

## **Note of the National Escalation Pressures Panel meeting**

**Friday 8 March 2019, Skipton House**

Panel attendees: Steve Powis (Chair – NHS England), Derek Alderson (Royal College of Surgeons), Carrie MacEwen (Academy of Medical Royal Colleges), Cliff Mann (NHS England), Richard Peabody (Public Health England), Pauline Philip (National Director for Emergency and Elective Care, NHS England and NHS Improvement), Prem Premachandran (Care Quality Commission), Helen Stokes-Lampard (Royal College of General Practitioners)

1. The Chair welcomed members of the panel to the meeting. The notes of the last meeting were approved as an accurate record.
2. The National Director for Emergency and Elective Care updated the group on recent performance. Overall winter performance to date was about the same as last year, despite a marked increase in demand. The first half of February was challenging – patients with flu in general adult beds had increased which had an impact – but the second half of the month had seen an improvement and a turnaround in performance.
3. Departments had less congestion even with increased demand, and this benefit was continuing to be reflected by front line staff reporting that the pressure on the service wasn't at the same level as last year. In addition, other pathways – 111, GP streaming, and same day emergency care – were lessening the impact. In elective care, both the overall waiting list and 52 week waits were reducing in numbers.
4. Public Health England updated on flu. The situation had improved, though flu was still circulating with the H3N2 strain being seen towards end of season as well as H1N1. Pressures on hospitalisation and ICU/HDU were now easing off. Vaccination uptakes were encouraging, with the staff rate up by 1 percentage point.
5. The panel agreed with the summation that whilst demand for services had increased, and winter had been challenging, that the system had coped well with pressures.
6. The Chair concluded the meeting and thanked members for their time. This meeting concluded the scheduled meetings of NEPP for winter 2018/19.