

REPORT TO THE TRUST BOARD IN PUBLIC
20 May 2021

Title	Quality Assurance Committee held on 26 April 2021 Committee Chair's Report
Committee Chair	Deborah Wheeler, Non-Executive Director and chair of the committee meeting held on 26 April 2021
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Purpose of the report

To bring to the Board's attention key issues and assurances discussed at the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) meeting held on 26 April 2021.

Issues to be brought to Board's attention

The Committee considered a range of items that focused on quality and safety at the Trust at its meeting on 26 April 2021 including a presentation on Adult Mental Health Services in City & Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets. Reports discussed included patient safety, medical education, Board Assurance Framework - clinical risk, environment and sustainability – climate emergency declaration, infection prevention and control board assurance framework report, veterans' service, research and innovation, internal audit and Quality Committee assurance report.

The Committee wished to draw the Board's attention particularly to its discussions on:

- **Quality and Safety Report: Adult Mental Health Services in City & Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets**
 - The overviews of the Trust's adult mental health services in City and Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets took account of the varying impact of Covid during the past year, successes and achievements as well as current challenges
 - Overall service levels were maintained throughout Covid; admissions had dropped in City & Hackney but had now picked up again
 - Primary care has helped respond to the needs of the community
 - More flexible ways of working have been introduced although this has, in some areas, identified some inequities
 - Staff are exhausted, there are some anxieties about returning to the workplace and challenges with recruitment
 - Digital poverty has been a barrier for some service users although in City & Hackney there has been success in using personal health budgets to access grants for mobile phones or tablets with some 400 service users having benefited
- **Patient Safety Report:** There were 17 serious incidents including 12 deaths of adults and one of a child; nine of these appear to be as a result of suicide (subject to inquest). A review of the increased number of inpatient deaths in Tower Hamlets during the last year has been commissioned. In addition, a review of all inpatient deaths during three years is also being undertaken.
- **Environment & Sustainability – Climate Emergency Declaration*:** The report outlined the rationale, process and implications for a climate and ecological emergency declaration at the Trust. Key points discussed included:
 - Experts agree that climate and ecological breakdown is the greatest single current threat to human health
 - The declaration recognises the crisis and identifies the Trust as an organisation with a commitment to tackling climate change which aims to mobilise and act at a scale and speed appropriate to the crisis
 - The declaration aligns with the Trust's values, commitment to improving population health and role as an anchor organisation

- The intention is that the Trust becomes a net zero organisation, promoting the public health benefits and opportunity to drive down health inequalities
- The Committee unanimously ratified the climate and ecological emergency declaration.
- **Veterans***: An update on the Trust's commitment to the National Armed Forces Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA) was received. The VCHA sets out that the nation has a moral obligation to current and previous members of the armed forces and their families, and establishes how they should be expected to be treated. The Trust is one of the first mental health Trusts that have signed and committed to the Covenant, and is currently working towards accreditation in coproduction via a group that comprises of ELFT staff who are veterans or relatives of veterans. A dedicated webpage has been launched to raise awareness, and a partnership between the Trust's Recovery College and the Help for Heroes Recovery College has been established.
- **Infection Prevention & Control Board Assurance Framework**: A detailed update on the Trust's response to infection control during the pandemic was received in the form of the self-assessment against the ten domains in the NHS England's infection prevention and control board assurance framework. Key points discussed included:
 - The Trust is working with partners to reduce the delays in the processing of swabs
 - There is an innovative focus on quality improvement, engaging with people around what keeps them safe, which is hoped will lead to more sustainable outcomes in terms of infection prevention and control
 - Aim is for more local ownership around infection prevention and control.
- **Board Assurance Framework - clinical risk***: The Committee discussed the range of actions being taken to mitigate the risks, and agreed the reduction to the current risk score to High 12 which is mainly due to the easing of Covid restrictions, and teams working to ensure services are adequately and safely covered. The Committee discussed the challenges and actions being taken, and agreed that appropriate controls are in place and operating effectively.
- **Medical Education Report**: The report provided an update on the progress against the five-year plan. Key points highlighted included:
 - Service users involvement in the design, development and delivery of all events
 - Working with partner organisations to strengthen the profile of teach and training across the Trust with the aim of making ELFT a more attractive option across medical workforce
 - The development of an Experiential Learning Centre (ELC) at Trust headquarters that will consist of an agile working space, large multi-purpose room and simulation rooms, all with state of the art equipment. This will provide an excellent opportunity to develop MDT simulation/experiential training and innovate learning methods across the Trust
 - The impact of Covid on teaching which has changed to online
 - The ambition is to modernise teaching across professional boundaries, rather than in traditional professional silos.
- **Research and Innovation**: A progress report was provided on the Trust's five-year research plan that is based around the four strategic priorities. The Team has been engaged with Public Health England to help with Covid research. In addition, a Covid-related piece of research has been commissioned exploring the range of responses to the pandemic that will feed into post-traumatic growth. There has been a focus on a culture of enquiry and innovation.
- **Internal Audit Report**: Positive assurance was received in respect of the remote working during Covid and People Participation audits, both demonstrating examples of good practice.

Previous Minutes

The approved minutes of the meetings held on 11 January 2021 and 8 March 2021 are available on request by Board Directors from the Director of Corporate Governance.