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Mr Brian Moore
Board Chair
The State Hospitals Board for Scotland

Via Email:
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2 December 2024

Dear Brian,

THE STATE HOSPITALS BOARD FOR SCOTLAND ANNUAL REVIEW: 18 NOVEMBER 2024

Thank you for attending The State Hospitals Board for Scotland (TSH) Annual Review with your Chief Executive and other members of the Executive Team on 18 November 2024. I am writing to express my deepest thanks and to also summarise the key discussion points from the Annual Review meeting.

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude towards every member of staff I met on the day. The visit was highly informative, and I was pleased to see and learn first-hand the person-centred care that is delivered at TSH. I can see staff are dedicated and maintain a high degree of professionalism despite the challenges they face. I would also like to extend my personal thanks to the patients I met, particularly those in the Patient Partnership Group. I was keen to hear their experiences, and I felt there was a real sense of empowerment in terms of patients being able to help shape their experience of the care they receive.

Annual Reviews remain an important part of the accountability process for NHS boards. I look forward to hearing more about the developments TSH intend to take forward as we navigate through the various changes being made to the forensic estate.

FINANCE

I am glad that progress is being made on TSH successfully meeting environmental targets, and that the service is looking to seek additional funding to ensure this is met. I was also

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pleased to note that despite the difficulties the service faces, TSH have achieved the necessary savings target for the 2023/2024 financial year. I understand this has been no easy task considering the pressure on budgets and I want to thank all those involved in ensuring these targets were achieved.

I understand the concerns and anxiety of staff members on the changes relating to the development of a high secure service for women, and the move to a single forensic mental health system. I appreciate there are financial implications, but I have been clear that this is the necessary direction to help improve forensic services as a whole and to meet our care obligations for some of the most vulnerable citizens in our country. My officials will continue to work with you, and the TSH Board, to ensure that we can deliver the best care for patients.

WORKFORCE

I note that staffing continues to be an issue at TSH with challenges due to absences and recruitment. However, I did hear that the task and finish group remains dedicated to understanding and seeking solutions to address this. Given the limited time we had on the day, I would be very interested in receiving more detail on the plans in place to help staff return to work and any other detail you can provide on how TSH expect to mitigate staffing issues.

I was pleased to hear as well that TSH continues to place staff wellbeing as priority. I know the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic are still being felt and have also impacted on staff wellbeing. I saw firsthand the Wellbeing Centre and I understand there is a high level of awareness and satisfaction for this service, which can only be commended. I hope this service continues to operate and I look forward to hearing how staff wellbeing has improved in the future.

PERFORMANCE/RESILIENCE IN PRIORITY AREAS

It remains disconcerting that such a high percentage of patients at TSH are obese, and this does not appear to have changed over several years. I do recognise there are a number of factors that have contributed to this position, and I understand overall the physical health needs of patients have been met. I would like to highlight that the improvement of patient physical health should remain a key priority for the Board, and I would be grateful for an update on this at the end of the financial year.

I also note that daytime confinement remains in place, despite plans to stop this in January 2024. I do appreciate staffing levels impact upon this and there are plans to recruit more staff to help manage the effect this has on patients. I ask that an update is provided to officials on this matter and that TSH make substantial efforts to minimise the impact this has on patients care, treatment and wellbeing.

STRATEGY

The development of a high secure female service at TSH is a key priority for this government. I understand preliminary work is due to begin shortly on the interim service and I look forward

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to being kept up to date as this work progresses. In addition, the move to a single forensic mental health system is the way forward for all forensic mental health services in Scotland.

A whole systems approach is key to addressing the many challenges that exist across the forensic estate. I completely understand making the much-needed changes will be challenging, but we can do better. I believe once a way forward is clear, many of the issues across the forensic estate will be managed better under this approach.

I also want to touch upon patient KPI's that were not discussed in the review and that I noticed TSH did not meet. Regarding care and treatment plans being reviewed at every 6 monthly interval and patients participating in 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week, I would be keen to understand what work TSH are doing to address these targets. I would be grateful if you could engage with my officials in the sponsorship team to provide this information.

LOOK FORWARD

Looking forward, I understand that there are challenges that TSH must face in the coming years as well as the potential landscape for uncertainty and change within the forensic estate around the work that is being addressed via the Forensic Governance Advisory Group and the development of high secure female care at TSH. I am content that TSH has the governance in place to face and overcome these challenges, however, I ask that you maintain a good level of dialogue with officials to ensure that focus and assurances are maintained.

CONCLUSION

I would like to reiterate my thanks to the Board, the Chief Executive, the Executive Team and the staff at TSH for their efforts and commitment over the last year. I look forward to being kept apprised of developments.

As I said during the meeting, my door is always open, and I would be willing to discuss any of the issues highlighted on the day further. Please contact my officials who would be able to arrange an opportunity for these discussions to take place.

Yours sincerely,

MAREE TODD MSP

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