

**Board of Directors Meeting in Public - Cover Sheet**

<b>Subject:</b>	Acting Chief Executive's report		<b>Date:</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2025	
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Rich Brown, Head of Communications				
<b>Approved By:</b>	Dr David Selwyn, Acting Chief Executive				
<b>Presented By:</b>	Dr David Selwyn, Acting Chief Executive				
<b>Purpose</b>					
An update regarding some of the most noteworthy events and items since the last Public Board meeting from the Acting Chief Executive's perspective.				<b>Approval</b>	
				<b>Assurance</b>	
				<b>Update</b>	Y
				<b>Consider</b>	Y
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>					
Provide outstanding care in the best place at the right time	Empower and support our people to be the best they can be	Improve health and wellbeing within our communities	Continuously learn and improve	Sustainable use of resources and estates	Work collaboratively with partners in the community
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Principal Risk</b>					
PR1 Significant deterioration in standards of safety and care					
PR2 Demand that overwhelms capacity					
PR3 Critical shortage of workforce capacity and capability					
PR4 Insufficient financial resources available to support the delivery of services					
PR5 Inability to initiate and implement evidence-based Improvement and innovation					
PR6 Working more closely with local health and care partners does not fully deliver the required benefits					
PR7 Major disruptive incident					
PR8 Failure to deliver sustainable reductions in the Trust's impact on climate change					
<b>Committees/groups where this item has been presented before</b>					
Not applicable					
<b>Acronyms</b>					
BAF = Board Assurance Framework ED = Emergency Department FCP = Full Capacity Protocol MSFT = Medically Safe for Transfer NEWS = National Early Warning Score			NTU = Nottingham Trent University PIFU = Patient Initiated Follow Up RTT = Referral to Treatment UEC = Urgent and Emergency Care WNC = West Nottinghamshire College		
<b>Executive Summary</b>					
An update regarding some of the most noteworthy events and items since the last Public Board meeting from the Acting Chief Executive's perspective.					

## NHS enters national pre-election period

Sherwood Forest Hospitals – like other NHS organisations across the country – has now entered the pre-election period, ahead of a number of elections taking place across the country this year.

The pre-election period is the time immediately before elections or referendums. During this time, specific restrictions are placed on the use of public resources and the communication activities of public bodies, civil servants, and local government officials.

The pre-election period is designed to avoid the actions of public bodies distracting from or having influence on election campaigns. The pre-election period has implications for all NHS organisations like Sherwood.

The main elections taking place in May affecting the Mid Nottinghamshire area and Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are the Nottinghamshire County Council elections.

The Trust will be adhering to national NHS guidance issued by NHS England during the pre-election period. A copy of [the national 'Pre-election guidance for NHS organisations' guidance is available to view in full on the NHS England website](#).

This guidance has been shared with Trust colleagues over the coming weeks to make them aware of the guidance and to ensure that the Trust continues to operate within that guidance.

## Operational updates

### Overview of operational activity

In the first two months of 2024/2025 quarter four, we have seen a gradual recovery in several of our Urgent and Emergency Care (UEC) metrics from the levels seen in December 2024 (ambulance handover, four-hour performance and 12-hour length of stay performance).

December 2024 was a very challenging month as we saw a peak in seasonal pressures, including influenza, Covid, RSV and norovirus.

As part of the winter pressures, we saw patient acuity increase as evidenced by a seasonal rise in the number of patients admitted with a National Early Warning Score (NEWS) of four or more. Patients NEWS scores are showing some signs of reducing as we move through quarter four; however, they typically stay at an elevated level until April.

Constraints in matching high demand with our hospital bed base has meant that we have not always been able to admit patients in a timely way, extending the time patients spend in our Emergency Department (ED) and contributing to overcrowding.

Under our Full Capacity Protocol (FCP), we have gone 'two-over' on our wards this winter to balance risk across the organisation. We recognise the consequences that this has had on our base wards and we have provided feedback of any quality impact via Quality Committee.

Patient demand has remained high in terms of the daily average number of Urgent and Emergency Care (UEC) attendances (particularly at Newark) and non-elective admissions. Whilst these demand metrics were closer to planned levels, the increased pressure of the number of patients accessing our services is evident across our frontline services. This is putting pressure on our clinical workforce and we have been struggling to fill additional clinical shifts to cope with the level of patient demand.

While performance across our UEC pathway is not where we would like it to be, our staff continue to work relentlessly to care for patients in as timely and dignified a manner as possible in very challenging circumstances. Our local system partners have worked together well to maintain relatively low levels of Medically Safe for Transfer (MSFT) patients in our hospitals over the winter period. Low MSFT patient numbers together with focus on our 'Getting the Basics Right' improvement programme have contributed to reduced length of stay which has been essential to maintain hospital patient flow.

In quarter four to-date, we have continued to reduce the incomplete Referral to Treatment (RTT) waiting list and the number of 52-week waits.

Our 65-week waits have reduced to 32 at the end of February 2025. We are slightly off-plan on all three metrics, in part driven by the support we are offering across the system, together with the need to prioritise cancer pathways.

We continue to work together as a system with patients being transferred between providers to support equity of access. Our diagnostics DM01 performance continues to improve significantly and is now 94.4% – the highest level since the pandemic – and has brought us mid-pack nationally (after being in the lowest quartile earlier in 2024).

In outpatients, first attendance activity levels have shown a reduction versus plan in quarter four to date. This is driven by an increase in the number of one-stop clinics where patients are having a procedure during their first appointment (we have seen an over-delivery versus plan for outpatient procedures). This change is better for patients.

We consistently exceed the 5% Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU) target and benchmark well. Advice and guidance performance remains well above target and stable over a long period of time.

In terms of our Cancer metrics, quarter four has been very challenging so far. Our typically strong 28-day faster diagnosis standard performance has deteriorated during quarter four due to histopathology and radiology capacity constraints; we continue to work towards resolving these.

This, alongside theatre capacity challenges, has also had a knock-on effect on our 31-day and 62-day cancer performance positions, which have also deteriorated through the quarter. Recovery plans are in place and further details around the key root causes will be detailed in our Integrated Performance Report that will be presented at the May 2025 Trust Board.

## Partnership updates

### **Universities for Nottingham Programme Management Board**

Sherwood was represented at the recent Universities for Nottingham Programme Management Board by the Strategy and Partnership and Research & Innovation teams.

This was a good opportunity to learn about the achievements of the partnership in particular the expansion of the Climate Ambassadors Scheme and further developments of the Co(l)aboratory Programme.

Co(l)aboratory brings together researchers, community organisations and local people to deliver meaningful change for the people of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire through research. From this discussion, the Trust's Head of Research and Innovation will explore expanding Notts Voice in Research to central and north Nottinghamshire.

The Board also discussed the opportunities and risks arising from the evolving regional landscape and implications for the partnership.

### **Vision West Nottinghamshire College strategy review day**

On 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025, Vision West Notts College held its strategy review day and, as a key partner, Sherwood was well represented.

The event was an opportunity to influence the strategic direction of the college and share partner strategic objectives. The Strategy and Partnership Team attended the morning strategy sessions and the People Directorate and Corporate Nursing the afternoon.

The sessions were interactive and informative: the morning strategy session highlighted opportunities for maximising community connections and amplifying Sherwood's role as an anchor organisation through its partnerships.

The afternoon sessions focused on hearing from partners regarding how current relationships could be enhanced and embedded further. The relationship between Sherwood and the College was used a best practice example where tangible benefits could be evidenced.

### **Other Trust updates**

#### **Messages of support continued to be shared for Paul Robinson**

The Trust has continued to be inundated with messages of support, following the passing of our Chief Executive, Paul Robinson.

Members of the Trust Board were represented at a family funeral for Paul during the month, while the Trust itself hosted its own celebration of Paul's life and the difference he made to us all here at Sherwood Forest Hospitals on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

I am grateful to everyone who has reached-out with offers of support and condolence over recent weeks. Those messages have been of great comfort to myself, our Trust colleagues and those who knew Paul best – his family.

Books of condolence remain available for Trust colleagues to sign at each of our King's Mill, Mansfield Community and Newark Hospital sites. [Colleagues, partners and members of the public wishing to add a message to our virtual book of condolence can also do so via this online form.](#)

#### **Executive Team recruitment update**

I am delighted to confirm two positive updates about recruitment to two vital positions on the Trust's Board of Directors.

Our Acting Medical Director, Dr Simon Roe, has accepted the Trust's offer to become its Chief Medical Officer, following a nationwide recruitment process.

Simon joined #TeamSFH as our Deputy Medical Director in November 2023 before he stepped-up to become the Trust's Acting Medical Director in May 2024.

Final employment checks to confirm Simon's appointment are now complete, which is standard practice for any appointment to the Trust's Board of Directors. The role of Medical Director has also been renamed to Chief Medical Officer to better align the role to similar roles across the country's NHS.



There have also been developments in the Trust's plans to recruit to the Trust's Chief's Operating Officer role, after Rachel Eddie announced her plans to leave the Trust in the summer.

Our recruitment efforts for that role saw us attract candidates from across the country, including a number who are already established in Chief Operating Officer roles.

An employment offer has now been made to an experienced Chief Operating Officer; I look forward to sharing more details on that appointment as soon as we are able to.

### **Hundreds explore career opportunities at 'Step into the NHS' showcase event**

Hundreds of job seekers and people looking for a new career path explored a variety of NHS roles at the latest 'Step into the NHS' careers event hosted by the Trust in partnership with Nottingham Trent University (NTU) and West Nottinghamshire College (WNC).

The event, which took place on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at Mansfield and Ashfield Sixth Form College, gave attendees the chance to engage with professionals and learn about the wide range of non-clinical roles available within the NHS, including finance, HR, facilities management, project management, and clinical illustration.

Feedback from several teams who participated in the event revealed that many attendees were unaware of the wide range of non-clinical roles available within the NHS.

It's always fantastic to see so many people interested in joining our Trust and exploring the rewarding careers available within the NHS.

Events like these provide a valuable platform for people at all stages of their career journey, whether they are students, job seekers, or those considering a career change.

It is especially great to see growing awareness of the many vital non-clinical roles that help support our clinical colleagues and make great patient care happen across our hospitals. We look forward to welcoming new talent to our workforce.



## New staff wellbeing spaces open at King's Mill Hospital



During the month, the Trust celebrated the opening of its new staff wellbeing spaces at King's Mill Hospital.

Located behind the clinics in the King's Treatment Centre, the new spaces will replace the Delimarche on Level 6 of the hospital for any colleague to take a break away from their work area, with that space to be converted into doctor's mess.

The three new spaces will be known as Whispering Willows, Peaceful Pines and Mighty Oaks. The peaceful Pines area will act as a quieter space for colleagues who want downtime and place to rest away from their work area.

Each space also showcases artwork designed by talented art students from West Notts College. Funding for seating in the new wellbeing spaces has also been funded by the Sherwood Forest Hospitals Charity.

To mark the opening, colleagues from across the Trust were joined by some of the students involved in creating the artwork, West Nottinghamshire College Principal Andrew Cropley and some of the tutors from the college to cut the ribbon and have a look around the new area for themselves.





## **Trust awarded funding for new Bone Density (DEXA) scanner at Newark Hospital**

A new bone density or 'DEXA' scanner that uses x-ray to assess the risk of thin bones and to diagnose osteoporosis, is due to be installed at Newark Hospital, after Sherwood Forest Hospitals was awarded funding in excess of £240,000, from NHS England.

The number of new referrals into the DEXA service has increased, with an average of 100 per week being received, reflecting our aging population.

Between April 2023 and November 2024, Sherwood Forest Hospitals received a total of 7,910 referrals for DEXA scans. This is increasing by approximately 8% year on year.

Sherwood Forest Hospitals covers a large geographical area with many patients as far afield as Lincolnshire and Leicestershire opting to choose Sherwood Forest Hospitals as their preferred healthcare provider.

It was recommended by the Royal Osteoporosis Society (January 2024) that there should be one DEXA scanner per 100,000 population. Sherwood serves a population of over 350,000 and, prior to the successful funding bid, only had one scanner located at Mansfield Community Hospital.

The new scanner at Newark Hospital, which should be operational by September 2025, will significantly enhance the service we can provide to our patients, allowing them to receive their diagnostic scan at a location closer to home, reducing the need for patients to travel, as well as reducing the costs they incur.

Currently, all patients – many of whom have limited mobility – have to travel to Mansfield Community Hospital. From September, patients will be able to receive their appointment in Newark and Mansfield, whichever is nearer for them.

This project reinforces our commitment to deliver outstanding healthcare for our patients and communities and helps us to continue improving local health and care services. Osteoporosis affects over two million adults in the UK.

This new scanner will increase the capacity we can offer, allowing for an additional 360 scans per month which will help to reduce the time patients have to wait to access their diagnostic tests, increasing the speed and efficiency of the care that we provide for our patients.

## Trust risk ratings reviewed

The Board Assurance Framework (BAF) Principal Risk 7 – ‘A major disruptive incident’ – for which the Risk Committee is the lead committee, has been scrutinised by the Trust’s Risk Committee.

Committee members discussed the risk scores and assurance ratings but decided that they should remain unchanged.

The full and updated Board Assurance Framework (BAF) is next due to be presented at the Public Meeting of the Trust’s Board of Directors in May.