

Birmingham City Council

Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Birmingham City Council and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Date: 7 February 2024



Subject: Update on recommendations from independent reviews concerning University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHB)

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1 Purpose

1.1 To provide a summary update on the progress regarding the recommendations from the four independent reviews that UHB has engaged with during 2023/2024.

2 Recommendations

2.1 For the Committee to note the contents of this report.

3 Any Finance Implications

3.1 None.

4 Any Legal Implications

4.1 None.

5 Any Equalities Implications

5.1 None.

6 Appendices

6.1 None.

1. Overview

Providing safe and excellent care to our patients is what is most important to University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHB); we all want patients to be confident and assured that the care and treatment provided at our hospitals is safe and we want our colleagues to all feel proud of the quality of care that they are giving.

2023 was a year of great scrutiny, challenge, and change, as we embarked on the start of new ways of working; making bold decisions and taking action, at pace. The changes that we have already delivered, or have started during 2022/23, take us part of the way there, but there is much more to do.

The impact of change must include ensuring people throughout the organisation feel valued, included, encouraged and respected, so that teams thrive. Where we get it wrong, listening to the feedback and learning. It will also include improving health outcomes, through pioneering research and innovation along, with high-quality education and training for our workforce.

It is important to recognise and acknowledge that implementing and embedding any one change is an enormous challenge; to implement all of them at the same time, is even more challenging, but is necessary and a reflection of the desire to do the right things as quickly and effectively as is humanly possible.

We have positively engaged with four independent reviews regarding concerns around:

- **Patient safety** (Patient Safety Reviews, by Prof. Bewick, published in March 2023 and June 2023)
- **Leadership** (NHS England Developmental Well-Led Review, published in April 2023)
- **Culture** (undertaken by thevaluecircle, engaging with 4,000 colleagues, published in September 2023)

We have welcomed the reviews, accepted all of the recommendations, actioned them, and apologised to colleagues for unacceptable behaviours and attitudes. The progress of the 106 review actions is actively monitored in the Trust Improvement Plan, which is overseen by UHB's Board, NHS Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Commissioning Board (ICB) and NHS England. UHB Board papers, where the Trust Improvement Plan can be viewed, can be accessed here:

<https://docs.uhb.nhs.uk/index.php/s/prTEizKrRnYnjaD>

Since becoming chief executive, myself, the Chair, the refreshed non-executives, new executive team and leaders through the organisation, have been working hard to build trust, confidence and relationships with colleagues and stakeholders, always endeavouring to be approachable, open and transparent.

Whilst we have much more to do on our improvement journey, I am confident that we have listened intently and extensively over the last year in order to truly understand colleagues' views. We have begun to turn these views into positive action through a series of co-designed measures, that should help to make our organisation the best possible place to work.

Our focus for 2023/24 must be on moving forward, continuing to provide safe and effective care, focusing on our local hospitals and services through our new devolved site-operating model, building a values-led culture and supporting our workforce.

We are absolutely committed to learning, improving and evolving – all fundamental things that are at the core of the NHS's values and UHB's success – to benefit our 2.2 million patients and 24,000 incredible colleagues.

2. Culture and Organisational Development

We are absolutely committed to creating a safe, inclusive, open culture where colleagues flourish and are enabled to provide the best care for our patients and communities we serve.

We have been putting changes in structure into place, and in leadership, which provide a good foundation for the further actions we need to take to improve morale and address staff concerns; but we have much more to do. It will take time for those changes to be felt by those that need them to feel them, most.

During 2023 a number of mechanisms were identified to enable the start of this culture shift and these will be reviewed, refreshed and revised as we continue to listen, learn and evolve.

Recommendations from the independent review into culture, have been accepted and formed an active Culture Improvement Plan.

2.1 Culture and Inclusion Board

The Culture and Inclusion Board has been meeting since October 2023. The purpose of the Board, which I chair, is to ensure that we are doing what we need to do, as quickly as we can do it, to make UHB the best possible place to work, where colleagues feel psychologically and physically safe, and where there is a culture everyone can all be proud of and flourish in.

Most importantly, we want as many as possible to take an active role in driving this seismic shift in how it feels to work here.

Six cultural strategic priorities - based on what we have heard and learnt from colleagues directly and through the recent reviews, as well as early engagement ideas and how to measure success – have been agreed. The six priorities are: belonging and sense of community; physical and psychological safety and wellbeing; fairness, equity and discrimination; learning and personal development; communication; engagement and co-creation; and effectiveness of leadership.

We have established an advisory group to the Culture and Inclusion Board, called the Wise Council, that all colleagues can join. The Wise Council is currently a 300-colleague strong group that is a sounding board and advisor, as well as providing assurance that we are doing the right things and taking evidence-based action to improve the culture in the organisation.

The Culture and Inclusion Board reports into the People and Culture Committee, who offer advice and assurance to the Board of Directors on its progress.

3. Governance

During 2023, the composition of the Executive Team was subject to a full review, as it was recognised that this was necessary to support the revised Group Operating Model, which went live on 02 October 2023.

A full review of the oversight and assurance processes throughout the organisation was also undertaken, as part of the transition to the new Group Operating Model. The review is nearing its conclusion, and in accordance with the agreed Trust Transition Plan, oversight and assurance mechanisms have continued to function. The new processes have already strengthened the line of sight from ward-to-board and a less complex system is being introduced to reduce the chance of issues being missed, and ensuring learning is gained.

We continue to focus on the role of Governors and provide support to them, with significant work undertaken to enable the Council of Governors to successfully fulfil their function.

4. Progress on change programme

UHB's new group operating model was implemented four months ago, on 02 October 2023.

The new model creates local leadership at hospital/site level; retains the best parts of working at-scale, by working as a group of hospitals and services; builds a stronger values-led culture; prioritises staff welfare and wellbeing; and supports system-alignment.

Whilst we are still in the early stages of this new way of working, we are seeing signs of the new model having a positive impact, with positive feedback from colleagues received including: improved visibility of senior leaders; increased clarity of roles; improved work-life balance, through a reduction in cross-site working; and renewed sense of pride and belonging in working at their hospital/site and at UHB.

5. The development of a new strategy

As part of the development of the new strategy for UHB, we have been engaging with as many colleagues as possible about what our vision should be. We have also been asking them about the types of behaviours they want to see that would be consistent with the UHB's values (*Kind, Connected, Bold*) and that would support the delivery of the strategy, as well as those they do not want to see that not be in line with the values and would hinder progress.

To date, more than 1,250 colleagues have contributed at face-to-face and virtual sessions, via existing team meetings and through 'walk and talks' in clinical areas and offsite locations. This engagement format is helping to ensure that all colleagues have

the opportunity to take part and has led to some invaluable conversations. The initial draft of the first output from the engagement we have had so far, and the new behavioural framework, is expected to be completed imminently.

Work continues to develop the detail of the new draft strategy and there will be further opportunities for staff to contribute to its development before the Board of Directors considers it in April. Hospitals also be given support to develop their own site strategies in line with the overarching strategy, as well as Group services being helped to devise cross-cutting core strategies.

6. Anti-racist Organisation Statement

On Thursday 2 November, we launched our Anti-racist Organisation Statement, which outlines our commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist organisation that opposes all forms of racism.

Colleagues were invited, via a livestream, to join the Board and governors, and individuals to hear about our statement, our commitments, campaign, new resources and personal reflections.

Alongside the statement, a new campaign and policy for ending violence and aggression towards staff was also launched, which included a guide for managers. We want to send a personal and clear message that racist, violent and aggressive behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated by UHB.

7. Sexual Safety Charter

On Monday 16 October, we launched our Sexual Safety Charter, which is the start of our journey to end misogyny, sexism and inappropriate sexual behaviour at UHB.

Sexual safety is one of the key areas highlighted in the Culture Review and more widely in the NHS recently; we are committed to addressing this issue urgently.

To mark the launch of the charter, colleagues were invited to join the Group Executive Team via an online session, to hear more about the commitments we are making to them to ensure that we are a sexually safe organisation.