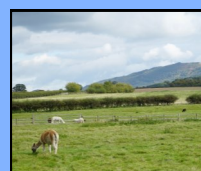




Jan's Weekly Update

Jan Ditheridge, Chief Executive

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Yesterday, we had our informal (no public present) Board of Directors meeting at Whitchurch. It was an early start for me as when I went home on Wednesday (domestic duties), it took me two and a half hours from Malvern to Whitchurch. I've decided driving on A-roads adds about 8 minutes for every 30 miles - I'm sure some of you can vouch for that!

Shropdoc Chief Executive Julian Barrett and their Chairman Russell Muirhead, who is also a GP that many of you have worked with, joined us so we could discuss progress on the new partnership and contract.

Half an hour repower

A confession - at lunchtime we had a teaching session on a new bit of software, which will manage our reports and papers so nothing needs to be printed, and we didn't take a break! It was my fault, I signed the agenda off and didn't make sure that everyone had time to stand up and take a breath.

I saw someone at Halesfield doing the same earlier in the week. They were having their tea over the computer before rushing out again to see patients. I flagged it to their manager about encouraging breaks and it looks like I need to reflect too, doesn't it!

After the meeting, we always split up and go on visits to our services. The Chairman and I had been invited to the Forget-Me-Not Café and the ward so I put all my office kit in the boot of my car to prepare.



On the way back to the ward, I got muddled into a crocodile of 3 year olds dressed in fabulous Halloween fancy dress and it turns out they were going the same place as me!

I don't know where to start about this visit - there were too many examples of compassionate, high quality care to mention. The crocodile of children were joining a group of our patients, who also all happen to have dementia and I will never ever forget the change in their faces as they interacted with the children. The dementia and their aches and pains drifted away - the person they are shone through. After, they were chatty, motivated and, well, happy!

They proudly showed me the art work they had done that morning and most were able to tell me what the goals they were working towards while with us. Rachel also showed me and the Chairman the felt poppies they were making, which were lovely, but also helped patients discuss memories and loss. I think we have to do a special piece on this so you can hear more.



The children looked like they were having a fabulous time! Interestingly, I sat amongst them all while talking to one of the ladies, and a whole line of them came over to show me their bumps and bruises, totally unprompted. They were mainly minor figure issues but I was the only one not in uniform - what was that about!

A big shout out to Heather (our Memory and Wellbeing worker) and our wonderful volunteers Rachel, Cynthia, Penny and Julie who made this happen.

The good stuff didn't stop there. I could see all the staff working together - Rehabilitation Assistants, Healthcare Assistants, Pharmacy staff and Nurses with Porters and Catering staff to promote independence (there were no PJs in sight) care for those too poorly to get up and take time to look after each other, for example; the kitchen staff made a birthday cake for one of the staff at very short notice!

I could go on but I have other things to tell you about.

Other stand-out things

Our Exec team - me, Ros, Steve, Julie and Jane - met with the Adult Services Locality Managers - Tara, Mande, Phil, Donna, Katie and Sam - on Tuesday to hear how they are settling into their new roles. It was an inspiring meeting. They're full of ambition, and, take it from me, they are absolutely person-centred for our patients, families and staff.

They understand and care about what you do well, where the challenges are and what needs to happen next. It was brilliant to hear they are helping you get time to have your appraisals and discuss personal development (well done and thank you Oswestry MIU!) along with refocusing on important things such as Red to Green and safety huddles and handovers. They have not lost sight of the things that are challenging or need to change to make sure you have time to do the things you're skilled to do.

I gave them one challenge to make sure they all have personal development plans, as managers often forget themselves, to ensure they are supported and develop as leaders because they are the senior leaders of our future.

Urgent Care

Steve Gregory and I spent a lot of time this week, and previously, working with Acute Services, regulators and partners to ensure we can support any changes to our A&E flow over the coming months. I know some of you have concerns about patient flow if A&E closes and I hope you're involved in the conversations - speak up if you're not and think you should be.

Ludlow Hospital

I'm conscious I usually write this late Thursday or early Friday so often miss the opportunity to say what I've done on a Friday so, last Friday after writing this, I went off to Ludlow Hospital for the official opening of the new X-Ray Unit. The result of a very generous donation by the League of Friends and investment by us. It was an absolute pleasure to be there, they really are such good friends to our hospital and the staff and patients there.

However, I also wanted to say I saw exactly the same team spirit, care and compassion as I described at Whitchurch earlier. Patients were up and about, the ward was clean and bright and outpatients was buzzing. Another great way to end a week.

One more thing

Many of you know CQC will be with us in the next few weeks/months or so, and many of you have talked to me about how you are preparing. I guess I just wanted to say, I just want you to show and tell what you've done over the last couple of years, since they last came, to improve things for patients and families, how committed you are to quality and show your best you - you all really deserve to that have recognised. You are some of the most committed and hardworking people I've had the pleasure to work alongside and you deliver high-quality care and services every day. Yes there are challenges, things that go wrong and some days are bumpy but we work together to recognise that and sort it out.

I want CQC to see what I see when I'm out and about, and I want them to write about it so everyone knows and you get the credit you deserve.

Until next week...

Jan Ditheridge
Chief Executive



PS - don't forget the clocks go back this weekend and to check your cold weather preparations. It's going to be dark and chilly next week!