

## AINTREE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

### Briefing for Sefton Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Health and Social Care)

30<sup>th</sup> June 2009

#### **A. Emergency care**

The pressure continues on the Trust's emergency services, with a high number of very ill patients, many of whom require admission to the hospital. Work continues with local Primary Care Trusts and Social Services to ensure that patients who are admitted for treatment are discharged as smoothly as possible. This helps increase availability of beds for new patients who need to be admitted.

Separately, a Strategic Health Authority inspection team have commended Trust staff for their "excellent" use of information in understanding, planning and forecasting patient flows relating to the four-hour A&E performance standard. A new emergency care patient pathway was developed this winter, helping ensure high levels of performance despite it being one of the busiest winters for some years.

#### **B. Progress on Infection Prevention and Control**

A range of measures introduced over the winter, including the opening of an isolation ward, additional handwashing facilities and restrictions on antibiotics have helped the Trust significantly reduce the number of C.diff cases which it has been reporting. The work had taken place with the support of local Primary Care Trusts, the Health Protection Agency and the Department of Health. The figure for April 2009 was 12 cases, compared with 38 the previous month, a drop of nearly 70%. While the progress is welcome, the Trust remains focused on reducing cases even further, with all staff being reminded of the importance of following Infection Prevention and Control policies. Advice for patients and visitors has included the development of life-sized cut-outs of Matrons. These outline simple actions to support good hygiene, such as handwashing.

#### **C. Palliative Care Transfer**

A special service for staff marked the transfer of the Trust's palliative care unit from University Hospital Aintree to the purpose-built Woodlands Hospice inpatients centre. The move took place on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> June. The hospice, which is a separate charity, is based in the grounds of the hospital.

#### **D. Flu pandemic preparations**

Working with local Primary Care Trusts, local authorities and other members of the Local Resilience Forum, Trust staff continue to prepare for a potential flu pandemic.

#### **E. Capital Developments**

The Trust's flagship Elective Care Centre, which is due for completion in summer 2010, has now been linked to the main University Hospital Aintree building by a walkway. Services, including day surgery, will be transferred from Walton Hospital to University Hospital Aintree when the Elective Care Centre opens. The third floor of the building will hold the Trust's endoscopy unit, which will help align day case and diagnostic services and will free up space

for patient services in the main hospital site. One theatre will remain in the main hospital building for emergency endoscopy.

Planning permission has been granted for a 1,250-space multi-storey car park at the hospital site. The amount of construction on-site has been putting pressure on car parking spaces. Around 150 additional temporary spaces are being provided, taking levels back to the availability in December 2008.

#### **F. Regional recognition for high-tech patient project**

An IT project designed to help patients during consultations has been highly commended in the North West regional finals of the Health and Social Care Awards 2009. The Patient Concerns Inventory scheme was developed by the Head and Neck Team of the maxillofacial unit, with support from the IT service and Trust volunteers service. It uses touch-screen technology to guide patients through issues which they may wish to discuss ahead of out-patient clinics. It also prompts patients to consider if they wish to be referred to any other members of the multi-disciplinary team. The project has been highly-rated by patients, and hospitals across the country have shown interest in adopting it for their own use. The project was commended in the Innovative Health and Social Care technology category.

#### **G. Stroke Unit**

University Hospital Aintree's stroke unit hosted a visit by senior clinicians from Slovakia to discuss best practice. UHA's stroke unit is the only one in Merseyside and Cheshire to offer clot-busting treatment (thrombolysis) to appropriate patients on a round-the-clock basis. The visit was hosted by Dr Anil Sharma, who is also Clinical Lead for the Cheshire & Merseyside Stroke Network. The 24/7 thrombolysis was introduced six months ago, supported by the development of the Trust's radiology services.

The Trust has also introduced Monday-Friday one-stop clinics where patients who have had minor strokes or Transient Cerebral Ischaemic Attacks (TIAs) can be assessed, undergo immediate investigations and have their treatment planned and commenced.

#### **H. Recruitment success**

A total of 27 registered nurses and nursing assistant posts in the Accident and Emergency Department and the Medical Assessment Unit are currently being recruited to. A special recruitment day, which featured an innovative video diary by current staff, was attended by more than 200 people, helping confirm the Trust's position as being seen locally as a good employer to work for.

#### **I. Active Workforce**

The Trust has joined the Active Workforce programme being run by Sefton Borough Council leisure services department. The initiative, which supports the Trust's aim of being an employer of choice, has been well-received by staff. A total of 79 staff have joined the scheme. Separately, hospital teams taking part in the Active Workforce stepometer challenge have now walked a cumulative 9,000 miles, and there are plans to hold a future challenge purely for hospital staff.

### **J. Sickness rates drop**

The Trust has seen a drop in staff sickness rates to 4.12% in March (the last reported month). These are now significantly improved from the previous three years. The improvement in 2008/09 equates to an additional 18 Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) staff per month.

### **K. International Nurses' Day**

The Trust's Volunteers Service arranged a series of events to mark International Nurses' Day, which takes place annually on May 12<sup>th</sup>, the anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale. Volunteers dressed up as Florence and other nurses in Crimean War period costume before delivering 'thank you' cards and cakes to nursing staff at University Hospital Aintree, Walton Hospital and the Walton Neurological Centre.

### **L. Trust supports National Volunteers Strategy**

Terry Owen, departmental head of the Trust's Volunteer Service, has been invited to join a Department of Health reference group to help develop a national strategy on volunteering in health and social care. This follows a national consultation with third sector, health and social care volunteer-involving organisations. A cross-sector Volunteering Strategy Working Group will be working alongside the Department of Health's Third Sector Partnership Team to produce the strategy. Terry and her colleagues on the Reference Group will give periodic feedback and comment on the developing strategy as the Department of Health moves towards its publication in the summer.

**Fin McNicol**  
**Director of Communications**  
**Aintree University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**

**22nd June, 2009**