



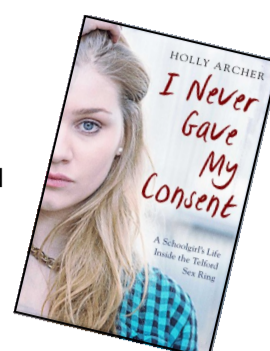
Jan's Weekly Update



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I started the week by having a long discussion with Dr Ganesh about the book I mentioned last week (*I Never Gave My Consent*). Dr Ganesh and many of the Children's and Safeguarding teams were involved in supporting many of the vulnerable girls abused in this case. We talked about our roles to ensure we are doing everything possible to support our teams and services to stop this happening, or importantly recognising and acting on it when it does. I've never apologised for being frustrated when mandatory training isn't completed and this is one good example why.



We need to ensure we influence commissioners, our communities and keep safeguarding on the agenda at a time when perhaps politicians and others are preoccupied by other things.

I also received a letter from a couple of leaders in Children's Services setting out their concerns about the lack of planning, internally and externally, for Children's Services in the future. It was well constructed, solution-focussed and clearly full of passion about children.

I was able to tell them that our Board had shared similar concerns with the Sustainability Transformation Board (the economy-wide plan for the future) and we will keep lobbying and offering to support plans with expertise and leadership.

There was a question for me about how experienced and skilled clinicians get involved in service level planning, which I have asked both operational and business planning people to consider. I have of course asked those who wrote the letter how they get themselves involved too - but that won't surprise you.

Those of you who have daily contact with patients and their families and understand the services, as experts in your field, should be involved in redesign and planning for the future.

Supporting our staff to make change

Many of you know that I chair JNP (Joint Negotiating Partnership) and we met this week to discuss a range of staff issues. We talked about Meridian, which is an organisation supporting our community teams to look at their systems and processes to release time to care, create more efficient workload arrangements and reduce bureaucracy and time waste. They have been with us a little while and I wanted to make sure that our staff representatives understand what it is, why we are doing it and keep an ear out for any anxiety this may be causing amongst staff. It's something the community teams have wanted, but it will challenge working practice at all levels and that can feel a bit uncomfortable. That said, I've been impressed by how our teams have joined in so far. It's important work to support our teams and help us understand if we have gaps and what to do about them.

We also discussed this at our Board meeting on Thursday. We had a very long day discussing everything from CQC and the upcoming Quality Summit, development of the Neighbourhood work (Community Fit plus) and our financial situation over the next few years. We stayed together at the end of the day and had supper together, which is really important as we normally only meet in formal situations and that doesn't help us understand how we all tick. We are all very different in formal, often public-facing meetings. I think it's important for all teams to "work socialise" now and again and I know some of you do this. You can tell the teams that do...

Working in challenging conditions

I'm on my way into Birmingham for a meeting today. It's a very different day to the one I drove home in last night. Today is blue skies and sunshine, last night was torrential rain. Our country roads can quickly become treacherous when wet and full of water, even in the summer. Our community staff must be some of the most experienced drivers in the country. We were criticised by the CQC for not having a policy for our response to inclement weather - it's not an excuse, but it's because you are all incredibly resilient and make it happen for patients whatever the weather. We have local support systems in place and safety guidelines, but Pete Old (our Health Emergency Management Specialist) is going to work with you to make sure it's written down and clear for everyone, especially new staff, and reviewed to see if we need to put anything else in place. Before the winter!



Right my train is pulling in so I'll go. I'm off for a few days next week and rather than give you a very boring account of my week off when I return on Friday, either Julie Thornby or Dr Ganesh will have my slot (I left them to decide who will do it).

Thank you to those working over the Bank Holiday. To those of you who are off, enjoy!

Until next time...

PS We have invited all team leaders and above to the CQC Quality Summit at the Shropshire Education and Conference Centre on 9 September, starting at 10.30am, and have asked that they bring a "friend" - another member of their team. If you'd like to come please talk to your team leader. The feedback is about all of us and the next steps will be about all of us so it would be good to see a real cross section of you there.

And if any GPs are reading this, you or your Practice Manager would also be very welcome.

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