

**ITEM: 2**

**MEETING:**  
Trust Board  
15 March 2006

**TITLE: Chief Executive's Report**

**SUMMARY:**

The CEO report updates the Board on key issues that do not warrant at this stage a full board paper.

**ACTION: Information**

**REPORT FROM: David Sloman, Chief Executive**



### **1. New building**

The Trust Board has previously been made aware of discussions with Whittington Facilities Limited regarding firmer completion dates for the development. These discussions have been constructive and, together with additional resources now committed to the construction project, completion of the new building is now scheduled for a phased period over June and July. The Trust's project managers are satisfied that these dates are achievable and that they are now resourced appropriately. The project's funders, Bank of Scotland, have re-affirmed their commitment to completing the building as rapidly as possible.

*For more information contact Susan Sorensen, Director of Finance and Strategic Development on 020 7288 5002.*

### **2. Fourth floor of the new building**

The medical ward that the Trust plans to move into the fourth floor of the new building is to be Nightingale ward rather than Reckitt ward. This decision has been made following a reassessment of the clinical advantages of using this area for the care of respiratory rather than gastroenterology patients.

The 21 bedded ward has a high proportion of single rooms that will valuably be used for patients with serious respiratory infections including tuberculosis and COPD with MRSA infection. It will also be located next to the new Mercers ward which will assist in the management of patients with lung cancer by the respiratory team. Nightingale will also be close to the new critical care unit which is important considering that frequent transfers will be made between respiratory high dependency unit and the main respiratory ward.

With the move, we will reduce the overall number of medical beds in line with the plan for 2006/7 described in the "making best use of beds project". Having successfully reduced length of stay, delayed transfers of care and converted more surgery to day case activity there is scope to do this and help increase the overall efficiency of the hospital.

*For more information contact Tara Donnelly, Director of Operations on 020 7288 5440.*

### **3. Ultrasound waits down from 4-5 months to 4-5 weeks in a year**

The waiting times for outpatient ultrasounds are down to between four and five weeks. To reduce the waiting times the department has introduced some routine morning and extra ultrasound clinics, in part by being creative with ultrasound machines outside the radiology department and organising multiple, dedicated high volume, consultant outpatient ultrasound surgeries.

This initiative was in response to the wishes of the local GPs and following an audit last year which showed that we had a four to five month waiting list. The clerical staff have worked hard organising extra lists to run smoothly and have contacted the patients in person.

*For further information contact Dr David Grant, Clinical Director for Imaging on 020 7288 5019.*

#### **4. Financial policies and procedures**

The Trust's Compendium of Financial Policies and Procedures, which is issued to Directors in hard copy and available on the intranet, is due for review and update. Parkhill Audit Agency, our internal auditors, have been commissioned to produce draft Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions, Reservation of Decisions to the Board and Scheme of Delegation. In carrying out this work they will take account of the new integrated governance arrangements and draw on the work that is currently being undertaken for the Department of Health on revised model documentation. In addition, the auditor will carry out a mapping exercise of all trust-wide and finance department procedures to assess the extent to which they are complete, comprehensive, up-to-date and consistent. There will be a particular focus on finance-related systems and integration with the procurement functions managed by the Director of Facilities. I propose that the Trust Board should delegate responsibility for supervising this work and approving documentation to the Audit Committee which meets next on 28 March. Any recommendations would, of course be subject to Board ratification at its next meeting in May 2006.

*For more information contact Susan Sorensen, Director of Finance and Strategic Development on 020 7288 5002.*

#### **5. Auditors' Local Evaluation (ALE)**

This exercise is being carried out by the Audit Commission forms part of the use of resources element of the Annual Health Check. It assesses the Trust's performance under the headings Financial Reporting, Financial Management, Financial Standing, Internal Control and Value for Money. It uses a number of Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) to structure the process. A self-assessment exercise was undertaken by executive and discussed by the Audit Committee at its January meeting. Recent discussions with auditors indicate that the Trust's performance is relatively good against the standards set, although one or two areas for improvement have been identified. This work will be completed over the next few weeks and action plans drawn up for the Board's consideration in May.

*For more information contact Susan Sorensen, Director of Finance and Strategic Development on 020 7288 5002.*

#### **6. The Highgate Hill Treatment Centre**

Further to Trust Board approval in September, work has proceeded to establish a dedicated centre for private patients at the Whittington and the

Highgate Hill Treatment Centre. The centre opened just before Christmas, and within six weeks of opening the centre has moved into profit.

Marketing packs have been produced and the website can be viewed at [www.whittington.nhs.uk/privatepatients](http://www.whittington.nhs.uk/privatepatients). The website was launched to coincide with local publicity and received an impressive 340 hits within 7 days.

The centre had its official launch on Wednesday 1 March and this was well attended by consultants, GPs as well non-executive board members and other interested local people and staff. As a result of the marketing activities, and very high levels of patients and doctor satisfaction with the centre, we are seeing an increase in the levels of booking

*For more information contact Anne Gibbs, Divisional Manager – Women's and Children, on 020 7288 5744.*

## **7. Discharge letters and patient tracking system**

From Monday 13 March, the way the hospital produces discharge letters will be standardised using the Patient Tracking System (PTS).

This will ensure that our local GPs will receive discharge letters that are consistently comprehensive, accurate and legible, as they will be produced electronically. It will also improve the requesting of To Take Away (TTA) drugs which will now be requested via the PTS 24 hours in advance of discharge, which will contribute to further reducing hospital length of stay.

*For more information contact Glenn Winteringham Acting Director of IT on 020 7288 5313.*

## **8. Sir Nigel Crisp leaves Department of Health**

Sir Nigel Crisp has stepped down from his post as Chief Executive of the NHS and Permanent Secretary at the Department of Health at the end of March 2006. Following Sir Nigel's retirement, Sir Ian Carruthers will become Acting Chief Executive of the NHS, and Hugh Taylor will become Acting Permanent Secretary of the Department.

Sir Ian Carruthers, 55, was appointed to the DH Board as Acting Director of Commissioning. One of the most experienced NHS managers, he has a track-record of leading organisational change, improving standards for patients and delivering balanced budgets. Sir Ian has been Chief Executive of the Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority (SHA), and Chief Executive of the Hampshire and the Isle of Wight SHA.

Hugh Taylor, 55, is Group Director of Strategy and Business Development at the DH. A career civil servant, he joined the Department in 1998 and was previously at the Home Office and Cabinet Office.

*For further information contact Deborah Goodhart, Press and Communications Manager on 020 7288 5983.*