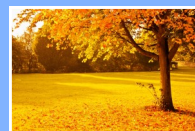




Jan's Weekly Update

Issue 208 – 27.10.2017



Is it all about money?

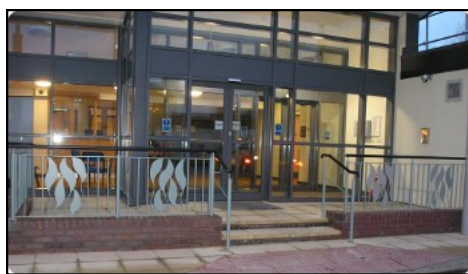
Monday was all about money. Our Board met in the morning to have a detailed look at our financial plans and progress against them. It's something we do every now and again - an extra stocktake. We are doing OK but we still have challenges to make sure we don't use expensive agencies and that we make the savings we said we would.

In the afternoon we had our regular Resource and Performance Committee - where we look at how we have done in the last month with regard to our budgets, savings and targets. It's the Non-Executives opportunity to ask questions of the Executives and senior leaders and challenge where we aren't improving and recognise where we are. I know some of you find it hard to understand why we have so many targets or have to make savings - what does that have to do with patients? Well for example our sickness absence is going up at the moment - we ask ourselves why? Is there something we can do or should have done - what impact is it having on a team and do we need to do anything about that and will it affect the way we are able to deliver high quality services. There are no obvious themes with regard to the absence at the moment - sometimes people just get poorly - but it is making life hard for some teams, we know that and need to make sure we continue to monitor and do something about it if there is a problem that needs fixing for an individual or team.

Out and About

I took myself off to Bishop's Castle yesterday after our Board meeting in Ludlow (I've spent a lot of time with our Board this week) I wanted to see the flooring and maintenance work in the hospital now it's finished or almost finished. I popped into the GP surgery first and luckily found some of the nurses involved in the Bishops Castle Home First pilot - we were able to chat about their experience and their hopes for the future. I also caught up with one of the GP's involved in the pilot - they have been very supportive and we both agreed although we don't yet have the evaluation we are really pleased with how the pilot has supported more people at home (always good) who would otherwise have had to go into hospital. This created a really good multi-disciplinary approach to care for local people and for the nurses a new set of skills under their belt.

I'm so proud of them - it's scary to go out into the community after working in a hospital for a long time - it's very different as many of you know - but they have gone out there, learnt the new skills and quite obviously enjoyed the experience. The statement that stayed with me "it's such a privilege to go into a person's own home" - you immediately see who they are, what life they've had, and what they need to support them to stay independent. We do treat people as individuals in hospital but once you've seen them in their own home it's so much easier to understand their individual needs and how we can support them to stay at home.



Bishops Castle hospital will open as planned - the work has been done well and I hope the team notice that the Estates department have also fixed all those little things that were driving them mad too - Paul from our Estates department showed me all of them yesterday. The man was also there doing routine checks on the water (for Legionella) which was quite interesting - I don't often get the opportunity to talk to people who do this sort of thing - I just see in reports it's been done so very useful to talk to him. We must not lose sight of this pilot - 64 people supported at home who may otherwise have gone into hospital unnecessarily - losing a few more days of independence at a precious stage of their lives.

A New Route Home

I made my way home from Bishops Castle so decided I would try a route via Clun and through Herefordshire - a risky strategy as I may have ended up lost but a lovely Autumn late afternoon and I like to think about how rural some of our communities are and what that means for them and our staff supporting them. It was a stunning trip through beautiful countryside and farmland. I travelled through 3 counties and two countries - I'll let you work those out.



At our Board meeting we were discussing the fact that some nursing and care agencies aren't keen to support us in parts of rural Shropshire and that trip helped me see their point of view - especially in bad weather. However we know we have to make sure there is equitable access to care and treatment and just need to be more creative about how we do that and accept it might cost a bit more money in those areas. I know some people (especially the public) worry that decisions about future care will be made on how expensive something is. We know rural care can be more expensive because we can't get economies of scale but that doesn't mean we don't have to deliver that care and service. It's important we are spending the money wisely of course and things should develop and change as people's needs change and things like technology improve.

It's never all about money....

Until next time

Jan Ditheridge,
Chief Executive



PS I'm now away for two Fridays - Ros Preen and Dr Ganesh will be talking to you while I'm away.

I'm going on a bit of a trip - back to Thailand to trace some of the steps my dad took during the Second World War - as a 17 year old new recruit he found himself in Burma and the Thai borders so I'm going to the River Kwai. Must have been quite a culture shock having never left Derby in his life before that! He didn't return to England until he was 24 - and never left Derby again except for holidays - in this country!

I last left Bangkok the day after the Tsunami in 2004 - I shared a plane home with many evacuees dressed in Thai people's clothes because they had left devastated islands with nothing but fortunately their lives. I was lucky to be on an island unaffected but quite an experience being so close, unaware it was happening until I got to Bangkok and unable to help. The best thing to do was to leave, stop using their precious resources and donate to the charities supporting local people to get up and going again.

It will be a reflective trip I'm sure...