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Board Chair,
The State Hospital

Via email:
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21 April 2022

Dear Brian,

THE STATE HOSPITAL ANNUAL REVIEW: 05 APRIL 2022

1. Thank you for attending The State Hospital's Annual Review with your Chief Executive on 05 April 2022. I am writing to summarise the key discussion points.
2. As you will be aware, the intention was for Ministers to conduct a full round of Annual Reviews during Winter. Whilst that has not proved possible due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Annual Reviews remain an important part of the accountability process for the NHS and, therefore this review was taken forward via video conference later than was originally planned.
3. The meeting marked the first Annual Review for you as Board Chair of the State Hospital and I want to thank you for the contribution you have made since your appointment in July 2021. I would also like to recognise and thank Gary Jenkins, Chief Executive for his leadership and management of The State Hospital throughout the pandemic. Finally, I want to thank the staff at The State Hospital and thank them for the work they have done under tremendous pressure over the past two years.
4. The agenda for this year's round of Reviews was split into two sections to cover: the pandemic experience in 2020/21 and the forward look for key planning issues for the remainder of 2021 into 2022.

Pandemic Experience

5. You helpfully provided an overview of the functions and the layout of The State Hospital which was very informative, which aided the rest of the discussion.
6. I was encouraged to learn that the governance processes at The State Hospital are robust and that during the initial phases of the pandemic the board managed to stay



on track, meeting regularly and keeping to their standing orders. I was also interested to hear of the structure of command at The State Hospital and the way that challenges faced due to Covid-19 were assessed and overcome through the infrastructure that had been put in place and that there was collaboration with external services in order to achieve this. It was positive to hear of the successes in testing and protecting both staff and patients at The State Hospital as well as the rollout of the vaccination across the service.

7. In terms of finance, it is reassuring that in 2020/21 The State Hospital delivered a balanced position and that savings targets were met. I see that there were several impacts from Covid-19 on finance over the course of the year and I am glad to hear that these have been communicated effectively with my officials in Health Finance and I hope this collaboration and transparency continues.
8. The State Hospital has faced challenges with workforce throughout 2020/21, with staff absences and overtime being the main issues which continued throughout the year. It is promising that such a focus has been put on the wellbeing of staff with the creation of the wellbeing centre. I would invite The State Hospital to continue this focus going forward. I can see from the review that there is an emphasis on driving down absences and alleviating some pressure from overtime costs and I will be interested to hear what is put in place in order to mitigate these pressures as well as the results of the increased collaboration with partnerships.
9. I see that there has been drift on key performance indicators, especially on patient health. It was good to hear that this is now a number one priority for The State Hospital and I look forward to hearing of the progress in regards to this throughout the year.

Look Forward

10. It was pleasing to see that The State Hospital is approaching recovery and renewal with diligent scrutiny. I understand that The State Hospital must learn to live with the pressures of Covid-19 and it was encouraging to see that there is some key progress to be made in order to stabilise the governance structure and ensure that is fit for purpose and for The State Hospital to return to business as usual as soon as possible.
11. I look forward to The State Hospital relaying the results of the implementation of the new clinical model and the security update. These projects are integral to the working of The State Hospital as well as its financial fidelity and it is hoped that the delivery of these projects progresses as per the timelines discussed in the review.
12. As previously stated I would be interested to be kept abreast of developments pertaining to workforce. Both in terms of wellbeing and recruitment. It was noted that financial performance is facing a challenge from the pressure on The State Hospital's workforce and therefore this is a key factor in The State Hospital's recovery out of the pandemic. I would encourage The State Hospital to remain transparent with both the Sponsor Team and Health Finance in regards to issues emerging at The State Hospital which may hinder its ability to deliver care to its patients and hit its financial targets.

13. I would like to be kept apprised of the details of the upcoming meeting with NSS regarding Northern Irish patients at The State Hospital and the funding of housing such patients.
14. Finally, I am interested to see what plans you have to change your website. As I stated in the review, it was not easy to navigate and therefore did not lend itself to demystify the work that The State Hospital takes forward. Changes that improve the user interface and increase the ease of access of information on the website would be welcomed.

Conclusion

15. I want to reiterate my thanks to the Board and local staff for their ongoing efforts, professionalism and commitment over the course of 2020/21 and in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic.
16. Scottish Ministers are aware that you are clear that there is no room for complacency now that the pandemic appears to be waning. The greatest challenge now lies with the recovery after the last two years and we are confident that under the Board's leadership, The State Hospital are well placed to continue their efforts and deliver their service with the care of their patients at heart.

Kind regards,

KEVIN STEWART