

South West Acute Hospital (the South West Acute Hospital) Strategic Development Group (SDG)

Held on 7th March 2024 in Boardroom, South West Acute Hospital and via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Neil Guckian, Co-Chair (Chief Executive, Western Trust);
Judi McGaffin, Co-Chair (Non-Executive Director, Western Trust Board);
Mark Gillespie (Director of Planned Care, with overall responsibility for the South West Acute Hospital and Omagh HPCC, Western Trust);
Teresa Molloy (Director of Performance & Service Improvement, Western Trust);
Dr Brendan Lavery (Medical Director, Western Trust);
Jim Wilkinson (Department of Health, Deputy Secretary, Healthcare Policy Group);
Geraldine McKay (Director Unscheduled Care, Cancer, Diagnostics & Medicine, Western Trust);
Chris Curran (Public Affairs/Relations, SPOC MLAs, MPs, lead on the South West Acute Hospital All Party Group, Western Trust);
Oliver Kelly (Head of Corporate Communications, Western Trust);
Cllr Thomas O'Reilly (Chair, FODC);
Prof Monica Monaghan (Divisional Clinical Director of Medicine, Southern sector, Western Trust);
Prof Ronan O'Hare (Deputy Medical Director, Western Trust);
Maura O'Neill, Interim Director of Community and Older People's Services
Donna Keenan (Director of Nursing & PCOP, Western Trust);
Jenny Irvine (Independent Community Stakeholder)
Bernie McCrory (Independent Community Stakeholder);
Joanne McClean (Independent Expert Health Advisor, Director of Public Health, PHA);
Dinah Shortt (Independent Service User, User Involvement)

In Attendance: Michelle Gilmore (Business Support)

Apologies:

Tomas Adell (Department of Health – Director of Elective Care and Cancer Policy);
Alison McCullagh (Chief Executive, FODC);
Prof Mark Taylor (Independent Expert Health Advisor);
Dr Laura McDonnell (Director, South West GP Federation)
Dr Mark Roberts (Clinical Consultant Lead, Integrated Care Southern Sector, Primary Care and Older People's Services, Western Trust);
Carol Reid (Asst Director of Nursing the South West Acute Hospital & Omagh H&PCC);
Paul Doherty (Asst Director of Operations the South West Acute Hospital & Omagh H&PCC);

Welcome

Mr Guckian, Co-Chair, welcomed all present and apologies were noted. Mr Guckian wished to convey his apologies for having to reschedule the last meeting due to commitments at Health Committee. Mr Guckian looked to reiterate that one of the many aspects of today's meeting is for the group to work to ensure the continued and future sustainability of South West Acute Hospital and that it continues to flourish for staff and patients.

Mr Guckian wanted to highlight, with regards to the Agenda that he was happy for members to make any suggestions regarding agenda items for discussion. Further to this Mr Guckian advised that Chris would be making his way through the membership linking individually with members to gauge thoughts on agenda, progress, areas of discussion ahead of the July 2024 meeting. Neil added that we want to look at current themes, at common themes; are we on the right path and if any early feedback at this stage. Mr Guckian added at the outset that a main standpoint of this group will be to focus on changing the (negative) narrative, the strategic development of the hospital and the systems within the Trust and the DOH working together.

At this juncture Jim Wilkinson wished to reiterate that the present time, amid the temporary change in EGS services, was an opportune time to review pathways and arrangements currently in use.

Minutes from last meeting held in October 2023 were addressed and agreed as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

Mr Guckian wished to draw attention to plans for a series of visits to departments, urging staff, managers, departments and services to avail of any opportunity to promote the positive work ongoing within the Trust.

On the subject of promoting positive stories and experiences, this includes our staff; Mr Kelly shared with the group, details of an ongoing Staff Profiling Communications exercise which have been profiling the staff members, their role, and their experiences working within the Trust and their contributions to services. Mr Kelly confirmed that 8 so far out of the initial planned 12 have been completed with very positive feedback to date. Mr Kelly wanted to have noted that the Trust wished to acknowledge and thank the Impartial Reporter for supporting this positive narrative and piece of work.

Mr Wilkinson addressed members with an update from DOH perspective highlighting at the outset three areas of focus currently; The Executive and Ministers have returned to Stormont; Health service and Trusts in NI remain in very difficult financial situations and this remains the Minister's top priority but is hopeful of some positive movement going forward; Thirdly Mr Wilkinson wanted to highlight a focus on Waiting lists – with a push to be utilising and maximising all resources i.e. including SWAH Overnight Elective Stay Centre to address Waiting lists. As part of this focus there has continued to be service reviews and consultations; including Consultation on Bariatric service and GIRFT Review for Maternity Services. Furthermore there is a focus on how we reform our Acute services regionally, as a whole moving forward. On the subject of the Bariatric Consultation, Mr Guckian shared context regarding recent public queries in relation to why the Trust were not engaging with this consultation; Mr Guckian clarified that during a public consultation that the Trust must step back and allow for the public to review, consult and feedback to the Dept with due process.

Mr Wilkinson wished to reinforce that the Minister has made clear that one of his priorities is to reduce waiting lists, emphasising the need to maximise what we do. Any commissioning of two additional theatres in SWAH will depend greatly on budgets

Mr Guckian updated members in relation to two new Non-Executive Directors who have recently taken up role; Brian Telford and Aideen McGinley; and noted on behalf of members, that both are heartily welcomed to the organisation.

Members were briefed on the visit to South West Acute Hospital and the Omagh Hospital and Primary Care Complex by Permanent Secretary Peter May in November. This was an

excellent opportunity to inform him on the developments and progress that is being made in stabilising and growing service across several specialities in the South West Acute Hospital and the visit was deemed both beneficial and very successful.

Presentation on The South West Acute Hospital overall activity

Mr Gillespie gave a detailed update on the position and overall activity in the South West Acute Hospital. Mr Gillespie shared that SWAH has continued on its trajectory and will be back to fully funded theatre capacity of 19.5 sessions from March 2024.

Mr Gillespie advised that Omagh Day Procedure Unit is now in a position to schedule 30 sessions per week, confirming that the exit step is to fully utilise these available sessions on a recurrent basis.

New Surgical and Gynae Consultant appointments have further stabilised the workforce; also a new Cardiologist appointment. Ms Monaghan shared efforts re securing a dedicated Pharmacist for Emergency Department, the benefits and the risks that could be mitigated.

Mr Gillespie provided a brief update on ongoing efforts to develop Trust wide working model, with a number of roles already doing so. This approach has seen an increase and improvement in recruitment levels and will be the approach going forward. Mr Gillespie also shared an update on Tier 4 Restructuring of the new Directorates which is ongoing.

Mr Gillespie wished to update members on further positive developments and advised that Ophthalmology services were returning to Omagh in April 2024.

Outpatient with procedure, flexible cystoscopy coming out of day case theatres in Omagh to an outpatient environment freeing up additional elective capacity.

Mr Gillespie also shared the following updates;

- SWAH sessions are up by 156 on the same period 22/23
- WHSCT has introduced 2 Breast sessions (fortnightly) providing a new service within the Southern Sector which previously would have only been available in the Northern Sector.
- SWAH is delivering 7 Gynae sessions per week up from 0 sessions in January of 2023 and brought stability back to the service.
- Paediatric surgery has resumed with plans to add further sessions as WHSCT continues to rebuild toward funded levels.
- Majority from WHSCT but also BHSCT, SEHSCT and SHSCT.

Winter Planning Update

Mrs McKay guided members through brief presentation update on Winter Planning. By way of update, Mrs McKay advised that Trust actions were created to meet the objectives set by the region for winter planning. These actions include:

- Maximising ambulance capacity
- Reducing time spent by patients in the Emergency Department awaiting clinical decision and next stage of care
- Timely Hospital Discharge for Patients who are Medically Fit for Discharge

Mrs McKay shared that the Trust is also expected to clearly demonstrate the approach to the following:

- increasing and maximising Domiciliary Care availability both in-house and the Independent Sector
- providing sufficient block booked beds and spot purchases
- increasing and maximising core community bed availability
- Protecting Elective Care
- Workforce
- Business Continuity and Escalation Processes
- Communication Plan

Mrs McKay shared that ahead of an upcoming Regional Preparedness workshop (scheduled for the 13th March) progress on the areas listed above are being updated and RAG rated by the accountable areas. The template will be reviewed and activity and outcomes will be assessed enable the Trust to share learning from the Winter Preparedness plans 2023/24 and identify priorities for planning in 2024/25.

Mrs McKay advised that the Trust is required to give a short presentation on the key aspects of its 2023/24 plan. This presentation will include the following:

- initiatives that worked well and will be continued or repeated in 24/25
- actions that did not provide any benefit against winter pressures
- plans that were not delivered in time for winter 23/24 but will be delivered in 24/25

A number of the actions specific to SWAH include the ED nursing stabilisation project along with the Enhanced Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) service that will be delivered in 24/25.

In June 2023 CMT approved a project to recruit additional nursing staff to enhance the existing workforce in both Emergency departments. At the time that the project was approved the whole time equivalent number of staff (WTE) for Band 5 was 27.7 and Band 3 was 8.18.

The update below is set to be published on the Trust Intranet, NOW newsletter and on the Trust's social network accounts.



Over 50 new nurses start in Emergency E

Mrs McKay shared update that the Western Coordination Hub went live on the 6th November 2023. The hub is based in Altnagelvin and utilises information provided during daily meetings to improve hospital flow, meetings take place at 0830, 1100, 1400 and 1600.

Details from SWAH are provided by the patient flow team. If there are any issues that require escalation then the site coordinator can be contacted directly or via switchboard. A senior rota is created and uploaded to the Coordination Hub SharePoint site. The hub returns reports to the Regional Control Centre twice daily (at 0900 and 1400).

Cllr Thomas O'Reilly took the opportunity to share and have noted a recent private experience of having attended paediatric services with a family member. Mr O'Reilly spoke very highly of the experience and commended all staff he encountered, expressing it was very positive feedback from all involved. Another member also shared a recent positive experience for a child via Emergency Department and continued journey to Musgrave, commending staff and systems in place for the positive experience.

Any other business:

Queens University visit – Mr Lavery shared the very positive feedback on the team that delivered the training on this visit.

ICS – Mrs Molloy updated members that work has been continuing on the implementation of Integrated Care Systems; some realisation of challenges in terms of legislation. Continuing work by DOH and with partners on operating model and performance framework and management.

There is an upcoming conference in Belfast in late April (International Conference on Integrated Care ICIC24) – Prof Monica Monaghan selected as specialist on the programme.

Staff Engagement Forum – Forum continues to meet and will continue to develop and grow while building engagement and partnership. Positive feedback to date built on a basis of meeting, networking, listening and learning. Described as getting the hub and spoke of the organisation together. It is an engaging culture with an appreciation of what everyone brings to the service/teams.

Cllr O'Reilly added to highlight the particularly important role of reception and administration roles within teams – vital cogs within services.

Royal College Visit – Mr Gillespie provided update on successful Royal College visit on 21st February with the visit inviting some very positive media coverage.



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Update on latest All Party Group Meeting/Visit to MedEd Centre – visit was used to highlight opportunities and learning from student and professional trainers.



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ED Team – Mrs McKay provided brief update regarding ED team; have been meeting with team over last number of weeks. ED Team are committed to the delivery and the vision of the Elective service and requested that this be conveyed at today's meeting.

NG brought the meeting to a close thanking everyone for giving up their time.

Next steps/Action

Mr Curran will continue to link with members to ascertain thoughts and contributions on current themes, common themes; are we on the right path with direction of this forum and any early feedback at this stage – to feed back at July 2024 meeting.

Details of Next meeting

The next meeting of Strategic Development Group is scheduled to be held on **Thursday 18th April 2024, 11am-12.30pm, in the Boardroom, South West Acute Hospital (virtual option MS Teams).**