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GENERAL NOTES

- 1. Last month's questionnaire:** Thanks to those who have already responded but few responses have been received. As some members had difficulty in opening the email version we are sending a paper copy to everyone in this month's mailing. Please return it as soon as possible if you have not already done so. For Item 2, please rate our activities to show how you view their relative importance, the most important rated 1 and the least important rated 4.
- 2. Nominations for our Executive for 2018-19:** Nomination papers are included in our April mailing. Although a number of Executive Members are willing to accept nomination for the coming year, we know that we need an Hon. Secretary, a Publicity Officer, and at least one more Executive Member, so nominations for those roles will be particularly welcome. However, if a ballot is needed members will be informed in our May mailing, so that delegates have time to discuss options with their own Executives before elections take place at our AGM on 7th June. Please return nominations as soon as possible, noting that they are expected by Thursday 10th May. If any potential candidate lacks a nominee or seconder please contact the Chairman, details above.

NATIONAL NEWS

- 1. Pay deal for 1.3 million NHS staff:** This covers all NHS staff except doctors, dentists and senior staff. If staff agree this will cost over £4.2bn, with the lowest paid receiving the biggest rise. Half will get 6.5% rise over three years and the rest, not yet at the top of their pay bands, between 9% and 29%. The lowest full-time salary, paid to cleaners, porters and catering staff, will rise by 15% to more than £18,000 with an immediate rise this year of £2,000. A nurse with one year's experience would get over three years up to £27,400. The deal includes a commitment by both sides to reduce the high rate of NHS sickness absence.
- 2. GPs and practice nurses:** In recent years there has been a small drop in GP numbers and 18% of GPs are over 55 years old. There is a trend for GPs to work only part-time. GP workload has grown hugely over recent years in both complexity and volume. Population change accounts for some of this increase but changes in medical technology and new ways of treating patients also play a role. A survey of 3,426 registered nurses working in general practice showed a third expect to retire by 2020, implying that nationally 8,000 may leave within three years.

LONDON REGIONAL NEWS

- 1. Recruitment for North West London CCGs Accountable Officer:** Currently there are two Accountable Officers, one with responsibility for three CCGs, the other with responsibility for five CCGs. Interviews for a joint Accountable Officer are now expected.
- 2. Local Authority Elections – pre-election period:** In Hillingdon the pre-election period started on 12th April, during which NHS bodies, both nationally and locally, should not make or announce new policy decisions, contentious procurement contracts or hold politically controversial debates.

Central & North West London FT

1. **Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services:** In Brent Harrow and Hillingdon, in January all patients were seen within the expected 18 weeks.
2. **A serious phone call incident:** A patient used a computer program to send a thousand 'phone calls to the Trust, causing problems for other users. The Trust contacted the Police and the Service User has received a formal caution.

London Ambulance Service

1. **London Ambulance Service Targets:** Following a national study by Sheffield University changes allow more time for Call Handlers to assess 999 calls with a new set of questions to indicate which patients need the fastest response. There are now four categories:
 - Category 1: Life threatening injuries and illnesses – response target 7 minutes
 - Category 2: Emergency calls eg for a stroke – target 18 minutes
 - Category 3: Urgent calls for patients possibly treated at home - target 120 minutes
 - Category 4: Less urgent, patients given advice over the phone or referred to GP or pharmacist
2. **Stroke response times at Northwick Park Hospital:** The road network structure is affecting response times and LAS is working with the Council to improve this. The new ambulance response targets should also improve response times for stroke patients.

Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS FT

1. **End to threat to congenital heart services!** NHS England has agreed to end its challenge to Royal Brompton's congenital heart disease services and to support a major new collaboration between the Trust and King's Health Partners. This follows the Trust's formal response to the NHS England proposals and thousands of responses from staff, patients, politicians, local councillors, charities etc including our own protest.
2. **Finance in February:** The month's deficit was £3.8m against a plan of £1.9m deficit, with the year to date deficit at £27.9m, £2.9m better than plan. The major concern was Harefield heart division – some critical care may be understated but transplant activity is paid at a marginal rate, and there is underperformance in most other areas, particularly elective cardiology and surgery, and critical care. Also private patient income at the new facility is significantly behind plan.

The 2018/19 budget is proving especially challenging following seven years of NHS austerity. Some difficult decisions are required although appetite for these varies. Even if the necessary savings are achieved, the Trust's underlying 2018/19 performance will still represent a deficit of some £30m.
3. **Chelsea Farmers Market:** This has been revalued and is expected to increase even further in value giving a possible £36m increase in benefit to the Trust.
4. **NHS Oversees Debtors Write Off:** Debts relating to deceased patients and to patients without access to funds have been written off, although all routes for recovery were explored. The finance committee approved write off of debts up to £50k and recommended items above £50k for Board approval. The Trust attempts to recover 75% of NHS tariff as it receives 50% from commissioners on the tariff at 150%.
5. **Cancelled procedures and operations:** No operation was cancelled twice in February and only one operation year to date. However 20 patients at Royal Brompton and 21 at Harefield had procedures postponed. They were all offered an alternative binding date within 28 days.
6. **Nurse staffing.** At both Royal Brompton and Harefield hospitals registered nurse staffing was either close to or above the planned level throughout February, but unregistered care staff were seriously below levels planned – as low as 41% of planned level at Royal

Brompton during night hours, with somewhat better provision of unregistered staff at Harefield Hospital, both day and night. However, the Trust confirmed that safe staffing levels were maintained throughout the month on all sites.

HARROW NEWS

London North-West Healthcare University NHS Trust

1. **Births:** The number of current births at the Trust is less than expected and in January the 6.84% percentage of births within the midwifery led unit was far below the 14% target, due to mothers' choice of where to give birth. In that month the rate of non-elective caesarean sections was 18.16%, above the 16% target.
2. **Stroke:** The Trust reports difficulty in achieving the 90% target for stroke victims to receive thrombolysis within 45 minutes of arrival at A&E – in January the rate was 78.95%.
3. **Community Respiratory Service:** In January only 37.5% of new patients were offered an appointment within ten working days against an expected threshold of 80%.
4. **District Nursing Services:** Failure to provide non-urgent referrals in January affected only two patients but this caused concern; subsequent care and treatment was satisfactory.

Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group

1. **Patient Confidentiality at Alexandra Walk-in Centre:** Concern has been expressed about this issue, but there is a separate room where confidential issues can be discussed.
2. **Care Quality Commission Inspection of GPs:** 31 of the 33 GP practices have been inspected. Two were rated "Outstanding", 27 rated "Good", 2 rated "Requires improvement" and 2 rated "Inadequate".

HILLINGDON NEWS

The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS FT

1. **Care Quality Commission's Inspection:** The first part of the CQC inspection took place between 6th and 8th March. There will now be a series of unannounced visits and NHS Improvement will assess the Trust's Uses of Resources framework, including a full day visit on 2nd May with the Executive and Senior Leaders.
2. **Finances:** At end of February the Trust had a deficit of £13m, £4.5m behind plan. Agency expenditure was down £1.1m in month compared with January, but pay was overspent by £1m. Efficiency savings of £1.2m were achieved in that month.
3. **February Infections:** There were three clostridium difficile cases, 17 in year to date, nine more than for the same period last year. Root cause analysis is underway.
4. **Fractured neck of femur in theatres within 36 hours:** In January two patients failed this national time target but neither came to harm as a result.
5. **Inpatient falls:** There were 4.3 falls per 1000 bed days against the Trust target of 3.9, a slight improvement since December.
6. **Mortality:** Both weekday and weekend rates have been as expected, showing a significant downward trend due to better care in coding..
7. **Maternity issues:** The Trust's non-elective caesarean section rate at 20.53% is higher than the target of maximum 16%. There is also a slightly above target rate for post partum haemorrhage, reflecting the complexity of the cases seen.

Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group

1. **Hillingdon GPs:** Hillingdon has a similar GP retirement demographic profile to the inner London boroughs with 28% of GPs eligible to retire in the next five years. Hillingdon GP:patient ratios are currently the lowest in NW London.

2. **Hillingdon nurses:** Hillingdon has slightly higher nurse:patient ratios than the London and NW London average but the highest percentage of nurses in NW London eligible to retire in the next five years (48%).
3. **Hillingdon carers:** At 31st December 2017 there were 6,641 Adult Carers and 804 Young Carers registered with the Hillingdon Carers' Partnership. Newly-registering Carers are now offered a Carer's Assessment as part of the registration process.
4. **Hillingdon CCG Finance:** The CCG hopes to achieve its control total for the year 2017/18 but will have to use its 0.5% uncommitted reserve to achieve that outcome, which is £5.7m below its plan.
5. **Care Quality Commission Inspection of GPs:** 44 of the 46 GP practices were rated "Good" and 2 were rated "Requires improvement"

SOUTH WEST HERTFORDSHIRE

West Herts Hospitals NHS Trust

1. **Trust's Chief Executive leaves to join health charity:** Katie Fisher, Chief Executive at West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust, is leaving the Trust to become the chief executive of a healthcare charity.
Trust chairman, Professor Steve Barnett, said: "It is with profound regret that I announce that Katie is moving on and will be leaving the Trust at the end of June. Under her leadership we came out of special measures, improved upon a wide range of clinical outcome measures for patients and increased our staff satisfaction rates in national surveys. Many hospital trusts would be pleased with just one of these three achievements. She should also be praised for her significant contribution to the creation of an exciting vision for the future of our estate and our bid for major funding to transform our buildings."
2. **Returning to normal outpatient activity:** The Trust is sorry that some appointments were postponed due to winter pressures. Most of its outpatient activity is returning to normal and it will resume planned operations at Watford General Hospital as soon as the demand for urgent care lessens. It tells patients to assume that outpatient appointments and surgery are going ahead unless the hospital gets in touch.

GENERAL HEALTH NEWS

Global glut in antibiotics fuelling superbugs *Daily Telegraph 27.3.18*

Drug resistant superbugs are rising in UK partly because of a lack of regulation of antibiotics in developing countries, experts warn.

Global antibiotic use jumped by 65% between 2000 and 2015. The analysis, led by "Centre for Disease Dynamics, Economics and Policy" in Washington DC found their use skyrocketed in low and middle-income countries such as India, China and Turkey where antibiotic use rose 114%.

Antibiotic-resistant infections are projected to reach 10 million worldwide by 2030. Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline & Abbott have fuelled the crisis by marketing antibiotics in India that were unapproved elsewhere and are widely available there without prescriptions or controls. Published in "Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences" journal.

"Chemical Cosh" Checks in Elderly Care Homes *Daily Telegraph 16.3.18*

Pharmacists will carry out checks on elderly-care homes amid concern that 1,000s of elderly people are being sedated with a "chemical cosh". Simon Stevens, head of the NHS, has ordered pharmacists to review the medication routinely doled out to residents. He said the cocktail of drugs can do more harm than good, fuels record hospital admissions and risks lives. The number of painkillers and antidepressants given has almost doubled in 10 years with 91 million issued last year. The average care-home resident is given 7 drugs, which can cause dangerous interactions between them.