

Trust Board – 7 October 2021
Chief Executive’s Report

<p>1.</p>	<p><u>Service Pressure</u></p> <p>Our acute hospitals continue to be under significant pressure from Covid patients and general demand.</p> <p><u>Altnagelvin</u></p> <p>We had 27 patients waiting for admission on 6 October, with significant number of patients waiting for longer than 12 hours.</p> <p>There were 43 Covid positive patients.</p> <p><u>South West Acute Hospital</u></p> <p>We had 12 patients in our ED waiting for admission on 6 October. There were 21 Covid positive patients.</p> <p>The above numbers are lower than previous days reflecting both the high demand and also the intense efforts by hospital and community teams to maintain flow.</p> <p>The greatest pressure in the system relates to workforce we have over 20 beds closed in Altnagelvin in recent weeks due to staff shortages. Our surge plans will involve the opening of these beds in the coming weeks.</p> <p><u>Community Services</u></p> <p>Acute hospital services are not the only service under pressure. Staff shortages and increased demand have resulted in increased pressure and delays across many services from children’s social work, maternity, mental health and disability and domiciliary care and many other services (internal and external) are all experiencing challenges.</p> <p>This has also made surge/winter planning very difficult.</p> <p><u>Support for staff</u></p> <p>I would again highlight the support available to all staff including the staff psychological support helpline. This helpline is open Monday - Friday 9 am to 5 pm. I want to again thank staff for their commitment at this very busy time.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>In early July, a charity walk was held in Ballygawley in memory of Nuala McLaughlin, a highly respected colleague and friend who members will</p>

	<p>remember sadly passed away in our Intensive Care Unit at the South West Acute Hospital last year. The walk raised a total of £54,000 and this money was donated to the Intensive Care Unit at the South West Acute Hospital and Child Support Services.</p> <p>The Trust is humbled by the kindness and generosity of Nuala’s family and friends, the local community and beyond who supported this walk.</p>
3.	<p>Every year all trainee doctors across the UK complete the GMC National Training Survey to deliver feedback on every aspect of their training experience. The top 5% in each category are flagged up as green, and those in the lowest 5% are flagged as red.</p> <p>This year the WHSCT has excelled with our green flags increasing from 33 to 68 (more than 10% of all responses). Conversely our red flags have fallen from 67 to 18 (2.8% of all responses).</p> <p>The green flags were spread over many areas but teamwork, supportive environment, induction and supervision all performed strongly – a marker of the hard work and overall care of MedEdWest and our trainers.</p> <p>This is on the back of last year’s quite phenomenal NTS Covid-specific results with 24% of all replies within the WHSCT as Green Flags and less than 2% red flags</p> <p>So congratulations and thanks to everybody who has contributed to making the WHSCT a great place to work and train despite the challenges of Covid and workload over the past two years</p>
4.	<p>A letter from the Chief Medical Officer on 15 September 2021 has outlined the direction for the 2021/22 Seasonal Flu Vaccination Programme.</p> <p>The letter re-emphasises the importance of vaccination for frontline Health and Social Care workers, including those working in the Independent Sector. Chief Executives have been asked to ensure all frontline staff are actively encouraged to receive the flu vaccine to maximise protection for their families, themselves and the vulnerable patients in their care.</p> <p>The circular sets out definitions of frontline health and social care staff for this year in line with the rest of the UK. Front line staff definition has been amended to align with COVID-19 staff definitions to include non-clinical staff who have contact with patients.</p> <p>Vaccine uptake ambition for 2021/2022 has been set at 75%.</p> <p>Planning for the programme within the Trust is well advanced with a view to commencing vaccinations week beginning 4 October 2021. However,</p>

	<p>this is dependent on the regional online Vaccination Management System being operational. As the system is being used for both COVID-19 booster and flu, work is ongoing to ensure functionality in relation to frontline staff eligibility criteria.</p> <p>The main mode of delivery in the first instance will be through static Hubs, where Flu and COVID-19 boosters can be co-administered or given individually. The hubs are situated across the geography of the Trust, in Altnagelvin, South West Acute Hospital and Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital. As the programme progresses, it is anticipated that mobile clinics in areas of lower uptake will also be arranged.</p> <p>The vaccinator workforce will primarily come from the pool of sessional COVID-19 vaccinators. The vast majority of these staff are retired health professionals who have been working in our Mass Vaccination Centres.</p> <p>The Flu steering group has agreed that it is currently not practical to utilise peer vaccinators due to surge pressures. However, it has also been recognised that peer vaccinators could be utilised in the future and play a vital role later in the programme to complement the static hubs. In the meantime, the Flu Co-Ordinator is liaising with all flu champions and peer vaccinators to promote uptake of the vaccine in all areas.</p>
5.	<p>We have now entered the next phase of the Vaccination Programme for the Western Trust, which is likely to last until the early part of the next calendar year, and there are some differences in what we will be asked to deliver during this phase.</p> <p>During the summer period, the Trust concentrated on transitioning to a “walk in” model for 1st and 2nd doses, and completing booked 2nd doses at our Mass Vaccination Centres. We also undertook some highly publicised “last chance” promotions for 1st dose vaccination at the 3 Mass Vaccination Centre (MVCs). In parallel with this, we ran a series of “pop-up” clinics, to particularly encourage the younger age groups to get vaccinated, and to focus on areas of low uptake which had been identified by the PHA.</p> <p>We have now closed the 3 Mass Vaccination Centres in the West, with the exception of a 2-day re-opening period on 16/17 October to deliver 2nd doses from the “Big Jab Weekend”. We delivered over 234,598 doses at these centres.</p> <p>We are nearing completion of our 1st dose “pop up” clinics, having completed “Freshers Fortnight” clinics across our university and FE colleges in the West, in order to attract 16/17 year olds for their vaccination.</p>

	<p>In total, we ran 38 “pop up” 1st dose clinics across 25 venues, working closely with PHA and our community and voluntary sector partners to place these in areas where we could best target low uptake.</p> <p>Moving into this next phase, the Programme will have a number of strands:</p> <p>1. Completing vaccinations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work to provide 2nd dose COVID-19 vaccinations to 12-15 year olds with multiple disabilities, and those from households of the severely immunosuppressed. We expect to complete these by end October 2021. • We will finish the 2nd doses from our “pop up” clinics. These are expected to be completed by the end of November 2021. <p>2. New Elements of the Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 Booster: We have re-established mobile clinics to reach into Care Homes, Supported Living facilities and to the Homeless. • COVID-19 Booster and Flu Vaccination: The Trust has adjusted its planning arrangements to enable an integrated approach to COVID-19 Booster and Flu vaccination which allows co-administration of this vaccine to eligible staff. This programme will start during w/c 4 October 2021. <p>The staff programme will only be available to “front line” HSC workers, not all HSC staff.</p> <p>3rd Primary Dose COVID Vaccination: The vaccination programme will require the Trust Clinical Teams to identify highly vulnerable patients who require a 3rd dose in order to complete their primary vaccination effectively, due to their condition or treatment.</p> <p>Schools COVID-19 and Flu Vaccination: JCVI advice now requires vaccination of all children over 12 years old, and this will be taken forward by our School Nursing Team.</p> <p>At time of writing, the Western Trust has delivered 250,566 COVID-19 vaccine doses, and there remains a considerable programme of work ahead for us.</p>
6.	<p>On 29 September I was able to visit Letterkenny University Hospital to be briefed on progress on a cross-border Urology project funded by EU. This involves a Western Trust clinician working in Donegal and a Letterkenny clinician working in Omagh. The project will help improve both services.</p>

7.	On 20 September the Minister from Gibraltar visited the Trust with Deirdre Mahon as host. The delegation were spending the week in Northern Ireland looking at approaches and structures for health and social care.
8.	<p>On 5 October I was delighted to welcome the Permanent Secretary to the Trust to meet with CMT and senior leaders before visiting a number of service areas.</p> <p>Richard met with staff from the Shantallow Maternity Hub, ICU and Lakeview.</p>
9.	I would like to inform Board that Tom Cassidy will continue to act as Interim Director of Social Work and Children's until 8 November to facilitate Deirdre clearing up her very important work on the Mother and Baby Review.