

North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust Board Briefing – November 2024 Board

This briefing aims to keep you informed of the discussions at our Trust Board. To watch the recording and read the papers, please visit the [Board Meeting page](#) on the Combined Healthcare website. Please note this briefing does not replace the official Board minutes, which will be published in due course and be available on the website.



Patient Story

This month's Patient Story featured Phoebe, Parent and Baby. A discussion took place about availability and continuity of service, as well as support for dads as well as mums. Phoebe also read out a powerful poem she had written about her experiences. You can watch the recording of the story and Board discussion [at this link](#).

REACH Recognition Individual Award

This month's REACH Recognition Individual Award was presented to Specialist Directorate – Claire Lamb, Occupational Therapist and Acting Team Leader, Broom Street. You can watch the recording [at this link](#).

Chief Executive's Report

Dr Buki Adeyemo, Chief Executive, presented the report, which is available [at this link](#). Buki in particular highlighted her involvement in a workstream to empower patients as part of the NHS Ten Year Plan. There was also a discussion about the challenges of system finances and being conscious of the impact on services and staff. You can watch the recording of the CEO Report [at this link](#).

ICB Briefing 17 October 2024

Dr Buki Adeyemo, Chief Executive, drew the Board's attention to the availability of the latest ICB Briefing. There was attention drawn to the need for progress on staff engagement and organisational development at ICB level. The report is available [at this link](#).

Chair's Report

Janet Dawson gave a Chair's Report to Board, which is available [at this link](#). Janet highlighted the Black History Month celebration - a "joyous" occasion, as well as informative. She also drew attention to the visits of local MPs and Chairs to the Trust, both of which had gone very well. You can watch the recording [at this link](#).

Questions from Members of the Public

There were no questions from the public. N.B. Anyone can submit a question for consideration and discussion at the Board via the [Ask The Board facility](#) on the Trust website.

Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF) Annual Report

Dr Ravi Belgamwar presented the Report. The Trust has embedded new PSIRF process with no adverse outcome to Trust processes. There has been an overall reduction in incidents reported from the previous year that could be as a result of projects/programmes that have been established within the Trust.

We have had spikes in incidents to the Trust priorities however have returned or returning back to the baseline for the year October 2023 to September 2024. Proportionate reviews are being consistently used to support learning from incidents. The Board discussed in detail review timescales and approach.

Research and Development Annual Report

Dr Ravi Belgamwar presented [the Report](#). The Research and Development Team (R&D) consists of a core R&D team, whose focus is on leadership, governance and delivery of portfolio research, supporting staff to evidence practice, and fostering innovations and ideas.

The wider team also includes Clinical Academics, Research Fellows, and research representatives from various professional groups and teams.

2023/24 of the R&D roadmap saw several key objectives achieved, which are set out in [the Report](#). The Board welcomed the Report and also discussed how performance and quality of R&D is reflected in the Trust governance structures.

Quality Committee Committee Assurance Report

Pauline Walsh presented the report from the meeting of the Quality Committee held on 7th November 2024. Pauline drew attention to the good level of discussion and challenge that takes place at Quality Committee. The Committee had also considered the degree of impact of adoption of lessons learned from various Trust activities.

The Committee had been aware of some use of Out Of Area arrangements by the Trust, which was not usual. The anti-ligature annual report had indicated that some capital expenditure might be necessary, which would be a challenge in current circumstances, although the new facilities being delivered by Project Chrysalis would help in this regard.

Improving Quality and Performance Report (IQPR) Month 6

Eric Gardiner presented the report. There are 3 special cause variations (orange variation flags) – signifying concern - which is the lowest number for some time:

1. CAMHS Compliance within 18 weeks (RTT)
2. Sickness Absence
3. Statutory and Mandatory Training

There are 4 special cause variations (blue variation flags) – signifying improvement.

1. Care Plan Compliance
2. Vacancy Rate
3. Staff Turnover
4. Agency Spend

The year to date (YTD) Agency spend continues to improve for the third consecutive month to 3.4% during M06.

Vacancy rate is 9.8% and is under the standard for the first time since November 2022 when it was at 10%.

Staff turnover has continued to improve to 10.2% during M06 and a special cause variation of improvement has been in place for the last 10 months.

The Board discussed in particular rates of sickness absence, which was being looked at in detail.

Finance Report Month 6

Eric Gardiner presented the report. The trust reported a surplus of £95,000 in month against a deficit plan of £6,000. The trust is forecasting to break even at the end of the financial year or even possibly deliver a surplus of around £700,000. Agency spend is coming down faster than forecast, which was very encouraging.

Finance and Resource Committee Assurance Report

The report from the meeting of 7th November 2024 was presented by Russell Andrews. The Committee had considered the IQPR Report, as well as looking at a Data Quality Index, which had shown welcome improvement.

The Committee had also seen very useful and encouraging data on the reduction of the Trust's carbon footprint. The Transformation Management Office (TMO) regime also appeared to be working well. The Committee shared the importance mentioned by Quality Committee of understanding the impact of activities, not just the process.

Audit Committee Assurance Report

The report from the meeting of 16th October 2024 was presented by Jennie Koo. The Committee had noted an improving trend in retrospective Purchase Orders, and the policy had been renewed as well as training delivered.

There had been a discussion of controls around flu vouchers and cash handling - both of which were being improved to the satisfaction of the Committee. Anti-fraud survey responses were disappointingly low.

Consent items

The following item was presented as a consent item, which can be read in the [Board papers bundle](#):

- Integrated System Surge Plan 2024/25
- Safer Staffing Monthly Report September 2024

Any Other Business

The Board meeting closed at 12.10 pm. Date and time of next meeting in public is 10am, 9th January 2025. To access papers and meeting link, please visit <https://www.combined.nhs.uk/about-us/our-board/board-meetings/>