

Stakeholder Brief

Tuesday 31 January 2017 3.30pm

Dear colleague

I am writing to inform you that we have received a letter from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) where they have outlined their concerns following their inspection team's visits between 22 and 25 November 2016 and the unannounced inspection visits on 7, 8 and 15 December 2016.

The Trust has been issued with a Section 29A - a statutory warning notice issued when significant improvement is required in an NHS trust and a simple warning is not enough.

The CQC have stated that they expect improvement by 10 March 2017.

The concerns raised in the letter relate to all three of our main hospital sites and the primary reasons for notice are as follows:

The systems, processes and the operation of the governance arrangements in place are not effective in terms of:

- Identifying and mitigating risks to patients in relation to which significant improvement is required
- Providing assurance that actions are taken to improve safety and quality of patient care

Concerns focused around three areas:

- Patient safety - urgent care pathway
- Quality governance systems in the organisation (how do you know patients are safe)
- Compliance

Examples of concerns:

- Mixed sex accommodation breaches
- Fridge temperatures
- Inappropriate care settings for patients
- Lack of NEWs and PEWs recording
- A&E waits and staffing

We fully accept the CQC concerns and are committed to the following:

- We will embark on a Board led improvement programme that embeds

“getting good and getting better”.

- We will deliver consistent high quality patient care, and patient safety. We know staff will be disappointed and we share the same focus as the CQC.
- We will refocus on the basics - in the past we have lost sight of these and have not always responded in a way that delivers improvements and learning.
- From the Ward to the Board we will strengthen processes to ensure patient safety, and refocus on the basic care standards.
- We will build a permanent leadership team, leading to stability and improved performance
- We will improve our governance processes
- We must focus on patient safety, quality of care and delivery of professional standards that we can all be proud of.

Our staff have received a written briefing this afternoon, and face to face briefing sessions will take place across our three hospital sites on Thursday.

A full media briefing has been organised for Wednesday afternoon however the email to staff has been picked up by the media and coverage is expected this evening.

As a Trust Board we are clear that we must deal with the problems we face today and put all our efforts into making our Trust a great place for our patients to be cared for and a great place for our staff to work.

As we move forward with a new permanent leadership team a different culture will be introduced. This will see prompt investigations where concerns are raised with clear outcomes and learning disseminated.

Our approach to accountability for delivery at all levels, will also demonstrably change. We must guarantee consistent, high professional standards and rediscover the best.

If we get the basics right we will be able to show that we have improved and others will be able to see the improvement for themselves.

For any failings in the past we apologise, but we can only improve by focussing on what we are doing now.

Caragh Merrick
Chairman