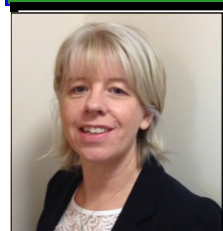




Jan's Weekly Update

Issue 31 – 06.06.14



"Loneliness has the same impact in health outcomes as smoking 15 cigarettes a day"

I have been at the NHS Confederation Conference for the last couple of days. I've heard great speakers say some really interesting things and it's given me lots to think about but Norman Lamb's comment

above is the one that had the most impact - I can't stop thinking about it!



If ever there was a reason to develop the notion of caring communities where health, social care and the third sector work in partnership with local communities to stop that happening then that is it. We are in the 21st century and people should not die or have a poorer quality of life because of loneliness. It also reinforces that we need to play our part in watching out for people who are lonely and ensuring that there is parity or esteem for mental as well as physical well being.

I know many of the community teams identify vulnerable individuals or couples but don't always have ways to support them - and it's not exclusively the domain of older people - young single parents with small children or children displaced from their families can feel just as isolated and lonely as many of our practitioners know. Meaningful relationships and occupation play a big part in supporting a healthy and happy life - the more we work in partnership with agencies that can support these individuals to make connections and become less isolated the better.

Messages from the Conference

The NHS Confederation is a "club" most NHS organisations join - it's our collective voice - liaising with Ministers, other health and social care agencies and international organisations. We have a new Chief Executive of the Federation - Rob Webster who was the Chief Executive of Leeds Community Trust and he is a great advocate for our services and has called for rhetoric into reality - if we are really going to shift services into the community and care for more people at home then things need to change.

He has - through us - issued a 2015 Challenge to the politicians and the public - I will talk more about this but the headlines are:

- Recognise the need for change - remember this is for the politicians and the public
- Culture change - stop making us work in silos - organisation pitched against organisation - common purpose and core values we all work to are what we should be working for
- Redesign the health and care system - not organisations
- One speaker described the NHS "needing to move from a Blockbuster model to Netflix" think about it!
- Shift resources to the community - transition money will be required we can't do it without
- Tell us how much money we have for more than a year at a time - 10 years would be good!
- Have a realistic conversation about the financial challenge - we can't deliver the same or more with 25% less money
- Allow local commissioners and providers to make local decisions - less "top down"
- Support the workforce to develop and change to meet the changing needs of our populations
- Help us to make best use of digital technology

All of the politicians - Norman Lamb, Andy Burnham, and the Secretary of State Jeremy Hunt - all referred to this challenge and appeared to support it - it's the first time I've seen this much focus on the community offer being more than words

Executive Team visit

We met with the Telford and Wrekin Community Nursing teams on Monday - they are really clear what would help them to be more efficient and effective - and they told us.

Better technology, less paperwork and some changes to the clinical pathways all cited as things, if fixed, could release more time to care.

They quite rightly had anxieties that there are plans to increase community activity - how will they do that with the same resource - they found it difficult to believe that if there is no more money or more staff they won't be able to do it. I agree, although there are some things we can do to release more time - but there will need to be different resources available to meet the needs of a growing community population - I think my report from the conference says there is support from the top for that as well as locally!

We also talked about the advantages of integrated teams and that Telford and Wrekin don't enjoy those advantages - and are still referring their patients to Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists in a way other teams no longer have to because they are in the same team - we must have a think about that too.

So a good visit demonstrating that they are really thinking about how to continually improve and release more time for patients and their carers ending with a sad but lovely story about a lady at the end of her life who, because of an experienced expert team of District Nurses, was able to die at home as she wished - with dignity and the people she loved around her.

Shadowing at the Acute trust

I shadowed the Director of Operations, Debbie Kadum, on Tuesday evening visiting Accident & Emergency, Ambulatory Care and some of the wards in Shrewsbury (I'm off to PRH in two weeks) I met some great staff working under pressure but still full of compassion and enthusiasm.

What did I take away from the visit -

- We need to find ways for clinicians in the community and acute to get together and talk more often - You would move mountains!
- There are definitely patients in Acute beds we could bring home sooner
- Our differences are artificial - we are all trying to do the same thing with the same people!

I heard some lovely comments about how great Integrated Community Services are and when they do have contact with community staff how helpful we are - and how expert we are! And they couldn't do your job!

Director Appointments Progress

Sadly, we did not appoint to the Director of Operations and Nursing post after interviewing on Tuesday. This means we will go out to national competition and I will advertise next week to ensure we fill this post promptly.

I am off to Edinburgh later today to take part in the Moonwalk on Saturday night - I'll be pounding the streets of Edinburgh at pace hopefully, thinking about friends lost to and friends surviving breast cancer. I've done 220 miles training since coming back from Australia so hopefully ready to give it my best!

Just needs to stop raining.....



Jan Ditheridge
Chief Executive