

Ashford and St Peters NHS Foundation Trust (ASPH)**Responding to Francis June 2013 – Report to HOSC****Introduction**

The final report of **The Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry** - Chaired by Robert Francis QC, was published on Wednesday 6 February 2013.

The report is critical of multiple external healthcare organisations whose scrutiny failed to detect systemic deficiencies at Mid Staffordshire Hospital but concludes that the primary responsibility for the unacceptable standards of care lay with the Trust Board and professional staff. The report also concludes that the Trust Board did not sufficiently listen to its patients and staff and failed to tackle a negative culture involving tolerance of poor standards and disengagement from managerial and leadership responsibilities.

The Public Inquiry makes 290 recommendations of which 107 apply to acute hospital settings and can be loosely grouped for implementation according to:

- Patient Complaints
- Information and Data
- Human Resources
- Training and Development
- Medicine and Nursing
- Trust Board.

Patients First and Foremost

The Government made its initial response to the Inquiry on the 26 March 2013 in a document entitled, *Patients First and Foremost* which sets out a plan around 5 domains to revolutionise the care that people receive from the NHS. The Secretary of State (SoS) for Health requires all healthcare organisations to respond in the first instance in 2 ways by the 31 December 2013:

1. Organisations should hold listening events with their staff to hear about how the NHS can remain true to its core values of compassion and care. Feedback from these events is to be shared with the Centre.

2. NHS hospitals must set out publicly how they intend to respond to the Inquiry's conclusions.

The 5 *Patients First and Foremost* domains are:

- Preventing Problems
- Detecting Problems Quickly
- Taking Action Promptly
- Ensuring Robust Accountability
- Ensuring Staff are Trained and Motivated.
- Healthcare Support Worker experience prior to access to nursing degrees
- Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers

ASPH Position

The ASPH Trust Board commitment to the creation and sustainment of an honest and open culture at ASPH that recognises and reports poor care and that enables a swift and effective response is unequivocal, as is the commitment to a culture without fear of retribution or failure to respond.

A high level analysis of the ASPH position against the Patients First and Foremost 5 domains and key areas for focus has been undertaken and found that ASPH is well positioned since much of the required work has already taken place or is in train. A more detailed analysis to triangulate the relevant Francis recommendations with the position against Patients First and Foremost is underway and aims to develop 2 key workstreams; firstly in relation to process improvement and secondly in relation to organisational culture.

Anticipated Areas for Improvement Work

- Complaints Handling Process
- Further work to embed the Duty of Candour
- Implementation of Schwartz Rounds planned for September 2013
- Appointment of ASPH Chief of Patient Safety effective September 2013

- Improved process to enable scrutiny and review of data by clinicians
- Implementation of Nursing and Midwifery Strategy “Together we Care” to include a focus on the development of Healthcare Assistants and supported by a visit to the Trust by the Royal College of Nursing Chief Executive, Peter Carter in July 2013
- Approval by Trust Board (June 2013) and implementation of a Safe Staffing Framework, embedding the use of an evidence based and validated tool
- Implementation of a Model of Care for Older People during the Autumn 2013
- Implementation of “Enhancing Staff Experience – Creating a Positive and Respectful Culture” as detailed below.

The ASPH Challenge

Recognising the results of the recently published ASPH Staff Survey, which quite rightly has caused great concern to the Trust Board and to stakeholders, the greatest challenge facing the Trust is the need to improve the experience and engagement of all staff. The first Listening Event, where staff contributed freely and thoughtfully to the discussion is a heartening and positive sign and has been followed up by additional team discussions the content of which will form part of the Trust’s response to the SoS Health.

A discussion has also been held with the Council of Governors (CoG), in May, where their role was debated and considered. It was agreed to arrange a meeting between the Trust’s CQC Liaison Team and the CoG to facilitate closer working and communication.

Getting the Culture Right

One of Sir Robert Francis’s key conclusions was that the culture at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust and across the wider NHS system was not “right”. Clearly setting and sustaining the right culture will be critical to success.

The Chief Executive is personally leading and implementing a work programme entitled, Enhancing Staff Experience – Creating a Positive and Respectful Culture, The Programme aims to bring together the Trust’s response to both the 2012 Staff Survey results and to the Inquiry by:

- setting a refreshed cultural tone for the organisation
- prompting the concept and feel of citizenship such that staff should expect to be involved in decision making and be enabled to do so
- using the Appreciative Inquiry methodology to focus on increasing what we do well.

Central to the Programme will be a number of key interventions:

- staff conversations with the Chief Executive via the CEOs “Sounding Board”
- an integrated leadership programme for the Trust Board, Divisional Teams, Specialty Leads and new consultants
- the continuation of Team ASPH. Team ASPH now has 27 teams participating in a programme that delivers expert external coaching and facilitation in order to build and strengthen the Team and to support them in developmental work.

Trust Board

The setting of organisational vision, strategy and culture is the role of the Trust Board. On the 27th March 2013 the Trust Board held a Board development session with a focus on culture. The development session resulted in the description of the Trust Board’s vision for the ASPH culture and the formulation of an action plan to get the Trust to where it wishes to be. Further work is now underway to articulate a refresh to the Trust vision and review of a detailed draft is to take place at this month’s Trust Board.

The Trust Board is committed to the relentless pursuit of excellence and the elimination of variability in the knowledge that this will take sustained commitment from all combined with a continued high level of vigilance and openness to understand and learn from poor experience or care. Work to review, understand and implement the learning from Francis is iterative and will continue over the coming months with a high degree of pace and focus.

Report prepared by

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