

GP NEWS

Newsletter for GPs and Practice Managers in Cumbria

• Issue 20

• April 2011

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DIRECTORY

All our consultants, secretaries and contacts, updated each month

LATEST ON OUR FOUNDATION TRUST PLANS

Our Trust Board met last week and discussed the next steps as we move forward to find a new partner in our ambition to become a Foundation Trust before April 2014.

We announced a few of weeks ago that we will be seeking a partner to strengthen our organisation so that we can continue to deliver high-quality and safe patient care in the future. We want to ensure that we deliver our Trust Board's priority aim and that is to always have patient care at the heart of our decision making.

We have been working closely with NHS North West (our Strategic Health Authority) over the last few weeks to outline the process we will take and we have also held initial discussions with potential trusts interested in forming a partnership.

Those interested parties are currently Cumbria Partnership, Morecambe Bay, Newcastle and Northumbria.

Chief Executive Carole Heatly told the Trust Board meeting: "The route we have decided upon is to find a preferred partner as soon as possible so we keep up the excellent performance in delivering our services. We are very strong on performance and on providing safe and high quality services. We want to make sure that they remain at the centre of what we do."

We are putting together an overall project plan for the merger and acquisition process which will set out how we will identify potential partners. We will then develop a preferred option based on a firm set of criteria.

This means any partner will have to demonstrate the following as a minimum:

- High quality services
- Outstanding patient safety including clinical outcomes and patient satisfaction
- Accessibility of future services for the people of north Cumbria
- Potential for redesigning and modernising services through larger multidisciplinary teams
- Understanding and experience of a rural population and its health needs
- Proposals for delivering the West Cumberland Hospital redevelopment
- Training and education strengths and the ability to sustain training programmes

MEETING ESSENTIAL STANDARDS OF SAFETY AND QUALITY

The Care Quality Commission (CQC), the regulator of health and social care services, has paid an unannounced inspection visit to the Cumberland Infirmary and has praised the Trust for the care and attention that we give to our older patients.

The purpose of the inspection was to look at the quality of care older people receive whilst in hospital, focussing on nutritional needs alongside privacy and dignity.

The CQC team has given initial feedback which was extremely positive.

The key highlights that they fed back included:

- Very caring and attentive staff
- Positive and welcoming approach from all the staff they spoke to
- Positive working atmosphere on the ward areas
- Good practice observed on nutritional practice including assistance given during meal times
- Good correspondence in the care plans and patient notes regarding patient choice and preferences, for example, menu choices
- Good practice in relation to risk assessment and consent
- Recognition of the key roles we have in place to assist with meeting patient nutritional needs, for example, the role of the ward house keeper

In February 2010, the CQC confirmed they would be inspecting 100 hospitals across the country to look at the quality of care given to older people. On 17 March, the CQC undertook an unannounced visit at the Cumberland Infirmary and focussed on two core areas – privacy and dignity and nutrition. The team interviewed staff and patients on the wards alongside observing the care delivered. Following the visit the CQC confirmed that they would not be making any formal recommendations for improvement on the standards of care they observed. The Trust will receive a report from the inspection visit in due course.

NATIONAL AWARD FOR TECHNICIAN



Phil Myers

A prosthetic technician at the Cumberland Infirmary has been named the best in the country after being nominated by two of his patients.

Phil Myers was named prosthetic technician of the year by Limbcare, a national charity which supports amputees. He picked up a trophy and £400 prize at the British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists' annual conference in Harrogate last month.

Phil, who has worked at the Cumberland Infirmary for 21 years, was nominated by two patients, both grateful that Phil's ingenuity had enabled them to continue with the hobbies they loved. One patient, a bilateral partial hand amputee, said Phil deserved the award as his specially adapted hand had allowed him to hold an ice axe to continue with his love of ice climbing. For the other patient, Phil's ingenuity had enabled him to continue mountain biking, by building him a special arm with a shock absorber built into it.

INTRODUCING DR MARIE VAN DRIMMELEN



Dr Marie van Drimmelen

Marie joined us on 9 February 2011 as Consultant Chemical Pathologist following Dr Chris Lord's retirement. She attended medical school and carried out specialist training in Pathology in South Africa. During this period she also completed an MBA (Master of Business Administration) degree.

She has lived in the UK for a number of years, and before joining us she worked as locum Consultant Chemical Pathologist in Northern Ireland and in East Anglia.

Marie is Head of Department for Biochemistry at WCH and will run lipid clinics on both sites. She has a keen interest in endocrinology and is currently completing a Post Graduate Diploma in Endocrinology and Diabetes from the Queen Mary University and Bart's School of Medicine, London.

Outside work her interests include travel, the cinema and cooking.

EXCELLENT WORK CONTINUES ON INFECTION

Our Trust Board was this month once again full of praise for staff for their work to reduce cases of MRSA and Clostridium Difficile. There have now been no post 48 hour bacteraemia for 10 months at the Cumberland Infirmary and for nine months at West Cumberland Hospital. The Trust trajectory for Clostridium Difficile was set to 120 for the year (2010/11), which equates to 10 attributed cases per month. The performance for February 2011 again shows the Trust performing well within its trajectory with only three attributed cases.

POSITIVE START FOR SELF-SERVICE CHECK-IN

The self-service check-in system at West Cumberland Hospital got off to a successful start last week.

Two self-service kiosks have been installed in the main Outpatients Department for a trial period in a bid to improve check-in processes and the quality of patient information held by our Trust. As well as enabling patients to check in for appointments without having to queue to speak to a receptionist, the kiosks allow patients to update their contact details and personal data with greater privacy.



WCH Patient Panel member Stan Lightfoot and Outpatient Manager Crea Simpson show a patient how to use the new system

The system also notifies outpatient staff of patient arrivals and directs patients to the appropriate waiting area. The system went live on Monday, 4 April, and early indications suggest that patients welcome the initiative. On the first day, 90 out of a possible 151 patients checked in using the kiosk (60%). Patient panel volunteers will be on hand for the first couple of weeks to explain how the system works and help any patient who would like assistance. There will always be a receptionist available should any patient not wish to use the self-service kiosks.

WEST CUMBERLAND HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT



The Outpatient Department at West Cumberland Hospital

The clinical strategy setting out the future of health services in north Cumbria was published in March. Senior clinicians from the Trust have been working closely with GP commissioners over the last six months to develop the strategy, which will now be independently assessed to make sure it is affordable and financially sustainable.

The Project Team and designers also continue to work with clinical users to amend the plans for the new hospital to ensure that the facilities required to deliver the clinical strategy can be provided within the available capital budget of £90 million.

Revised plans have been prepared and discussed at clinical user meetings during February and March. It is expected that revised plans at 1:200 scale will be finally agreed with users shortly. These will then form the basis of the revised scheme which will be included within the updated Full Business Case (FBC).

This therefore means that the timeline for Trust Board approval of the FBC has been amended to May 2011. The programme has therefore been amended as follows:

Task	Planned completion
Completion of Clinical Strategy	Mar 2011
Revisions to FBC	Apr 2011
FBC approved by Trust Board	May 2011
FBC supported by NHS Cumbria/GP Commissioners	Jun 2011
FBC approved by NHS North West	Jul 2011
FBC approved by Department of Health	Sep 2011
Start of new build works on site	Oct 2011

Achieving the milestones set out above still remains subject to the revised FBC being approved by NHS North West and the Department of Health.

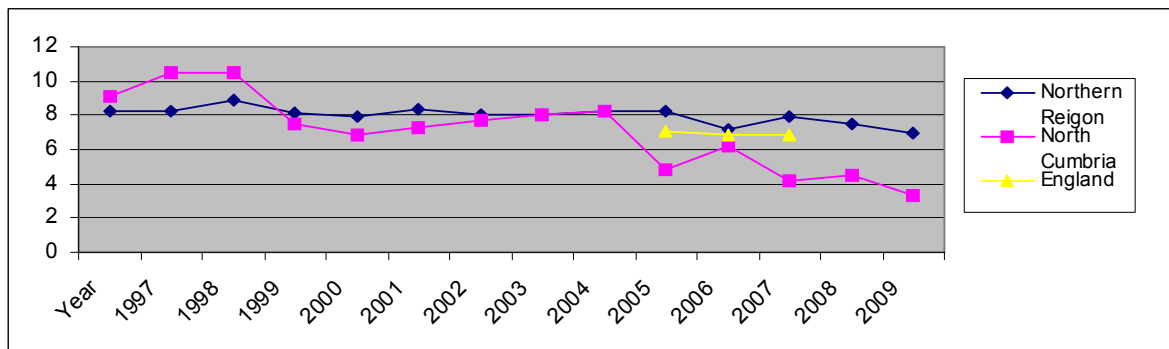
Work continues on the programme of decanting and refurbishment to allow the on-site relocation of Yewdale Ward, which is the one remaining area of the current site to be demolished to allow the new build to take place. The overall design of the new mental health facility, to be located within Block J at WCH, has been signed off by the Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and the detailed design stage is now well underway.

A complex programme of decanting within the hospital is necessary to vacate existing services from J Block in order to allow the refurbishment works to commence. This is planned for completion by next month. Staff and service users will continue to be kept fully involved and informed regarding the moves in order to minimise any disruption to services.



DRAMATIC DROP IN PERINATAL MORTALITY RATES

Over the last five years the maternity service at our Trust has demonstrated a significant improvement in the reduction of perinatal loss sustained in north Cumbria. Although the individual annual numbers are small the fact that this has now been sustained for five years is significant with a reduction of 44% identified.



The graph indicates that from 2003-2006 the rate dropped and ran in parallel with the northern region rate, since then North Cumbria has seen a sustained drop in the perinatal mortality rate.

Changes in practice since 1999 include the development of Maternity Day Units that provide easily accessible obstetric services. The introduction of the Perinatal Institute Notes and Personalised Growth Charts have also contributed to the identification of small for Gestational age babies allowing prioritisation and focussed interventions.

The NCUH maternity team continue to improve and maintain a collaborative approach to patient care in North Cumbria, Dr Lawley commends the Trust teams and states that the improvement in patient care is an example of good team working and the implementation of effective Risk Management systems that provide a safe guard for the maternity service, as does the development of Maternity Guidelines across both hospital sites.

HOW ARE WE DOING ON HIP REPLACEMENTS?

Figures from the National Joint Register shows how well our Trust is doing on hip replacements, compared with our neighbouring trusts in the North East.

We have the joint best figure for the whole of the region for the number of patients whose hips we have to redo in the first year.

All operations at Hexham are done by surgeons from Wansbeck and North Tyneside.

As the NJR gives raw numbers as well as percentages, we are able to calculate the combined Wansbeck/ N Tyneside/ Hexham percentage which is given above as Hex/NT/Wans.

% of patients requiring revisions	
Cumberland Infirmary	0.2%
Freeman	0.5%
NE Strategic Health Authority	0.8%
NW Strategic Health Authority	0.4%
NHS	0.7%
Hexham	0.2%
North Tyneside	1.4%
Wansbeck	1.0%
Hex/NT/Wans	0.96%
BMI Lancaster	0.5%

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