

## **NHSBT Board**

28<sup>th</sup> March 2019

### **Chief Executive's Board Report**

#### **Status – Official**

#### **Personal Perspective**

This has been a busy final two months for me as I hand over the role of Chief Executive to Betsy Bassis. Operationally it has been good to see blood stocks continue to be held at a resilient level ahead of the planned EU exit date of 29<sup>th</sup> March. Our planning, including securing key consumables stock and getting organ sharing agreements in place is going well and the team have had excellent feedback from the Secretary of State on their work. The Executive Team has also been involved in a National Emergency Team exercise which tested our ability to handle unexpected disruptions of consumables. We have concluded the work on the Core Systems Modernisation programme and the Chair and I together with Greg Methven and Helen Gillan held two meetings to listen to the views of colleagues who were involved in the work. At the end of February, I attended the Organ Donation memorial unveiling ceremony at St Thomas's Hospital, meeting the artist (a kidney recipient) and the Bishop of London, Dame Sarah Mullaly.

Our Board is going through a period of change: as well as welcoming a new Chief Executive we are also delighted to welcome Piers White and Helen Fridell as new Non-Executive Directors. Finally, Anthony Clarkson joins the Board as the new Director of Organ Donation and Transplantation. All new members are engaged in induction meetings and visits as they get to know the organisation.

At the beginning of March, I attended the first joint conference between ODT and the British Transplantation Society. This was judged to be a tremendous success, bringing together the donation and transplantation communities for the first time. There was an immensely moving session when we listened to Max and Keira's story (after whom the new organ donation law was named). Listening to Max Johnson, his mother and the parents of Keira Ball, his donor, was an unforgettable reminder of the power of donation. The conference also celebrated the first UK Awards for Excellence in Organ Donation and Transplantation with Jay and Sina Patel winning the volunteer award for their work sharing the story of their young son Aari's donation. Also at Congress Lisa Burnapp was elected as Vice President of the Society. Lisa is NHSBT's Lead Nurse for Living Donation and she will be the first nurse (and only the second woman) to become president in two years' time. This is a phenomenal achievement and a true mark of respect from her colleagues.

## **Quality**

Focus on supporting Ian Bateman and the team working on preparing for EU Exit has continued since my last update. Stephen Hammond, Minister for Health has again met with ALB Chief Executives to ensure that no deal plans are consistent and co-ordinated. We are fully supporting the establishment of the central DHSC Emergency Planning Resilience and Response (EPRR) plans and will be providing regular updates and data to provide oversight of any potential impacts of EU Exit on our service delivery. The Executive Team has exercised our emergency plans to test our ability to manage a supply chain incident as a result of EU Exit. Huw Williams has now taken over as SRO and is continuing to take the work forward in Ian's absence.

There was one regulatory inspection of our Specials Medicines and Investigational Medicinal Products activities at Liverpool in February. Unfortunately, this resulted in two Major deficiencies being raised by MHRA. However, the inspector commented that he had seen significant improvement since he visited Birmingham to review similar activities last year; the systems had improved and the staff were more knowledgeable, particularly about clean room operations. The Operational teams and QA are working on responses to the MHRA and to implement effective corrective and preventive actions.

## **Communications Activity Since Last Board Meeting**

The Government's Organ Donation 'Deemed Consent' Bill had its third and final reading in the House of Lords on the 26 February and Royal Assent was granted on the 15 March. The change in law will not come into effect until spring 2020. Widespread media and stakeholder engagement took place around the third reading clearing the Lords. Further activity took place as Royal Assent was granted including media, stakeholder engagement, social media posts, an animation explaining the changes, website development and internal communications. We will work closely with the Government to ensure that the introduction of the new opt out approach is now implemented successfully. Between now and then we will carry out an information campaign to raise awareness of the change in the law, as well as the choice and options available to them, and that effective measures are in place to enable those who do not wish to donate to record their decision and to ensure that this decision is respected. Securing Royal Assent has involved a huge amount of work by many people in the organisation but I would particularly commend Claire Williment who has been instrumental in supporting the Bill. There is now a year in which to prepare before the Act comes into force in April 2020. Meanwhile the equivalent Scottish legislation continues to progress through the Scottish Parliament.

We held a very successful event promoting all donation at London City Hall in partnership with the Greater London Authority (GLA) on the 7 February. The aim of the event was to raise awareness of the health inequalities that exist in all forms of donation and to gain the support of key health figures across the capital such as the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan. The Mayor attended the event and gave blood for the very first time, encouraging Londoners to register and donate. The event was also attended and supported by the Chair of the London Assembly Health Committee, London Assembly members, a number of London MP's and Councillors and Chief Executives from surrounding London Boroughs. The event saw some 30 new donors give blood and 65 Know Your Type tests were completed. Some 194 social media posts discussed the event, with nearly a million individuals potentially seeing the posts. Positive media coverage included the London Evening Standard, African Voice and the Eastern Eye reaching an audience of over 1 million people.

On the 1 March we hosted a visit by Jon Ashworth MP, the Shadow Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and member for Leicester South to Leicester Donor Centre. The Member was issued with social media guidance, a template press release and a verbal briefing on the work of the centre and our position in respect of the current Opt Out legislation. He urged local people in Leicester to come forward and register to give blood.

## **Promoting Donation**

- **Organ donation**

Over recent months the NHS Blood and Transplant media team has worked collaboratively with the black and Asian 'community investment scheme' project leads to generate strong regional coverage about the grants they have been awarded to carry out organ donation promotional initiatives aimed at black and Asian people. Twenty-five projects were funded, and they cover a number of geographic, faith and ethnically-based projects. To complement this activity and reach younger people, there is a digital and targeted radio campaign currently running to explain the patient need for more black and Asian organ donors and some supporting targeted posts on social media.

NHS Blood and Transplant has also worked with Mufti Muhammed Zubair Butt and Amjid Ali to raise awareness of the Fatwa that is in development covering all forms of donation. Amjid shared his journey in a standalone BBC Radio 4 programme, 'Me and My Fatwa' and the Scholar shared the process he has gone through to draft the religious edict and engage other Scholars in its development. This programme has generated other interest from other media outlets, several media discussions and wider engagement with, and interest from, those people of the Muslim faith

The launch of the paediatric donation strategy in March generated significant national and regional media coverage. Coverage included every national print outlet including the Daily Mirror, Telegraph, The Times and BBC Online. On the day of the strategy launch, BBC Inside Out highlighted paediatric donation and a family's story at GOSH. The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock, met Jay and Sina Patel in advance of the strategy's launch. Jay and Sina have been doing a

huge amount to promote organ donation following the tragic death of their three-year son, Aari, and the donation of his organs.

Three moving stories of organ donation and transplantation were told in an episode of the BBC series 'Hospital' in February. This resulted in an increase in people signing up to be organ donors. The episode featured deceased and living organ donation, an attempted neonatal donation and an interview with a Specialist Nurse in Organ Donation. During the show's hour-long broadcast on BBC2 and in the hour following it, 1,391 people signed up as organ donors through our social media channels and by searching for organ donation online and signing up through our website. This is compared to 60 within the same period the previous day.

NHS Blood and Transplant has worked alongside the UK devolved administrations and a number of kidney charities to promote living donation in the week of World Kidney Day (14 March 2019). NHS Blood and Transplant issued a press release announcing that the UK's living kidney sharing scheme was set to hit the 1000th transplant milestone during the week. We shared animations, donor and recipient stories, facts and statistics on our social media channels to raise awareness and increase understanding of living kidney donation.

- **Blood donation**

We launched our Donor Centre focused Valentine's Day themed campaign called 'What's Your Type' in February to highlight the urgent need to recruit more priority blood groups at our donation centres and provide information on each blood group. A significant push on media and press content saw 170 personalised valentine's day boxes being sent to specific journalists, influencers, and local authorities. Included in each box was a home blood testing kit for them to test their blood type and publish their experience. A press release highlighting the number of new donors needed in February at each donation centre, and the percentage increase on the priority blood groups issued from stock holding units to hospitals over the last five years was released. We got 24 pieces of media coverage across broadcast and print, held 24 events and gained 720 registrations.

January 2019 saw the launch of our New Year campaign which was primarily focused on converting current registrants and using low cost / no cost channels. There was four times as much PR coverage as in 2018 and a doubling in response rate from direct comms to registrants compared to 2018 (14% vs. 5%) Key successful recruitment events were held within corporate organisations around Donor Centres and we achieved some 80 pieces of broadcast coverage and 40 print/online articles – the strong message and appeal for specific male donors rather than just an appeal for blood lead to strong pick up from the media. The campaign saw new donor appointment bookings at Donor Centres increase from 5,762 to 7,261 between the end of December and the end of January 2019. Campaign ideas and activity were delivered in house and all our video assets were created through our Customer Marketing team.

Clear Channel, a provider of digital outdoor advertising across the country launched an innovative pro-bono campaign with NHSBT in January., The campaign used live data from local donor centres (about available appointments, volume of people

booking there, walking distance and centre location) alongside images of real blood recipients with the aim of driving donors to our Donor Centres. The work showed this approach to be very successful around large city centres (e.g. Birmingham), with an uplift of 34% to 39% of registrations at the centre on the same period in the previous year with dynamic content working better than static information. It was not successful in the smaller cities, e.g. Gloucester.

### **Activity in the next period**

We will continue to monitor the considerable uncertainty surrounding the exit from the European Union and the future implications for NHSBT.

We note that the Infected Blood Inquiry (IBI) Hearings recommence on the 30 April and we reiterate our approach to openness and to give full assistance to the Inquiry at this time. The IBI team will be visiting our facilities in Filton on the 2 April.

### **Preparing for integration of the NHS App with the NHS Organ Donor Register**

It is common for people to register to the NHS Organ Donor Register (ODR) more than once. There are methods in place to reduce the number of duplicate records held on the ODR, although we estimate that 1.8 million remain. We now have a new way of reducing duplicates available to us.

The number of duplicate records must be reduced in preparation for the integration of the ODR with the NHS App. During March and April 2019, an estimated 0.5 to 1 million records will be merged, meaning that the overall number on the ODR will initially appear to reduce.

We will re-state previous years' totals to ensure that a comparable reflection is made. We have made initial contact with key stakeholders and will develop communications as we near the publication of annual activity reports from July.

### **Action requested**

**The Board is asked to note the report.**

**E Sally Johnson  
Interim Chief Executive  
March 2019**