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GENERAL

- 1. Community Voice Elections 2017:** Nomination forms are in this month's mailing. New Executive Members are needed. If you might be willing to stand but have some queries, please contact the Chairman (*details above*) and come to the next Exec. meeting 7.30pm Thursday 18th May if you wish.
- 2. Community Voice Project to support people who are hard of hearing:** Members who wish to assist this project should contact the Chairman, details above. We lack legal expertise to advise us on the legal aspects of this project – members are asked for suggestions on how we can find help.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 1. Friday 28th April and 12th May: Harrow Mental Health Carers' Afternoon drop-in session,** 1.30-3pm at 376 Pinner Road North Harrow. Tel 0208 868 5224 for details.
- 2. Monday 1st May: Paul Strickland Scanner Centre's Chenies Spring Walk,** 6.2mile walk through the picturesque Chess Valley. Tel: 01923 844290 for details.
- 3. Friday 5th May: CNWL Harrow Mental Health Service monthly Carers' Surgery,** at Northwick Park Hospital. Book 30 minute appointment, new Tel. 0208 869 2320
- 4. Saturday 6th May: Annual Plant Sale at Michael Sobell House.**
- 5. Monday 15th May: Paul Strickland Scanner Centre's Plant and Cake Sale,** at Mount Vernon Hospital, with the Head Gardener from Royal Ascot

NATIONAL NEWS

- 1. A&E target:** All local systems are required to comply with the national expectations, 90% of patients discharged or admitted within four hours by end of September 2017 and 95% by March 2018.
- 2. National budget March 2017:** Social care 2017/18 was granted £1bn, plus £1bn over the next two years, to ensure councils can fund care packages and relieve local NHS pressures by addressing delayed transfers of care. Later in 2017 there will be a green paper on long term social care.
An additional £100m was made available for 2017/18 for investment in A&E departments and £325m over the next three years to support Sustainability and Transformation Plans.
- 3. "Prevent":** Part of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy, this recognises that healthcare professionals meet and treat people vulnerable to radicalization. Such professionals are required to work with partner agencies to safeguard vulnerable individuals by ensuring that they can identify signs that an individual is being drawn into terrorism, and for them then to seek appropriate support. The CNWL view is that it should safeguard individuals from both this and other forms of exploitation.

LONDON REGIONAL NEWS

- 1. Responsibility for GP services in NW London:** In the past GP services were the responsibility of NHS England, but for a brief period responsibility was shared with local Clinical Commissioning Groups. However, from 1st April, complete responsibility for local GP services has passed to some local CCGs, including Ealing, Harrow and Hillingdon CCGs - but not Brent nor Hounslow CCGs.
This is of course a major shift in responsibility, so we have invited the chairmen of Harrow and Hillingdon CCGs to be guest speakers at our July meeting, which we hope they will accept, so that they can update us on these changes and our members can question them if they wish.
- 2. Financial co-operation:** All eight NW London CCGs continue to co-operate financially, as they have done since 2015, which is greatly to the benefit of both Harrow CCG and Hillingdon CCG.

3. **Care and Support for Adults with Serious and Long-Term Mental Health Needs:** NW London's eight CCGs have a system wide approach to these patients, involving the local authorities and voluntary services. Expansion of Home Treatment Teams, Community Teams and Crisis Response is delivering faster access and 24/7 support.
4. **Healthy London Partnership:** Co-operation across the capital continues towards shared aims.
5. **North West London Productivity Programme:** The NW London Productivity Programme was launched to address the challenge that all providers in NW London are expected to be in deficit in 2017/18 and beyond. A procurement collaborative has been set up to target product standardisation, with each provider acting as lead in a particular area. A sector wide approach to elective orthopaedics is being developed to improve quality and productivity, with similar programmes expected for other specialties later.
6. **In line for an award:** The new NHS kit bag launched in December by the NHS North West London Critical Care Network has been shortlisted for a prestigious Health Service Journal Patient Safety Award. The winners will be announced at a special ceremony on July 4th.

Central & North West London FT:

1. **Replacement of computer system:** The Jade system is being replaced by SystemOne which will allow CNWL to create an integrated electronic health record for all its patients across Community, Child Health and Mental Health Services and will also provide additional functionality for mobile working and electronic prescribing.
2. **Finance:** At the end of January the Trust was on track to meet the financial target agreed with NHS England, an end of year deficit of £1m, but that aim contains risks and the Trust continues to work to reduce its use of agency staff and other expenditure.
3. **Safer Staffing:** Reports are required when staffing levels fall below 10% of their fill rate. Daily staffing data is displayed on each ward on whiteboards informing patients staff and visitors about the number of nurses required and the number actually on duty per shift.

London Ambulance Service:

1. **London Ambulance Service response times:** With a drop in demand post-Christmas and a number of active interventions by LAS, there has been some welcome improvement, with the service now approaching its targets.

Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS FT:

1. **New consultants:** Some consultant posts are being replaced but there are also new posts including a whole time consultant in Cardiac Electrophysiology to work at both hospital sites and a new full time post at Harefield for an additional Consultant Cardiac Surgeon.
2. **Write off of irrecoverable debts:** The Trust pursues overseas debts with debt collectors, but this month, with no prospect of recovery, a debt of £96k had to be written off. A Hillingdon Hospital baby was admitted without the Trust knowing her mother came from overseas. Subsequently she was taken to Algeria, where her mother was totally unable to pay the debt. In fact Ealing PCT paid the Trust's invoice in 2012 so the Trust lost nothing, but this was a loss to the Exchequer.

HARROW NEWS

London North-West Healthcare NHS Trust

1. **Quality, Performance and Finance Report – February 2017**
 - A&E performance was 81.3%, an improvement from the previous month. This A&E is one of the most challenged in the region with high demands and increased ambulance arrivals with a high number of patients needing a bed.
 - Cancer (one month in arrears): achieved seven out of eight national standards.
 - Urology, Haematology and Head and Neck cancers accounted for two-thirds of breaches against the waiting time standard.
 - The Trust achieved the national six weeks Diagnostic Standard with 99.2% success
2. **Finance:** At the end of February 2017 (month 11), the Trust had a year to date deficit of £58.5m, which was £0.6m behind plan.

- Cost Improvement Plan delivery to date was £31.2m, in line with plan
 - The forecast outturn for the year was in line with plan, a deficit of £61.5m
 - Capital expenditure to date was £14.6m, £4m behind plan
 - Sustainability & Transformation funding forecast was £20.5m, a shortfall of £1m
- 3. National Apprentice Week:** As one of the largest employers in the area, the Trust offers apprenticeship opportunities for a number of different roles.
 - 4. Pharmacy:** Existing seven day services are being developed, increasing the number of independent pharmacist prescribers, reducing operational costs and making sure that the pharmacists and technicians spend more than 80% of their time on patient-facing activities.

Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group

- 1. New Harrow Children's Service:** Children and young people are getting a new flexible Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service in the Borough. The early intervention service will be launching in April 2017, and is targeted at children and young people who have an identified need.
- 2. Mental Health and Employment Trailblazer launch:** New help is available for people with anxiety or depression to find stable work, thanks to a new service rolled out in some Harrow wards in March.

HILLINGDON NEWS

Hillingdon Health & Wellbeing Board

- 1. Health & Wellbeing Strategy:** Current Hillingdon challenges include historically high levels of violent crime, high rates of sexually transmitted infections, tuberculosis and diabetes and low levels of adult physical activity. These are exacerbated by smoking, poor diet, lack of exercise and high alcohol consumption, all addressed by ongoing projects.
- 2. Better Care Fund Performance Oct. – Dec. 2016:** Monitoring included delayed discharges from hospitals – 2,122 days in the period, permanent admission to care homes – 40 in the three months, and the number of people over 65 years still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital – which was 94.2%, slightly above target. There was a slight increase in the number of patients discharged from hospital at weekends and more patients were informed about available services and support. More elderly people were enabled to stay in their own homes via disabled facilities grants.

The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS FT

- 1. A&E – failure to reach the 4 hour waiting times:** The CCG and the Trust have agreed a recovery plan for 2017-18. Also monthly review meetings are held with NHS England and NHS Improvement Regional Directors, who provide additional support via multi-disciplinary site visits.
A 14% in year increase in A&E attendances led to nearly 17,000 A&E patients between October and December 2016, with a 32% increase in blue light ambulances in the same period. Hillingdon's A&E is the smallest in NW London for the number of patients seen. Designed for 4,350 patients per month, it sees an average of 5,600. However, backed by support from NHS Improvement, the Trust is seeking a loan to double the "A&E majors area". Until this is expanded the Trust will be unable to combat its lack of capacity to treat the current volume of A&E demand within the target time.
Up to the end of February Emergency Department attendances increased by 6,257 compared to the previous year, an average of 19 more patients each day. The expansion of ambulatory care has prevented the escalation of emergency admissions.
- 2. Escalation of capacity:** In February, as part of a major ward reconfiguration, the Trust also opened The Home Safe Frail Unit, a ten bed unit for patients aged over 65 years for maximum stays of 72 hours. Further development of this unit is expected.
- 3. Current Finance:** The Trust is now behind plan since the over-spend on operating costs, especially pay, now exceeds over-performance on commissioning contracts and the non-recurrent gain from property revaluation. However, the Trust still expects to end the year with a surplus of £0.7m.
- 4. Finance 2017/18:** The Trust has submitted a planned deficit of £15.3m and is therefore classed as "distressed" and it is applying for "interim support" from the Department of Health. A recovery plan will be developed over the next couple of months. This is against a Control Total set by NHS Improvement of £1.6m surplus. The deficit budget already assumes that the Trust will deliver savings of £9.6m, so delivery of additional savings for financial recovery would be highly challenging.

Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group

- 1. Delayed Transfers of Care:** In January the failure rate was 16.3% against a target of 7.5%. due mainly to four causes:
 - Lack of Residential and Nursing Home beds
 - Disputed funding issues and family choice
 - Delay in setting up care packages in the patient's home
 - Problems in providing secure unit placement
- 2. Finance:** At end of February, the CCG was achieving its planned surplus - £3.6m by end of year in March 2017, but, with no unused reserves, success remained challenging and it was also unlikely to meet its savings plan in full.
- 3. Budget 2017-18:** The CCG has submitted a plan to NHS England for an in-year break-even position, which complies with NHSE Business Rules but has no in-year reserves to absorb any overperformance on Acute Service Level Agreements.
- 4. 18 weeks Referral to Treatment Pathway:** The CCG has not reached the 92% target for this pathway due mainly to Imperial College Healthcare Trust which recently reached only 82%. Hillingdon Hospital delivery has varied but year to date it has achieved 92.4% over all.

SOUTH WEST HERTFORDSHIRE NEWS

West Herts Hospitals NHS Trust

- 1. A third purple star award!** Hertfordshire County Council has awarded this latest purple star to the vascular ultrasound team at Watford General Hospital for delivering a high quality service to help people with learning disabilities.
- 2. New Play Assistant:** Play can help children deal with worries about their illness or treatment. If a difficult or painful procedure is coming up a play specialist will provide preparation and distraction therapy to teach the child ways of coping. Six year old Freddie, who has known the Watford play specialists from a very early age, decided that he wanted to be a play specialist too. So every time he comes into hospital - as frequently as every three weeks, for up to two weeks at a time, he now has his own list of jobs. As well as making a thank you card for Father Christmas who came to the children's party, he regularly checks the pieces in the puzzle boxes; laminates posters; helps take things to the post room; glues displays and talks to other children to make them feel better.
- 3. Beads of Courage programme:** This is an exciting programme to help children and teens at Watford General Hospital to cope with cancer. When diagnosed with cancer, they receive a length of string with beads that spell out their name. On each occasion they have an operation, an overnight stay or a procedure such as an injection, blood test, x-ray, or chemotherapy, they receive a glass bead to add to the chain. As the colourful chain grows in length, it creates a visual record of all the treatments and procedures the child goes through. The Beads of Courage programme is provided by the charity Be Child Cancer Aware which raises awareness of childhood cancer and supports families of children and young people with cancer.

GENERAL HEALTH NEWS

A Breath Test for Cancer *(The Week 11.2.2017)*

A simple breath test could, in the future, be used to diagnose two of the deadliest forms of cancer, reports The Daily Telegraph. Stomach and oesophageal cancers affect a total of about 16,000 men and women each year in the UK. Survival rates for both cancers are low (about 85% of sufferers die within five years) largely because symptoms only tend to appear when they are already advanced. Currently, the only method of diagnosis is an endoscopy – an invasive procedure that involves a flexible telescope being inserted down the throat. But scientists at Imperial College London hope to change that, after developing a breath test that measures five chemicals which tend to be expressed differently in people with these cancers. When trialled on 335 patients who'd had endoscopies – about half of whom had one of the cancers – it was found to have a sensitivity rate of 80% meaning it was effective at detecting cancers, and a specificity rate of 81%, meaning it was also good at detecting the absence of cancer. If larger trials confirm the findings, the team believe the test could be adopted as a “first line” diagnosis to cut the number of endoscopies. In the longer term, it could “also mean earlier diagnosis and treatment, and better survival” said one of the researchers.