



Jan's Weekly Update

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If we could just talk to each other.....

A number of things have happened this week that have reminded me how we sometimes find it difficult to talk to each other. We put all sorts of things in the way to avoid it - time pressures, availability, "it's not my place to say" "nothing will change anyway" OR we fire off an email and play email ping pong because it seems too hard to talk to the person who can help solve the issue.

The best thing that happened to me this week was seeing two people (both of whom I have the greatest respect for) sit down and sort a problem out that had become much bigger than it should have because they didn't have the conversation about it

before now.

A 10 minute conversation ended months of frustration and misunderstanding. I don't believe anyone comes to work to make someone else miserable but sometimes the things we do can land awkwardly and a simple human conversation is all that's needed to sort it out....

The Ludlow Kitchen

Our Board meeting was at Bishops Castle hospital this week (a very windy drive up there through Storm Doris) and the catering staff at Ludlow kindly provided our lunch and some cakes for the afternoon when SATHs Board joined us for a discussion about how we can work better as partners. The cakes were amazing (a bit of a treat because I usually make the Board have healthy options) and I said they were from Ludlow Kitchen- one of our Directors thought that was a trendy cake shop in Ludlow. Well it sort of is but it just happens to be in our hospital kitchen ! The important thing is that this high standard we experienced is provided for our patients every day at Ludlow.

Discussions about the future

I've been to Leicester with other Chief Executives to discuss our System plan(STP) with our regulators this week and took the chance to discuss many issues with colleagues on the very long drive over there. As I've already said SATH joined our Board to share thoughts about future partnership working especially how we develop clinical pathways. I took the opportunity to show some of the Acute Execs around the hospital and to meet staff - it helped them understand some of the challenges of rural healthcare, why we sometimes have to say no to transferring patients and what a different experience community care is to an acute hospital experience. They really enjoyed it! (I knew they would).

At our Board meeting we discussed the results of our staff survey and where we might focus this year to improve things - based on what you've told us.

Guess what - talking to each other or actually not talking to each other is still something we could all get better at! The Board are particularly keen to make sure we stay visible in your work areas and give you the opportunity to talk to us(if you haven't seen us for a while and want to let me know and we will come and see you).

There is still more work to do to share learning when something has gone wrong and importantly to ensure people feel able to report incidents - although thankfully incidents of violence and aggression towards staff is low some of you are saying you don't report it if it does happen. Reporting isn't a bureaucratic exercise - it's to help us see where risks are and take action. It should also be a reflective exercise so you can think if there is anything that needs to change. Of course talking to someone when it's happened is important to, so you get the immediate support you need.

I'm back in Bishops Castle this afternoon for a gathering of local people with Philip Dunne in the Chair to talk about health issues in their part of the world. It's always a pleasure to do that. They ask some challenging questions but always in a way that is reasonable and respectful of the brilliant work all our Health and care professionals deliver every day.

So I'd better get going - I've already made myself dizzy this morning trying to get out of Kidderminster - all the roads to Bridgnorth were closed due to fallen trees (Doris again) I hope you all stayed safe during the storms, please don't forget about falling branches on your trips to see patients I know you know the roads well but



Until next week.....

Jan

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