Financial Instructions

Digital and Estates

Critical infrastructure
 Theatres
 Cyber programme phase 1
 Wycombe tower scaffolding
 Wycombe tower bridge survey

People

Key worker accommodation
 CARE value award winners
 Equality, diversity & inclusion annual report
 Employee relations update
 National Staff Survey
 Freedom to Speak Up Guardian quarterly report
 COVID-19 and flu vaccination programme

Transformation Board 16 August and 20 September 2023

Transformation Board is an Executive-level meeting with clinical and operational leads from across the Trust and is dedicated to strategic projects and oversight of delivery of the operating plan. It meets on a monthly basis covering transformation portfolio updates, strategic business cases, and quality improvement (QI). The following provides an overview of the key areas considered in the last meeting:

QI projects on a page

Integrated Performance Report
 Performance Activity & Income
 Elective Recovery Plan
 2024/25 Breakthrough objectives
 Transformation portfolio overview

- Organisational Development framework
- Admin & Clerical transformation

Transformation portfolio updates:

- Urgent and emergency care
- Healthy communities
- Digital
- Diagnostics

Productivity and efficiency weekly update
 Temporary staffing programme
 Medicines optimisation progress report

Place and System Briefing

September 2023

Place

Buckinghamshire Executive Partnership (BEP) meeting 12 September 2023

Item	Summary	Impact
Priorities update	Progress report on delivery of three priorities (transforming SEND, joining up care, and tackling health inequalities, including key milestones and quantitative metrics. Improvements in some areas e.g. total lost bed days; but deterioration in other measures e.g. proportion of children seen for initial OT assessment within 18 weeks	These priorities represent the most significant challenges that can be improved through working with place partners, and therefore improvement in these areas will reflect an improved experience and outcomes for BHT patients and Buckinghamshire residents.
Progress on SEND investment and transformation programme	Detailed report on investment in SEND services to make improvements outlined in the Written Statement of Action	Some of BHT children's and young people's services are involved in delivering SEND services and therefore funding decisions will affect how BHT services are delivered.
CQC ICS inspections and Right Care Right Person	Summary of interim guidance published in March 2023 on ICS assessments, which focus on quality and safety, integration and leadership. Right Care Right Person is an initiative to ensure the most appropriate care is given to people experiencing mental health difficulties.	Some changes in the Right Care Right Person initiative will impact how patients with mental health difficulties attending our Emergency Department are best supported.
ICS digital and data strategy	Discussion to agree the role of the place partnership in delivering the 3-year ICS' digital and data strategy	Objectives are: digitise providers to reach Minimum Digital Foundations requirements; connect care using technology; transform data foundations to provide insights required to transform our system. BHT will see a range of positive impacts through the delivery of this strategy.
2023/24 discharge programme financial recovery plan	Report on the financial position for the discharge transformation programme and plans to achieve financial balance.	This programme is critically important for improving patient experience around discharge from hospital and ensuring the right care is available in the right place for the patient.
BOB ICS: defining our long-term ambitions and model of care	Proposal to develop a model of care for Buckinghamshire focused on prevention and community-based care.	The principles of this proposal reflect the opportunities BHT as an integrated trust have in evolving services to best meet the needs of Buckinghamshire residents, by bringing more healthcare services into the community and engaging residents preventative health.

Buckinghamshire Health & Wellbeing Board 21 September 2023

Papers are available [here](#).

Item	Summary	Impact
Healthwatch Annual Report	A review of the work undertaken by Healthwatch Bucks for the past year.	Healthwatch provides a valuable voice of the patient and resident for us in the design and continues review of our services.
Buckinghamshire Executive Partnership	Update from the place-based partnership meeting in July.	
Winter Plan	The 2023/24 Urgent and Emergency Care Winter Plan for Buckinghamshire.	Ensuring we have robust plans in place and are as prepared for the anticipated high levels of demand winter typically brings, is critical for how we will manage our services this winter.
Integrated Care Board updates	Verbal update from the BOB ICB, and a written update from the neighbouring Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board.	

System

BOB Integrated Care Board (ICB) 19 September 2023

The BOB ICB meeting takes place every other month. Papers are available [here](#).

In addition to standing items regarding quality, performance, finance and risk, the Board discussed its initial response to the letter from NHS England (see Appendix 1) regarding the trial of Lucy Letby.

I would also draw the Board's attention to the Quality Assurance Framework, which sets out the quality and safety oversight of commissioned services.

The Board also reviewed a progress report against the Joint Forward Plan published earlier this year and a review of the first quarter of the system Operational Plan for this year.

Lastly, the Board are establishing a Change Programme Board led by the Chief Executive, Nick Broughton, to develop and implement a revised operating model for the organisation.

Acute Provider Collaborative 31 July 2023

The Acute Provider Collaborative is a collaborative of the three 'acute' providers in the BOB ICS, namely BHT (as we provide acute as well as community services), Oxford University NHS Foundation Trust, and Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust. It is relatively newly formed, and therefore some elements, including formal governance arrangements, are still being developed.

At the July meeting, CEOs and Chairs from the respective Trusts discussed the scope and ambitions of three priority workstreams: clinical services, corporate services, and elective care. It also discussed a proposal to form a Collaborative Committee in Common, and some early proposals for resources to deliver the three priorities.

Appendix 1 – Trust CARE values awards

I am delighted to share this summary of the winners of our Trust CARE value awards. Every month from all nominations received from colleagues and members of the public, the Executive Management Committee award four winners, one for each of four categories, which are: Collaborate, Aspire, Respect, and Enable.

July 2023

Category	Name	Role	Nomination	Nominated by
Collaborate	Ben Tofte	Helpdesk Manager, Wycombe Hospital	When we advertised the Trust was holding an AGM/Open Day/Careers Fair and 75th celebrations, Ben contacted me to say he would like to volunteer to help on the day. Ben wanted to give something back to the Trust having spent some time this past year in ICU at SMH. Ben took the time to understand what was needed on the day and basically pitched in and did whatever we asked of him. He spent the whole day helping the Communications team.	Colleague
	Patrick Blanche, Graham Podbury, Ian Hunter, Jason Steptoe, Danny Clarke, Jake White, George Burton, Brendon Barrett, Paul Oakley, Tony Cruickshank & Stephen Burton.	Estates/Property Services	The individuals named above all went out of their way to ensure we had everything in place for the AGM, they sorted out the electric points, erected Gazebos and rallied around as a team and got stuck into helping. Thank you all for being there in the background, being present on the day and for supporting this really important event.	
Aspire	Nurses	Florence Nightingale Hospice at Home	I was at my Mum's home for her last 9 days, helping to care for her whilst the team visited twice daily. I had previous experience because my husband was attended by another H@H team 22 years ago (also good). By 01/07/23 I had met many of the nurses, who were all great, and some even better. Their relationships with Mum were evident, with personal details about her clearly remembered and discussed with her. Their respect and gentleness stood out, which helped her to feel safe in their hands and able to trust. Nothing was too much trouble and they always had time to answer questions	Patient relative

			and arrange extra things needed or desirable. They were never in a hurry to complete a visit, and constantly offered words of support to family. Individuals were authentic and used humour or solemnity in conversation totally appropriately. The dynamics within our family are complicated, and several of the nurses became aware of delicate situations where I needed an extra word, which they accommodated with quiet understanding. When someone is dying, professionals attending have a lot of "power" over a situation, and everyone in the family, especially the patient is vulnerable. Not only did the nurses work well as a team, but I was made to feel that we were all a team, toiling towards Mum's comfort and peace. The work that H@H nurses do is vital towards a "good" ending of someone's life - I cannot praise this team highly enough and could have used any of the 4 categories.	
Respect	Pam Price	Nurse, Pre-Op SMH	I was very anxious about my pre-op assessment as I fear needles. Pam quickly realised this, put me at ease, came with me to Phlebotomy and made sure I did not have to wait. In the past some people have dismissed my fear, telling me to pull myself together, saying it is not that bad, but Pam did not judge me and knew having blood taken was a big deal for me. She stayed with me whilst the blood was being taken, distracting me, and keeping me calm. She made sure I was ok to go home and walked me to my car. Her actions went along way to make me feel less anxious about my upcoming surgery, thank you Pam.	Patient
Enable	Jessica Royce	Service Manager MFOP/FNH (IECC) Stoke Mandeville	Jess has hit the floor running as one of newest team members and has been phenomenal in supporting the medical and operational teams to prepare each time for the industrial action. She is proactive and responsive to any requests for help, has often completed templates etc ahead of the main plan enabling the rest of us to set the plans and actions required in super quick time, nothing is too much trouble and she is a pivotal and very much appreciated extension to the IECC team	Colleague