

# North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust Board Briefing – January 2025 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 James Sheppard, who had become involved with the Trust in a number of ways through volunteering and peer mentoring. You can watch the recording of the story and Board discussion [at this link](#).

## REACH Recognition Team Award

This month's REACH Recognition Individual Award was presented to Acute & Urgent Care Directorate - Crisis Resolution Home Treatment Team. You can watch the recording of the REACH Award [at this link](#).

## Chief Executive's Report

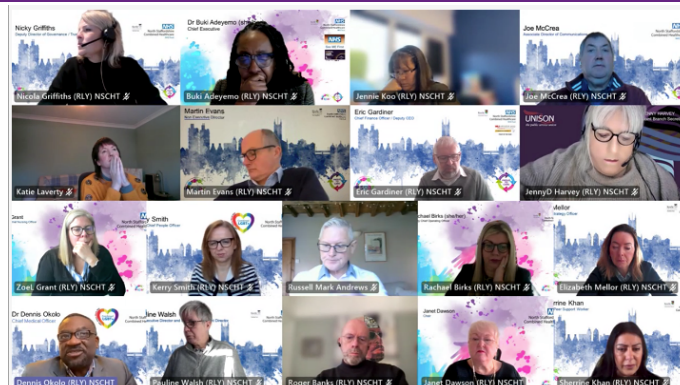
Dr Buki Adeyemo, Chief Executive, presented the report, which is available [at this link](#). Buki in particular noted that winter had become even more challenging since the Report had been written. There had also been welcome confirmation of the ongoing commitment to the Mental Health Investment Standard. You can watch the recording of the CEO Report [at this link](#).

## ICB Briefing 19 December 2024

Dr Buki Adeyemo, Chief Executive, presented the report to the Committee. The report is available [at this link](#).

## Chair's Report

Janet Dawson gave a Chair's Report to Board. Janet wanted to offer the Board's thanks to everyone who worked over Christmas and New Year, including giving up family time to care for others. New guidance from NHS England on board effectiveness had been produced and would be considered over the coming period. She was particularly pleased to see the rebranding and relaunch of the Trust Charity. You can watch the recording of the Chair's Report [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 (Previous Serious Incident) report – Quarter 2 2024/25

Dr Dennis Okolo presented the Report. There was one current patient safety incident investigation because of a death of a detained patient on ward 6. There is a slight increase in proportionate reviews being completed (3). 4 suspected suicides have been reported during this quarter. There are no current concerns reported within current reviews of patients who were open to the trust at the time of their death.

## Mortality Surveillance Report – Quarter 2 2024/25

Dr Dennis Okolo presented the Report. The current rate is below the 2 year reporting average. The most reported category correlates to a person's physical health deterioration UN1 – Unexpected Natural Death from natural causes e.g. sudden cardiac condition, stroke (n10 = 50%). This is also the prevalent death category too with 9 cases reported to have this as the contributing factor. There had been 17 episodes of care rated as good or excellent (85%) and 1 episode of poor care – learning points have been discussed through the group for awareness and review against current standards expected against policy.

In discussion, Dennis and Zoe Grant gave assurance to the Board on staff training and awareness communications on sepsis.

## Safeguarding Report – Quarter 2 2024/25

Zoe Grant presented the Report. The report included an update on statutory review for Safeguarding Adult Reviews, Child Safeguarding Practice reviews and Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews. The report included referral rates, trends and themes and training and supervision levels. There had been an increase in face-to-face supervision. Zoe also highlighted work on tackling domestic abuse. In discussion, Zoe highlighted challenges in releasing staff from frontline duties due to acuity.

## Quality Committee Assurance Reports

Prof Pauline Walsh presented the report from the meeting of the Quality Committee held on 5th December 2024 and 2nd January 2025. The Staffordshire & Stoke health & care system was in 'Critical incident', mainly due to pressures at the UHNM. Ambulance delays and bed capacity had been very challenging. The Trust had also been experiencing operational pressures with high bed occupancy, with 2 Acute and 1 PICU patient being placed out of area.

There was an increased risk of adverse sample results for Legionella at the Harplands on site, due to the hot water has been recorded below the recommended 55 degrees. This score has been increased to 16.

In discussion, Kerry Smith confirmed that quality impact assessment processes were in place around recruitment and the Trust retained control in approving posts and addressing vacancies despite system financial pressures.

## Improving Quality and Performance Report (IQPR) Month 8

Eric Gardiner presented the report. There are 3 special cause variations (orange variation flags) – signifying concern:

- CAMHS Compliance within 18 weeks (RTT)
- Sickness Absence
- Statutory and Mandatory Training

There are 5 special cause variations (blue variation flags) – signifying improvement:

- Emergency Readmission Rate (30 days)
- Care Plan Compliance
- Vacancy Rate
- Staff Turnover
- Year to date agency spend as % of total pay bill

Overall performance continues to improve during M08.

## People, Culture and Development Committee Assurance Report

Martin Evans presented the report from the meeting of the Quality Committee held on 2nd December 2024. He confirmed that on the back of new risks being raised in this area the Committee would undertake a deep dive on people risks in general. Dr Adeyemo confirmed that a new risk committee had been established which would further support that process.

Sickness absence remains above target of 4.95 and has increased slightly from 5.6% to 5.7% in M7. Anxiety, stress, depression remains the highest sickness reason within the Trust and overall in M7 1,160 FTE days have been lost as a result of sickness absence.

The Committee had a good conversation and received assurance around items highlighted in the Being Open report. The Committee received assurance around meeting Sexual Safety standards.

## Finance position month 8

Eric Gardiner presented the report. The Adjusted Financial Performance in month is a £99k surplus against a deficit plan of £4k, giving a favourable variance of £103k. The position year to date is £99k surplus against a planned deficit of £389k giving a favourable variance of £489k. The Trust is forecasting to breakeven at year end with a £1.2m surplus.

## Finance and Resource Committee Assurance Reports

Russell Andrews presented the report from the meetings of the Committee held on 5th December 2024 and 2nd January 2025. The CFO advised the Committee that planning guidance has been delayed, but this was not unusual. The Committee had also looked at sickness absence and was aware that PCDC were also looking at this. The Committee noted the positive financial position and good progress but no complacency on CIP. The Committee also looked at the issue of water temperature as part of its Estates overview function.

## Charitable Funds Committee Assurance Report

Russell Andrews presented the report from the meeting of 2nd December 2024. The Committee approved the Annual Report and Accounts, welcomed some examples of concrete projects being funded and acknowledged the progress made in developing the charity. This includes development of a brand ('Combined Charity'), establishing a Charitable Funds Oversight Group and identification of opportunities/products to improve the infrastructure of the charity to enable growth.

## Consent items

The Safer Staffing Monthly Reports October and November 2024 was presented as a consent item and can be read in the [Board papers bundle](#):

## Any Other Business

The Board meeting closed at 11.50am. Date and time of next meeting in public is 10am, 13th February 2025. To access papers and meeting link, please visit <https://www.combined.nhs.uk/about-us/our-board/board-meetings/>