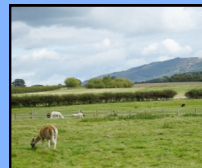




# Jan's Weekly Update

Jan Ditheridge, Chief Executive

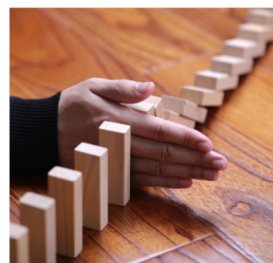
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## I want to talk about prevention

Over the last week I've been preoccupied with the importance of prevention and what it really means in practice. What we do at work and what we do at home to keep our patients and their families and ourselves and our families healthy and independent.

There are so many programmes on the telly showcasing amazing operations and treatments that have revolutionised healthcare but where do we celebrate prevention?



It's in all the national policies that it's important, the media, this week, are reporting the rise of childhood disease such as measles (almost unheard of a few years ago) and many of our services and the care you give are designed to avoid illness, crisis and deterioration - but we don't shout about it do we?

## So I thought I might do that now



Our Children's and Young Peoples Immunisation Team have recently won a tender to continue to deliver the Immunisation Programme in our county - a small team punching well above their weight to ensure all our young people are protected against childhood diseases.

We heard at Quality Committee yesterday what our community teams, nurses, carers, specialists and equipment teams are doing to prevent pressure ulcers - a crippling, debilitating and sometimes a life limiting problem once it's taken hold of someone.

Our dentists spend loads of time trying to ensure children and adults understand the need to look after their teeth for so many reasons - poor dental hygiene will have a direct impact on many aspects of physical and mental health.

Our allied health professionals give people exercises, advice and solutions to problems that help them live independently, stay mobile and ultimately stay healthy and well - and probably happy!

Our psychologists work with people to equip them with strategies to prevent mental illness and improve physical outcomes or pain experiences.

I could go on and on.....maybe do your own list of what you do on a daily basis that's called prevention and celebrate it!

## And what about us?

Our Health and Wellbeing team are promoting living well through the menopause at the moment. I'm so pleased we're talking about it - a bit of a taboo subject for some, it's a rite of passage for every woman which can be problematic for some, debilitating for an unlucky few. However there are lots of things that can make it easier, manageable, even enjoyable. It's a time to be proud not miserable.



A few years ago I mentioned my first mammogram in my Weekly Update - and the need to encourage our male colleagues to go get their prostate checks - I heard a few grumbings that it might not be appropriate to mention "things like that in my blog."

Well here I am again having just been for my second mammogram - if you're talking about it you're thinking about it - cancer screening has done so much to improve outcomes for all of us - catch it quick, early and there's a really, really good chance treatments will work and life will return to normal.

I wonder if it's a bit like measles - many of us don't remember life before widespread immunisations, screening and early treatments.

I do - and some of you will too - I remember nursing a little girl in intensive care with measles - I can remember her, her family and how awful it all was for them - I was in my early 20s but I remember it like yesterday.



I remember caring for women and men on medical wards with very progressed breast and prostate cancer - and hearing them say they didn't look for help until it was very late. No-one talked about it back then, they were embarrassed to say anything or go to the doctor, they certainly didn't talk about it to anyone....

Many of us are working alongside someone who has had a positive screening, or found something wrong that they were curious enough to go to the doctors to investigate - they will need our support at times through the path they have to take and deserve our upmost respect for going for that screening or seeking early help to ensure they get the very best outcomes.

## Let's take a moment to celebrate prevention .....

It's a bank holiday weekend - I hope all of you get some time off to be with family and friends. That's prevention too!!!

For those of you working thank you and enjoy your time off when it happens.

So until next time...

**Jan Ditheridge**  
Chief Executive

