Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to report to the Board of Directors on the Trust’s Annual Major Incident Exercise, held on 17th September 2010.

Background

The Trust is required to exercise the Major Incident Plan at least once a year and hold a “live” exercise every three years, under the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Category One responders, and also to comply with DH guidance.

This year the Trust sought the services of the Health Protection Agencies, Emergency Preparedness & Response Department to run the exercise, unfortunately, following initial enquires the funding for the exercise programme was withdrawn nationally, the Trust having already seen the benefits from running Emergo in 2006, decided to fund this year’s event.

Exercise Emergo Aim

It is a one day exercise designed in real-time for ED staff and those from other hospital departments, to train against their emergency plans and capabilities of dealing with major incidents.

The Emergo Exercise is used as a training and exercise tool for decision making in complex emergencies, in planning and managing the response to a major incident. It enables assessment of how different outcomes could have been achieved (for example, in terms of lives saved and quality of treatment) if different decisions had been made.

The event was run in real time at King’s Mill Hospital. The Exercise looked at our operational response, casualty management, hospital management and included other aspects such as, staff welfare and the short and long-term hospital needs.

Learning objectives

Through participation in this exercise the delegates developed:

- An appreciation of the need for clear and unambiguous exchange of information and co-operation between all responding agencies and hospital departments.
- An understanding of the constraints imposed by limited resources in the immediate aftermath of an incident.
• An appreciation of the consequences of decisions made in stressful situations.
• Recognition and understanding of the logistical difficulties of major incident management.

Assessment

A hot debriefing session was held at the end of the Exercise to identify key issues relating to the hospital's major incident plan. The event is not designed to test the individual participant's abilities within their own specialism; it is designed to facilitate participants’ identification of strengths and weaknesses of the hospital's plan, enabling a positive but critical review of the plan by all those involved on the exercise.

A written report of the event has been issued to the Chief Executive of the Trust and a copy is attached to this report.

Outcomes

The outcomes identified within the attached report will be added to the existing Emergency Planning action plan and will be progressed over the coming months along with any other outstanding issues from the East Midlands NHS Internal Audit Services Report; Emergency Planning and Business Continuity April 2010, report reference: 0910/SFH/10/R

The Board of Directors are requested to note the exercise outcomes.

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On behalf of Susan Bowler and Carolyn White. October 2010.

NB:- It has been agreed by the Department of Health and Civil Contingencies Secretariat that Emergo training is a suitable vehicle for a 'live exercise' under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) providing the organisation takes forward the lessons identified.