

NHSBT Public Board Meeting**26 March 2024****Chief Executive's Report****Status: Official**

The last two months have provided many opportunities to celebrate our amazing teams. The Together Awards were held in February, recognising the work by colleagues across the organisation to developing our people, deliver the highest level of services every day and drive improvements and innovation. The event was both emotional and inspiring, with messages from patients, organ donor families and senior NHS colleagues about the impact NHS Blood and Transplant's teams make. Congratulations to all the winners and to everyone that was nominated and shortlisted. Particular congratulations to the NHS Cord Blood Bank in Colindale, who were awarded the 'Winner of Winners'. Also, to Colin Brown who the Lifetime Achievement Award for his huge contribution, including advancing scientific knowledge with more than 75 research papers, leading the Colindale lab in its innovative work, promoting diversity and inclusion and developing people in NHSBT and beyond.

I was pleased to have taken part in the Women's Network Annual Conference. It brought together colleagues from the organisation and provided an opportunity to celebrate the amazing achievements of women in all Directorates in driving improvements to our services. There was also discussion about how we can ensure that women continue to be supported to achieve their full potential.

1. People

I look forward to working with our new Non-Executive Directors (NEDs). Penny McIntyre, and Ian Murphy bring a wealth of private sector HR and Finance experience to the organisation. Professor Lorna Marson has stepped down from her role in NHSBT as Associate Medical Director for Research and Development within organ donation and transplantation, to become our new NED with a focus on organ donation and transplantation. In Pathology, Dr Jo McCullough, has been appointed to a new joint consultant clinical scientist post in transfusion between NHSBT and Barts Health.

Nursing Directorate

The corporate nursing team has completed the workforce engagement process for the Nursing Strategy refresh, which is aligned to the corporate strategy. It is anticipated that it will be launched in May, to coincide with Florence Nightingale's Birthday celebrations.

People Plan

The draft People Plan has been revised in line with discussion at the Board in January. The final draft of the plan was discussed by the Executive Team on 5 March and is now presented to the Board for final approval.

Engagement

The Our Voice annual employee engagement survey launches in May, which will inform future approaches for supporting the needs and ambitions of our workforce. The survey will follow the launch of the People Plan and demonstrate our commitment to improving people's experience of working at NHSBT.

Health Safety and Wellbeing (HS&W)

Preparations have started to produce the annual HS&W report for the financial year. A new workplace adjustments recording tool has been launched aligned to our new policy.

2. Finance

After February's results, the overall position continues to be deliverable within our agreed funding envelope. We've continued to report a consistent forecast through the year and our planned budgets for 2024-2025 remain aligned with agreed outcomes. Discussions continue to take place with DHSC and Devolved Governments to confirm resourcing for organ donation and transplantation. In addition, we are also awaiting confirmation of our capital allocation for 2024-2025. We expect to hear the outcome for these remaining areas in early April.

3. Service Delivery

Blood

The 'Give Blood, feel good, no sweat' campaign ran from late December to mid-February, highlighting ease of donation during the period when people are considering their year's resolution. This led to a 13 per cent increase in weekly sign ups and significant increases in donors switching to both plasma and platelets.

Plasma

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has awarded licenses for processing donated plasma. This means that we can start to use donated plasma for producing medicines for patients. This will reduce our reliance on imported medicines and help ensure that patients who need plasma-derived medicine will have a more stable supply.

Organ Donation

The year started strongly with nearly 75,000 opt-in registrations in January. An uplift is often seen in the New Year driven by people using the holiday period to catch up on their admin, register for driving licences and generally being open to marketing messaging. Nevertheless, this is a great result, which has continued into February with opt-in registrations of over 65,000.

Stem Cells

Research has been undertaken to understand what motivates and prevents people from wanting to donate stem cells. It highlighted preconceptions about bone marrow donation, low awareness of process and the importance of emphasising that those that register may well not be asked to donate. The research will be used to guide our work in promoting stem cell donation and improve our information leaflets, tools, training, and website.

4. Innovation

We are working with NHS England to roll out six new Eye Retrieval Schemes in hospital Trusts. This work will deliver significant improvements in the supply of corneas for transplantation and increase the number of people who can receive a life-changing cornea transplantation.

Last month we launched an innovative virtual reality training app “NHSBT Blood Identification”, which simulates the process of testing blood for lifesaving blood transfusions. This opens our world-leading training to more students interested in a career in Biomedical science or transfusion science.

5. Donor and Patient Experience

Last month, we held an open day at our new blood donor centre in Brixton. This was an excellent event, giving an opportunity to explore the new site and see the work with community representatives, to ensure that the services within the centre meet the needs of local residents and donors. The site will include a meeting space for local community groups to use and the design will include work by local artists. The open day also included an opportunity to see the Brixton donor team in action, as they held a donor session in the town hall. The high number of donors attending demonstrated that the team are already building up a strong donor base, which in turn will help increase donations from people of Black and Asian heritage.

The annual British Transplantation Society congress was held on 6-8 March. NHSBT was well represented in the scientific programme, including the NHSBT Statistics Team plenary session, highlighting the work of the team in improving services and outcomes for organ donors, their families, and patients.

My focus for the coming months will be on building on the positive actions across the organisation and identifying further opportunities to improve the services for patients. I will also be meeting with my national and international counterparts, to share best practice and identify areas where we can work together to address any areas of common concern.

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