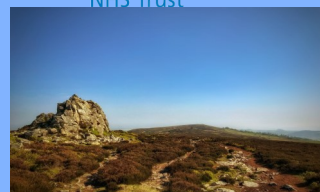




Jan's Weekly Update

Jan Ditheridge, Chief Executive

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I welcomed my new PA to our team on Monday - Lilia. She spent the week meeting people she will work closely with and getting to know how things work. I watched as the rest of the team helped her, and others in the building made an effort to come and say hello, offer support and say a bit about what they did. We do work with really decent people.

I tried hard to be self sufficient this week so she has time to learn and make those important links. It's not easy because I obviously want her to hit the ground running but that won't help her, me or the rest of the team in the long run.

I remember my 1st day here (nearly 5 years ago!) where I was scheduled to go to meetings all day, then to the Annual General Meeting and then the Staff Awards. It turned out to be a 15 hour day!

I wanted to meet staff, orientate myself to my surroundings and understand how things work - I had no idea what was going on in the meetings - I couldn't contribute and I felt a bit at sea. The awards were great but not the easiest way to meet people on your first day - I felt like I was at someone else's party!

Evidence tells us that we lose staff in their first year if we don't help them really understand the job they're going for before employment and if they get a poor beginning..... something for all of us to think about.

P.S. my beginning got a whole lot better after day one!

At Our Board Meeting

In Ludlow yesterday we had some feedback from the public that they were struck by how patient centred we are - that they are central to all our conversations and it's clear that's why we're here. On the one hand I thought - Well of course that's why we're here but I was then so pleased to hear it from people who are often challenging about managers and the decisions Boards make - and we know we can get wrapped up in the important bureaucracy, finance and targets stuff, we always know there is a patient, a Carer, a family member or a member of staff in the centre of that conversation.

The reason they saw this in action though is because of the fact that some of our staff and patients and carers were there either to share their stories or to celebrate success.



The Chairman gives out an award at each meeting to someone who's stood out - living our values - making a difference. This time it was Manish Gajjar's turn, who is, amongst other things part of a reception service at Stepping Stones where he was commended by a parent for his compassion and helpful approach making the family visits so much easier in what must be a challenging life. Interestingly most of the Board had come into contact with Manish and had a story to tell about how he stood out for them too - including, we learned, that he is a very good Bollywood Movie Critic!!!

We then heard from Gary a gentleman who cared for his wife for many years with a debilitating and finally life ending disease Huntingdon's Chorea. He asked our services along with many other health and care services and gave us a very powerful message about the things we can do to make a difference. Sadly his wife died recently but he described "a good death" because of the excellent End of Life care provided by us and others. Kate, one of our Community Matrons, was alongside him while he told his story, as she has been alongside him and his wife for a few years making sure they got the care they needed - a complex task requiring partnership working, new learning and heaps of patience and compassion. It was a real privilege to hear his story and motivated me to get back out there to make our services the best they can be for people like Gary and his wife.

Speaking Of Which...

I attended two important meetings this week that give me hope that we will progress our desire to grow and develop community services to meet the needs of our communities now and in the future. The first was at a lovely venue in Meole Brace which I had never been to before - an event led by the CCG for staff and patient groups to hear about the work on Care Closer to Home - the ambition? To provide more and improved care for people over the age of 65 with long term conditions, who are vulnerable or in crisis due to ill health - to keep them well, independent and living the lives they want to lead - hoorah!!!

I was asked to say a few words about why that is important to us as an organisation which was easy - but then ended up answering loads of questions from the public who are very supportive but like us what to see something happen.

We've done loads to improve things for our patients and their families but we can do far more if we work together with our partners. Ros Preen and I then left this meeting to meet with our CCG colleagues to have further discussions about how we will do it which was again really helpful and hopeful.

And Finally

At lunchtime yesterday I met with just the Non Executive Directors of the Board (not my team) to discuss potential changes to the Executive team. Many of you know that Dr Ganesh has decided to step down as Medical Director and we need to replace him - when he agreed to take on the role he originally said he'd give me a year and has actually given me much, much more than that so I understand he needs to focus on other things now!

I have a vacancy after Mel leaving but have agreed with my team that Ros Preen will continue to hold that role - and we will ensure that we have arrangements in place to ensure she has time to do it - while creating opportunities for others to develop.

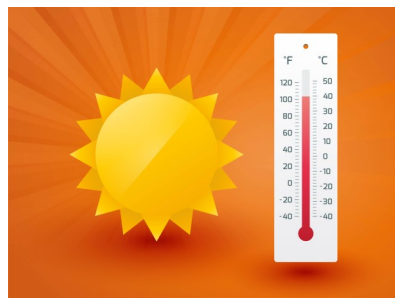
I have also created a role which was agreed and that is Director of Children - I have listened to you - it's not the whole answer but hopefully will ensure that the Child's voice (including Children's services staff) is front and centre at Board level as we develop new services for them and don't lose it in all the conversations about Adult services. It will be a part time post but I'm very excited it will bring new leadership to the Board to take things forward. It won't interfere with operational leadership but I expect it to support and strengthen their roles. This is a direct result of what I've heard from you.

I haven't spent any more money, just moved things round a bit to meet our needs and give other people an opportunity to develop and use their skills differently.

Until next week.....

Jan Ditheridge

Chief Executive



P.S. - many of you have contacted me about uniforms and hot weather. We have relaxed the uniform policy but we still need to be presentable and meet health and safety rules. Speak to your manager if you're unsure and about how to cool your environments. I know that Steve Gregory and Sara Hayes will work with you to consider your request for a summer uniform. Too late for this year but who knew it would be like this....



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