

**Ursula Ward MSc MA**  
**Chief Executive**

Chair, Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel  
Customer, Community & Democratic Services  
Portsmouth City Council  
Civic Offices  
Guildhall Square  
Portsmouth  
PO1 2AL

22 February 2013

Our ref: UW/AS

Dear Chair

**Update letter from Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust**

I write to provide the Health Overview Scrutiny Panel with an update from Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust to reflect on some of the important challenges in the year to come and also to share some of our recent achievements.

You will be well aware of the Francis Report, which was published on 6th February. We have welcomed the review findings which will have national implications for quality of care in the NHS nationwide. The findings from the Mid Staffs review are sobering and all of us in senior clinical leadership posts are taking the recommendations seriously and much reflection and scrutiny has been applied within our own hospital environments. What is important, and at the centre of everything we do, is putting the patient first through excellent clinical care and ensuring the patient experience is a positive one.

We are pleased that in Portsmouth our hospital ranks highly in national audits for quality outcomes, and our plaudits far outweigh our complaints by about 25 to 1. However, we can never be complacent about our standards of care. Ensuring staffing competencies are kept high at the Trust, and remaining committed to keeping nursing vacancy levels low through the recruitment of highly qualified and caring staff remains a top priority.

We readily embrace feedback, encourage the voice of the patient and strive for continuous improvement. We believe we are well placed to respond quickly to the national implications of the Francis Report.

On the local NHS landscape we continue to move towards the new commissioning model for NHS services, with the SHIP Primary Care Trust and Strategic Health Authority disappearing and new GP Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) commencing in April. I am pleased to say that much work has been done in the transition stage to position ourselves as a provider of choice. We remain committed to delivering world class services to our local population to best meet their health needs.

The Trust has performed well over the last year, with many of our key indicators being maintained regardless of the increased demands on our services. There has been a continued unprecedented demand on the emergency pathway and the past year saw a constant, steady and increased demand on all of our services. Despite this our achievements continue to inspire.

The Trust has been chosen by the national Health Foundation as a Trust whose innovative ideas help to improve the quality of healthcare. Selected for the *Shine* programme, we are developing a computerised 'app' (decision making tool) to support women, their partners and midwives to make decisions about place of birth.

This is a new approach to delivering healthcare that supports patients to be active partners in their own care, whilst also improving patient safety and quality while reducing costs. After the initial 15 month project we hope that this can be rolled out nationally as a tool to help women choose where they want to give birth.

We are delighted that one of our Community Midwives has won a national award for her work. Mandy Grosvenor from the Blake Birth Centre in Gosport received the Mentor of the Year award, one of the UK's top midwifery prizes at the Royal College of Midwives (RCM) Annual Midwifery Awards. The award was nominated by Amie Ducie, Student Midwife from Bournemouth University, and was given to Mandy for her insight as a mentor.

Our maternity services continue to receive much acclaim, as the Nurture programme continues to develop. Each year around 6,500 babies are born in the Trust which makes us the busiest unit in the South. Special mention also goes to the diabetic midwives who received a special commendation at The Quality in Care programme awards ceremony in October for the best improvement programme for pregnancy and maternity. The team have introduced a robust programme which specifically caters for pregnant women with diabetes, offering a multi-faceted approach which aims to improve networking. They also took part in filming for Channel Four's The Food Hospital which is due to air in the spring.

Another valued member of our staff, Professor Peter Brennan Consultant Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon at the Trust, has been recently elected as the youngest ever President of the British Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (BAOMS). Although Mr Brennan will not take over from the current President until 2016, he currently sits on the Council of their specialty association and has the responsibility of organising a national conference, which is why the Presidents are elected so far in advance.

The Trust partnered with the British Liver Trust for an extremely successful Love your Liver week in January. Free Fibroscan tests were offered to the public by our Liver Consultants and Specialist Hepatology Nurses. Hundreds arrived to take part in the event which was also covered by lots of local and regional media coverage including the BBC Inside Out programme. Around 95% of all liver disease can be avoided through changes in lifestyle and alcohol, food and exercise. With the success of the tour, the best in the country our British Liver Trust colleagues tell us, we hope to offer something similar next year.

I also advise you of more deserved congratulations for our diabetes team who have been shortlisted for two national BMJ Awards, the Diabetes Team of the Year (for their Super Six Model of Diabetes Care) *and* for the Clinical Leadership Team of the Year. Our diabetes service is upheld as a real beacon of excellence, not only by our commissioners and those giving prestigious national awards but also our patients.

With one in three people over the age of 65 now going on to develop dementia and numbers predicted to increase as people live longer, the Trust has continued to focus on vulnerable patients and the dementia strategy that I mentioned to you in my last update is working well.

We continue to have a very successful partnership with our Ministry of Defence Hospital Unit (MDHU) colleagues. Led Commander Danny Follington in September we continue to develop the partnership working between the Trust and the military ensuring highly capable and clinically and militarily trained healthcare personnel for current and contingent operations. We cherish our successful partnership with all three armed forces in the MDHU which makes up around 5% of our staff, all of whom are embedded in clinical disciplines across the trust.

We are also delighted that Health Minister Dr Dan Poulter has announced that the Trust is among only nine NHS services across the country to benefit from additional funding to improve prosthetic and rehabilitation services for ex-servicemen and women. Our Prosthetic Regional Rehabilitation Department will benefit from a share of the £6.7 million of the funding made available by the Government over the next two years to ensure veterans are able to access a high level of prosthetic and rehabilitation care – similar to that which the Armed Forces provides for men and women currently serving in the army, navy and air force.


The additional funding and improvements that this will bring will mean that civilian amputees will also be able to benefit from advanced care in centres across the NHS in England. The NHS Commissioning Board will work with military charities and the NHS to finalise the amount each service will receive.

I am pleased to be able to announce that Ben Lloyd has been appointed as our new Director of Finance and Investment. Ben joins us with a wealth of experience and is currently the Head of Business Development for Circle where he has been responsible for developing their NHS business. Before this Ben was Director of Finance and Performance at South Central Strategic Health Authority and prior to that Director of Finance at Southampton University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Ben joins us on 1 April and will also be the Trust's appointed Deputy Chief Executive.

Planning for the 2013/14 financial year is also now well underway. I can advise that despite a challenging year the Trust is projecting a break even position for the end of this financial year. The Trust is managing its costs for temporary (bank and agency) staffing and has continued to push its savings programme which has also helped contribute to an improvement in the financial position. Whilst it is recognised that the next year will be no less challenging the Trust is well placed to meet these demands through robust financial planning.

Finally, we bade farewell to our Chairman, Professor David Rhind, who retired after four successful years in December. A new appointment will be made by the Trust Development Authority. I will keep you updated in a separate communication when we hear more about this. In the meantime our Deputy Chairman, Alan Cole, is covering the vacancy.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ursula Ward'.

Ursula Ward MSc MA  
**Chief Executive**