



The Community Voice

MONITORING THE **NHS** IN
NW LONDON AND SW HERTS

NEWS-SHEET – MAY 2015

1. SOURCES OF INFORMATION IN THIS NEWS-SHEET

Most items are extracted from our representatives' reports, all of which can be obtained on request to the Secretary or Chairman, contact details page 4. Where items come from elsewhere, the source is noted.

2. NEW DIARY DATES:

- a. **Harrow Mental Health Services' Carers' Surgery:** Friday 5th June at 44 Bessborough Road, Harrow. Book ahead to obtain an appointment with a senior manager. Tel: 0208 966 7171
- b. **Paul Strickland Scanner Centre's Charity Golf Day:** Tuesday 9th June, 11am to 8pm, Denham Golf Club. Entry fee £100 includes 18 holes golf, light refreshments and three course meal, charity auction and raffle – all in aid of its 30th Anniversary CT Scanner Appeal (*See Item 10C*).

3. INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Positive results for new malaria vaccines: According to the World Health Organisation, there were 198 million cases of malaria in 2013 and about 584,000 deaths related to the disease. Scientists have been slow in making progress because of the nature of the infected mosquitoes that transmit the disease to people through their bites. There are four different parasites that cause malaria.

After 20 years of research, encouraging results have now been recorded for two malaria vaccines, including signs that one works in young children. With about 1,300 children dying in sub-Saharan Africa from malaria every day, scientists particularly want a vaccine to protect children

4. NATIONAL NEWS

- a. **Nurse training:** Central & North West London Foundation Trust recruits newly qualified staff from UK universities. It is concerned that some qualified staff are unemployable due to lack of numeracy and literacy. It is meeting College Deans and Peter Carter, Chief Executive of the Royal College of Nursing, to discuss both quality and quantity of nurse training. It believes that numeracy and literacy should be fully addressed during basic training.
- b. **Carers' strategy 2015/18:** The Care Act 2014 requires local authorities to identify carers' needs with NHS bodies obligated to assist in this.
- c. **Mental Health Care:** There is a national plan to ensure that CCGs are focussed on improving mental health. This is supported with additional finance.

5. LONDON NEWS

- a. **Central & North West London FT:**
 - **Care Quality Commission Inspection:** The CQC's Draft Report allows ten days for challenge of its factual accuracy. It includes 14 areas for compliance, for which action plans are being developed, but it indicates that CNWL's care is outstanding, its community services good and that the Trust is well led, although the overall rating will probably be "Requires improvement" in line with some of the 17 areas of inspection. The Final Report will be published on 18th June.
 - **Finance:** The Trust ended 2014-15 with a deficit of £2.35m, compared to a planned surplus of £5.7m, caused largely by non-achievement of savings and high levels of agency use. It achieved £17m in savings, 52% of its initial target. Its Continuity of Service rating remains at 3.
 - **2015-16:** The Trust is negotiating with 23 Local Authorities. Its submission to Monitor is a planned surplus of £0.7m, based on the sale of two properties – with an underlying gap of around £8m. The Trust's cash problems are managed on a week by week basis. Monitor now requires the Trust to provide monthly finance details, reflecting the Trust's poor financial position.
- b. **London Ambulance Service NHS Trust:** The CQC starts its inspection of this Trust on 1st June.

c. **Royal Brompton & Harefield Foundation Trust:**

- **Deficit 2014-15:** Despite £13.1m from Project Diamond funding, the deficit was £3.3m.
- **Budget 2015-16:** The initial budget included the expectation of a small surplus of £0.1m for the year ahead, but the withdrawal of Project Diamond income and other items forced a revision to a projected deficit of £11.5m.
- **Write-off of major debts:** At its early April Board Meeting the Trust agreed to write-off two debts, one for a visitor from the USA of over £62k and another for over £100k for a UK resident who had been in UK too short a time to qualify for NHS funding.

6. NORTH WEST LONDON NEWS

- Shaping a Healthier Future (SaHF):** Ealing Clinical Commissioning Group has delayed until late May its decision on when to move maternity, paediatrics and gynaecology services from Ealing Hospital to other hospitals. Receiving Trusts still expect maternity services to transfer during the summer. In preparation, Hillingdon Hospital is moving its early pregnancy assessment unit and gynaecology services from its maternity building into its tower block, and transitional funding is under negotiation with SaHF for an additional ultrasound scanner. Staff recruitment is already underway.
- 2015-16 Central & North West London FT's contracts in North West London:** CNWL provides mental health services in Harrow and Hillingdon and community services in Hillingdon. The community services contract has been agreed but not yet the mental health contracts. CNWL believes mental health services are needed for which the Clinical Commissioning Groups are reluctant to pay. Decisions are expected by the second week in June, but arbitration may be needed.
- Joint co-commissioning:** From 1st April 2015, all eight CCGs in North West London have entered into primary care joint co-commissioning arrangements with NHS England. This means that local GPs will have more power to decide which primary care services to commission for their areas.

7. HARROW NEWS

- Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group:**
 - **Finances:** 2014-15 ended with a small surplus of £83k, but an underlying deficit of £20.1m
 - **More joined-up community services:** Harrow patients should benefit from plans to bring a range of existing services under one organisation. Currently, contracts for district nursing podiatry, rapid response and short term rehab services in the community are all due for renewal. Four potential providers have now been shortlisted to deliver these services together.
- London North West Healthcare NHS Trust:**
 - **Shortage of beds:** (*From Health Service Journal 17.4.15*) This Trust, recently merged from Ealing, Central Middlesex and Northwick Park hospitals, has experienced an 8% increase in admissions in the last year despite being short of 103 acute beds to provide for its population. Northwick Park Hospital plans an additional 63 beds in a new block close to the A&E Department. In preparation for next winter the Trust is working with partners on changes to community pathways to reduce admissions.
 - **Community Services:** This Trust provides community services in Brent, Ealing and Harrow.
- Patient Participation Groups:** Most GP practices in Harrow now have a Patient Participation Group and an active network of these groups has been formed to liaise directly with Harrow CCG.

8. HILLINGDON NEWS

- Harefield Hospital staffing:** In February the appropriate level of nurse staffing was available day and night – 104% for registered staff during days and 102% at night, plus unregistered care staff .
- Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group:**
 - **Finance:** The CCG believes that the surplus for the year 2014/15 will be £3.3million, the first time that a surplus has been achieved in Hillingdon. This was aided by transitional support and slippage in plans. The underlying deficit is forecast to be £7.7million.
 - **Acute services:** Targets were not met in ambulance handover times at Accident and Emergency Departments, cancer treatment and MRSA infection control.
 - **An integrated appraisal team:** The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS FT, the Hillingdon CCG and the London Borough of Hillingdon will establish an integrated appraisal team in the next 4 months.

The purpose is to appraise patients on admission to acute care, to identify their needs and to plan their care on discharge.

- **Use of withheld funds:** The CCG is entitled to withhold payments to Acute Trusts in respect of certain categories of patients who are re-admitted within 30 days of their discharge. There is £1.4 million available in 2015/16 and it is proposed to use this to support the discharge planning process, post discharge care/support, daily review of re-admissions, review of Emergency admissions and support of urgent care in winter.
 - **Improving access to GPs:** The CCG is expected to allocate specific funds for this purpose.
- c. **Hillingdon Community Health:** An incident occurred at Kirk House in Yiewsley on 29th April when fumes, thought to be gas, caused the evacuation of these main offices of Central & North West London FT's community services in Hillingdon. Two staff members needed medical attention. Fire, ambulance and council services responded swiftly. An investigation is underway.
- d. **The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS FT:**
- **Development of the Excellence Centre for North West London:** Working with The National Skills Academy for Health, this Trust will develop the regional hub for new learning resources for healthcare support staff, involving education trainers and healthcare providers from the public, voluntary and independent sectors including care homes, GPs, pharmacies and dentists.
 - **Finance:** The Trust ended 2014-15 with a deficit of £2.6million, mainly due to increased demand and the need to employ a large number of agency staff. Targeted savings of £7.5million (3.6% of operating costs) were achieved in full. The Trusts expects to break even in 2015/16.
 - **Emergency performance:** The trust achieved 94.1% for the 4 hour A&E discharge target in 2014/15. It is currently achieving the full target of 95%. In the year there was an increase of 9% in emergency attendances and a 6% increase in emergency admissions.
 - **Hillingdon Hospital Theatres:** Improvements in ventilation are expected to be complete in July. Despite losing 20 sessions a week the Trust is still achieving its Referral to Treatment targets.
 - **Nurse staffing:** The Trust has plans in hand to increase staffing, including recruitment overseas.
 - **The Care Quality Commission has revisited the Trust:** Results are awaited.
 - **The Health and Safety Executive improvement notice:** This has been issued to the Trust for failing to implement the regulations with regard to handling of Sharps (ie needles and scalpels).

9. SOUTH WEST HERTFORDSHIRE NEWS

a. Herts. Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group:

- **Locality Patient Groups:** In each of the four localities there is a patient group, normally meeting for a couple of hours in the evening monthly or bi monthly, each sending two representatives to the [Patient and Public Involvement \(PPI\) Committee](#), a sub-committee of the CCG Board. These groups are quite small and more people need to get involved. Volunteers do not have to be ill or regular users of health services. People with various skills are needed including those willing to read information, those who understand data, and those prepared to contribute to committees. Contact heather.aylward@hertsvalleysccg.nhs.uk for more information.
- **Watford and Three Rivers Locality:** This covers the geographical area of Abbots Langley, parts of Bushey, Chorleywood, Croxley Green, Garston, Rickmansworth, South Oxhey and Watford – 28 practices in all with a total population of around 209,000.

The locality operates through an Executive Group which meets monthly comprising six elected GPs, two patient representatives, and a local community pharmacist. It also has a Locality Management Group meeting bi-monthly, currently attended by a GP and the Practice Manager from each practice. Each practice also belongs to a 'cluster,' of which there are four - North, Central, West and South - which meet bi-monthly. By grouping up broadly geographically it is hoped that meetings allow mutual cultural exchange and sharing of best practice amongst peers.

b. West Herts. Hospitals NHS Trust:

- **Care Quality Commission inspection:** The outcome of this inspection is now awaited.
- **Handover of patients at Watford Hospital's Accident and Emergency Department:** At peak times up to 12 ambulance crews have had to queue. The Board is investigating.

- **Closure of private obstetric service from 1st May:** Two patients took out an injunction against the West Herts Hospitals Trust in the hope of forcing continuation of this service, but the judge has ruled in favour of the Trust focussing on ensuring a safe maternity service for all its patients.
- c. **West Herts Community Trust:** The Trust wants to become a Foundation Trust so that it can have more freedom to shape plans for the future and to be responsive to the wishes of local communities. Local people can apply to be members – see the Trust’s web site, or obtain a leaflet from the Trust.

10. MOUNT VERNON NEWS

- a. **Mount Vernon Cancer Centre:** East & North Herts. Hospitals NHS Trust now has over 500 staff at this Cancer Centre, treating patients from a local catchment population of almost 2 million people plus some patients referred from across the country. It has over 5,000 new patients each year. It prides itself on being at the forefront of latest technology and many patients being offered clinical trials for both chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatments. It has the latest pumps for chemotherapy and the most up to date linear accelerators for radiotherapy.
- b. **Site problems:** There has still been no agreement between East & North Herts. Hospitals and its Hillingdon Hospitals landlord, regarding future plans for the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre site.
- c. **Paul Strickland Cancer Centre:** This Scanner Centre provides early diagnosis, monitoring and research of cancer and other life-limiting diseases, but it is a charity with no government funding. To celebrate its 30th anniversary it has launched an appeal to replace its eight year old CT scanner. It is organising a series of events to raise funds for this appeal but donations can also be made by ‘phoning 01923 844290 Or by visiting its website www.stricklandscanner.org.uk

11. GENERAL HEALTH NEWS

Keep your nose warm *(From The Week 17.1.15)*

Doctors tend to argue that it’s not the cold that makes colds more common in winter: its people staying indoors in unventilated room. But now, scientists have found evidence that the old advice - to wrap up warm on cold days – might still be worth heeding, reports The Daily Telegraph.

In tests on rodents, the researchers found that the rhinovirus (one of the most common causes of the sniffles) replicates faster in a chilly nose. It is not the virus itself that is affected by the lower temperatures; it is the body’s immune system.

Researchers at Yale University found that the immune response to the rhinovirus was significantly weaker at 33C, the kind of temperature typically found in the nose, than at 37C, the human body’s core temperature. “In general, the lower the temperature, it seems the lower the innate immune response to the virus” said Professor Akiko Iwasaki. So to reduce the risk of falling ill keep your nose warm by covering it with a warm scarf.

Anglo-Saxon potion kills MRSA *(From The Week 11.4.15)*

A potion used to treat eye infections a millennium ago has been found to wipe out almost completely the antibiotic-resistant “superbug” MRSA. The tenth century remedy, which combines garlic, onions, wine and bile from a cow’s stomach, was discovered in Bald’s Leechbook, a leather-bound medieval manuscript held by the British Library, and translated from Old English. Assuming the “eye salve” was used on bacterial infections, scientists at Nottingham University recreated it as faithfully as possible, tested it on MRSA and were “astonished” to discover that it wiped out 90% of the bacteria. Having conducted further tests, they believe that it is the combination of ingredients, rather than a single one, that gives the salve its power. “We were blown away by how effective the combination was”, said Dr. Freya Harrison. “We tested it in difficult conditions too,” she told the International Business Times. “We let our artificial ‘infections’ grow into dense mature populations, where the individual cells bunch together and make a sticky coating that makes it hard for antibiotics to reach them. But unlike many modern antibiotics, Bald’s eye salve has the power to breach these defences.”

(Members should contact the Chairman if they wish any item to be discussed at our next Council Meeting)

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