



Jan's Weekly Update

Jan Ditheridge, Chief Executive

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This weekend I celebrate five years in the privileged position of Chief Executive of Shropcom and I think the week's activities are a reflection of what that is and means to me.

I started the week meeting our new starters at induction. All chairs were taken, as we welcomed a fresh group of staff keen to work with us. Really pleased to see we are filling posts in Bishops Castle, Bridgnorth and Whitchurch - Healthcare Assistants, Nurses and Domestic Cleaners - all will make a big difference to our patients. We also had a number of people starting work in Ludlow having relocated from all over the country.

I've been putting my slides together (with a bit of help) for our Annual General Meeting next Monday 1 October - Steve Gregory and I brainstormed all the things we've, well, you've done last year - once we started we couldn't stop. Maybe you should do that too when you take your Half Hour Power break - it will astound you at what you've achieved in the last year. I hope some of you will come to the Wroxeter to share the achievements, lunch, conversation with staff and our patients and the public, and you can even get your flu jab!

Speaking of which

Did you see the programme about the 1918 Spanish Pandemic Flu outbreak on the tele this week? If you didn't, I recommend it - while many things have improved relating to medical care, a pandemic is still named as our biggest public health risk. The big difference from 1918 is we can now be immunised against flu and if enough of us do that we can prevent widespread infection.

In 1918 they had no prevention and no cure - 50 million people died. The pandemic lasted 500 days. Today we can prevent it but we still can't cure it and there are more people with more opportunity to spread it worldwide - so our best chance is to prevent it happening - you won't be surprised that I volunteered to be the Board champion for the flu vaccination programme this year - so possibly more earache from me—because I care about you. The Board also committed to the ambition of 100% immunisation of eligible staff this year - I'm confident we can do this. We did 82% last year and I know you think it's important to protect your patients, team mates and your families.



Did you know?



There are 140 Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) working in Shropcom - and Liz Hagon, Adult Professional Lead for AHPs, and Alison Parkinson, Children's AHP Lead, did all of you proud by presenting the work (at the Board meeting) they are doing with you to make sure you are leading and contributing to all aspects of our services. Steve Gregory is the Board level professional lead, and with him, Liz and Alison have really raised the voice of AHPs with a positive impact on the already important work you do. I hope you feel that AHPs - I'm keen to know what you think? It's National AHP Day on October 15. Let's all take a moment that day to celebrate and appreciate our AHPs.....

Difficult to hear but....

At our Board meetings, this Thursday in Bishops Castle, we invite patients and carers to tell us about their experience of our services. I've talked before about the many amazing things you do to support people and their lasting gratitude for that. This time we heard from a lady who had an experience that wasn't so good. Her husband died last year and our End of Life Care wasn't as good as it could have been - she is keen we learn from that experience and wrote to me explaining what she thought went wrong and why. She's made a video that I hope you all get to see as it's so powerful - the most important message? Behind every task, every service, every treatment or intervention is an individual, a person, a precious life. Dying well is at least as important as living well and while this gentleman and his partner had some outstanding care, it wasn't all great. And that mattered a lot.



It wasn't any one individual's fault but in many ways it was all our fault - I apologised for me and I apologised for us - I am confident none of us come to work to do the wrong thing but sometimes the wrong thing happens - we must stop, think, learn and change it. This lady wrote a complaint and a long report, and has spent many hours with us now to make sure it doesn't happen again - all while she's grieving. We owe her, and it's in our gift to do what she wants for others. If you haven't seen it watch the video. It's not easy to listen to or watch but I'm pleased we do listen, we do put our hands up and say sorry and we do make it right.

Other things..

As I took the spectacular Hope Valley road to Bishops Castle yesterday morning I turned a corner to find a young cow in the road, scared and running all over the place. Two cars passed him then he turned and faced my car I'm sure he looked me straight in the eye - I slowly rounded him up and urged him to the edge where he skipped onto the bank and into the trees, while it was a bit scary it seemed strangely normal.

Later in the day I heard someone say that they had been in Shropshire a while now and couldn't imagine leaving - that's the thing about Shropshire it sucks you in I know exactly what she meant.....

Until next week...

PS, Being CE at Shropcom is still one of the best jobs I've ever had.

Jan Ditheridge
Chief Executive

