

Report from the Trust Chair on the activity of the Boards for Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust and Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust which met in common on 30 April 2020

Introduction

Given the rules on social distancing each Board took the decision to suspend public board meetings during this period. The Board has also taken the decision recognising the demands on the Trust and Executive Management to focus Board meetings on receiving updates on key matters and taking key decisions that cannot be delayed

Whilst the meetings have become private, receiving in the main verbal updates and presentations, each Trust is keen to keep the Public informed of the matters it discussed and report the key decisions it has taken (recognising that some elements of any contractual decision would not be disclosed). The Boards for BSUH and WSHFT met at the same time to help streamline governance through this challenging time so commentary below refers to both Trusts unless otherwise described.

Activity of the Board

Both Boards approved the minutes of its January public meetings and these are placed on our website.

Both Boards received an update from the Executive team led by the Chief Executive covering the Trust's response to Covid-19, the plans developed, the performance against those plans and the management of risks along with an understanding of the next stage as each Trust and the Country move to the next phase of responding to the virus and managing non-covid-19 patients, making sure that innovative ways of working which have been developed through the crisis are captured for the future (the new normal). Both Boards were assured over the development of robust plans and that the each Trust was able to operate within those plans and that these plans and the actions taken were positively impacting on the identified risks to patients and the staff.

Each Board received information from the meeting of their Finance and Performance Committee that;

- confirmed the each Trust had met its control total and in doing so had substantively delivered its set efficiency programme.

- confirmed the funding mechanism for each Trust until July, this being substantively based on a block contract with top up payments for extra costs incurred as result of Covid-19.
- confirmed the each Trust has been reimbursed fully for the extra Covid-19 costs incurred in February and March 2020.

Each Board received information on the recent performance of each Trust and were assured that had Covid-19 not brought about the significant changes it did in the latter part of the year, the Trusts would have delivered their agreed performance aims.

Key Decision

The Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust Board approved the purchase of equipment for the Breast Unit from the Trust charitable funds.

Next meeting

The next Board meeting for each Trust is scheduled for the 4th June. At this time we are working on the assumption this will be conducted under the same social distancing constraints and as such a short summary of the business of the meeting will be made available after the meeting. Governance arrangements are being kept under constant review and any changes to these temporary arrangements will be given on our website.

Alan McCarthy

Trust Chairman