

To: The Board

For meeting on: 26 July 2018

Agenda item: 4

Report by: Dido Harding, Chair

Report on: Chair's report

Getting out and about in the NHS

1. Since the last Board meeting I have continued to visit providers across the country including Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust, Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust and the Devon Partnership NHS Trust. I have spoken at chairs' meetings in the North, Midlands and East, and London regions, and at a variety of healthcare conferences. I also visited Tower Hamlets Council with Duncan Selbie, the Chief Executive of Public Health England, to get a better understanding of frontline community health projects. As we celebrate the 70th birthday of the NHS, I continue to be inspired and humbled by the people I meet from across the country who work in the NHS, and make it what it is today.

Non-executive Director appointments

2. I would like to formally thank Sarah Harkness who is stepping down from the Board in September and Sigurd Reinton who stepped down at the end of June. They have both serving two terms on the TDA/Monitor and NHS Improvement boards and we are very grateful for their tremendous contributions. I am delighted that Lord Carter and Lord Darzi have been reappointed for a second term, and that we have four new Non-executive Directors joining the Board at the beginning of August. Sir Andrew Morris, Wol Kolade, Laura Wade-Gery and Tim Ferris MD will bring a breadth of experience from both inside the NHS, and outside, and I look forward to working with them.

Closer working with NHS England

3. Malcolm Grant and I continue to meet regularly and have further detailed discussions on how to align the work of NHS England and NHS Improvement. Following our joint Board in May where we approved the senior management structures and executive governance of our joint work, we have hosted an informal workshop of NHS Improvement and NHS England Non Executive Directors to develop options for board oversight of our joint activities. We have a further joint Non Executives working session at the end of the month and are on track to present proposals to our joint board meeting in September.

Leadership and culture change in the NHS

4. I have spoken at a number of conferences over the last two months, setting out my view that the most powerful lever there is to drive improvement in the NHS is culture. Organisations where staff feel safe to speak up; where diversity in backgrounds and leadership styles are encouraged; where people feel engaged and empowered to do what they think is right perform better. The opposite is also true, and my trip to meet the staff of what was Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust with Ian Dalton, Stephen Barclay MP and Rose Cooper MP is not a day I will forget easily. Hearing their stories of what went so wrong, and how poor leadership and a rotten culture affected them and their patients, was heart wrenching and I am extremely grateful to the team in Liverpool for being so open and honest with us. I feel a keen sense of responsibility to act on their behalf on the recommendations set out in Dr Bill Kirkup's report. It is good to see the progress set out in the Board paper this month, but there is clearly much more that we have to do.
5. One of the actions from the Kirkup review is a review of the Fit and Proper Person Regulation, which is being led by the Department of Health and Social Care. While there is much we in NHS Improvement can do to recruit, develop, support and hold to account senior leaders in the NHS, the formal assessment of the appropriateness of appointments is a very important element in shifting the leadership culture in the service. Ian Dalton and I have had an initial meeting with Tom Kark QC who has been appointed to conduct that review and we will continue to engage closely with his work.

Volunteering

6. An important element of moving our culture from a regulatory one to one more focused on improvement is to get closer to patients and frontline services. With this in mind, I am sponsoring the development of a volunteering scheme for NHS Improvement. Spending time in trusts helping out, is a great way for national staff to reconnect with patients and frontline staff. It reminds us all what really matters. There is strong support for a scheme: nearly half of NHS Improvement staff responded to a survey last week and 85% of them were keen to volunteer; with 200 staff offering to help design the scheme. We are working with NHS

England and a number of trusts to get a scheme up and running for everyone to participate in this winter.