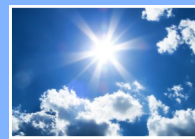


# Jan's Weekly Update

Issue 198 – 18.08.2017



## Back from Rome

So I took my nephew to Rome - in temperatures often above 40 degrees I made it my mission to avoid the queues, stay out of the mid-day sun and still show him all the main sights. A bit of a challenge with a 14 year old teenager who doesn't speak until about 12 o'clock and seems to be very preoccupied with his phone. Was it the wrong trip at the wrong time?

However although he did play games and search YouTube during downtime and really struggle to get out of bed in the cool early hours of the day when we got home I heard him talking none stop to his little brother about the things he had seen, heard, learnt and about the people he had met - in great detail - I was surprised I have to say but he had filtered what was important. I read an airport book to relax he watched YouTube stuff about guitars and chatted to his mates on some media outlet or other, but we both paid attention to what was happening to us now and in real life when it mattered

So when I came back to work late last week and found a number of people distressed and anxious by things they had read in the media - social and the press I knew we had to make sense of the speculation versus real life:

## Squashing the rumours

As most of you know we have recently been successful in securing a new contract for Children's services (0-19) due to the hard work and passion of our teams who persuaded commissioners we are the only game in town. It was presented in the press as a "downgrade" - much less money and a big reduction in staff. The individuals who reported that don't know any of the teams by name or what they do for patients on a day to day basis. They do worry about the future of the NHS and feel it's their job to comment on that which is ok.

The truth of the matter? Yes the new contract is less money and we are required to work very differently to achieve those savings - so we could have walked away and let our staff go to a new Provider or work out how we would do it - keeping young people safe and staff in jobs they can do and enjoy. That's what we did. There will be changes (no redundancies) and as with all change it will feel bumpy. We will make sure we monitor quality outcomes and workload. It's an opportunity as well as a challenge!

## And the Shropdoc rumour?

Then there were rumours that because Shropdoc are in financial difficulty one of our hospitals might close - lots of chatter about that on social media and in the press by people who don't know our staff, don't know the work we do and have no access to the facts. I knew Shropdoc had financial problems because they told me and that they would look at everything they do to save money. That's what we all do all of the time - at no point did I think it would mean our patients wouldn't continue to be cared for or supported medically but we may have to work differently in the future to make it work.

## The reality

And still the patients come into our services, we care for them and they get better. That's our job and we will continue to find ways to do it when things are tough resources are tight and people around us are worrying about things they can't control.

We trust each other to share the facts we know, say when we don't know and keep talking to each other. The public will always need competent, caring staff to support them when they are ill or unable to live well with a long term condition. We may need to adapt and change to meet their needs but we'll always be needed.

## Out and About

That was reinforced while I was out and about this week. The Exec team met with the Incontinence service reinforcing the important work our small specialist teams do to keep people well and independent, and support other teams when they've run out of ideas. I also joined the Stirchley community nurses, recently joined up with the Dawley practice. They are busy, expertly meeting the needs of a local population with really challenging complex health needs.

One more media issue for me to deal with this week - many people kindly and selflessly raise money for us especially for our hospitals. It's brilliant but there is an activity in one of our communities that we can't support and I've had to say we won't accept money from that - it's an event where young men dress up in female nurses uniforms, and push a bed round the town. I'm sure it's done with good intent but I can't and know you don't support this portrayal of one of our professions. I've made that clear in writing to those responsible very respectfully and it may get in the press so you already know about that story if it breaks!!!

What struck me is through times of change, busy workloads and a social media that provides a running commentary on what they think we do for a living how important it is to "top up" keep perspective, work out issues. Clinical supervision, team meetings, mentoring and our new Schwartz rounds are all ways to stay resilient - please use them....oh and of course as I've seen and heard this week - learning to run 5k, getting on a cycle or like I did this weekend spend the day on a motorbike ! That stopped me thinking about work for a few hours!!

If you're worried or anxious about work ask the people who know your name , know what you do, care about your Well Being and have responsibility for you if you don't know what's going on, that's where you'll find the answers, leaving you to get on with the brilliant job you do every day

Until next week.....

PS - while waiting to see the Incontinence Team I got talking to a man who uses our Wheelchair service - an inspirational individual who has competed in the Paralympics more than once - and what did he attribute his success to - the quality of his wheelchair and cushion and the support he gets when it needs altering - because of this service he leads a fulfilling life and rarely needs to access healthcare for anything else. Marvellous.

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