

**To:** The Board

**For meeting on:** 30 November 2017

**Agenda item:** 4

**Report by:** Baroness Dido Harding, Chair

**Report on:** Chair's report

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### **Getting to know NHS Improvement and the NHS as a whole**

1. My first priority as Chair of NHS Improvement has been to learn about NHS Improvement specifically and the NHS as a whole. I have visited several of the NHS Improvement regional offices, held multiple internal focus groups and walked the floors in Wellington House and Skipton House speaking to staff. I have visited a cross-section of NHS trusts including Queen Elizabeth's Hospital in King's Lynn, Cambridge and Peterborough, London Ambulance Service, Birmingham Community Healthcare, The Royal Marsden, Salford Royal, University Hospitals of Manchester, Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital and Barts. I have talked to trust leaders, staff and patients and listened to what they love about our NHS and what they would like to see change.
2. I have met with various stakeholders in the last month, notably the Academy of Royal Colleges, and the Chairs of NHS England, NHS Digital and the Care Quality Commission. I am looking forward to working together with our partners across the sector to ensure we rise collectively to the challenges and opportunities the service is currently facing.
3. I have also met with Lord Hunt, the Labour frontbench spokesman in the House of Lords and am in the process of arranging introductory meetings with various members of the Health Select Committee in the House of Commons, in addition to meeting with Government ministers in the Department of Health.
4. Everywhere I go, I meet deeply committed teams keen to show me what they are most proud of and it is clear that while there are undoubted challenges, there is also huge opportunity to share and scale best practice across the service.
5. I intend to continue visiting trusts and meeting other key stakeholders over the next few months to broaden and deepen my understanding, and in doing so shape my priorities as I learn.

## **Appointing a new chief executive**

6. Beyond getting to know NHS Improvement and the sector, my first priority has been working with members of the Board to find the best possible replacement for Jim Mackey. This is still to be finalised but I expect to be able to report an outcome soon. I wanted to thank both Jim Mackey for his ongoing commitment to NHS Improvement and to Kathy McLean for stepping up into the role of Interim Chief Operating Officer during this period of transition.

## **Joint working with other arm's length bodies**

7. I have spent some time in my first weeks discussing the early effect of our joint arrangements with NHS England in the South. There is clearly a need to align our objectives and efforts to ensure we are all working together for the benefit of those delivering care in the NHS. I am keen to explore how to make these joint working arrangements most effective, including how to clarify our respective roles and align governance, data, systems and processes. Achieving these things is no simple matter and we should ensure that resource and time are committed to focus on these aspects of joint working. I am in discussions with the leadership of NHS England on how best to progress this so we can give the right clarity and support to our respective teams quickly.
8. I'd like to thank everyone across the service who has gone out of their way to welcome me into the NHS family and in doing so give me every possible chance to deliver on my responsibilities.