

# Report from the Accountable Officer

August 2018

I took up the post of Accountable Officer in June. The meeting of the Shadow Joint Committee marks approximately the 100 day anniversary of my appointment and so gives a chance to reflect on priorities and developments in this first period.

There have been, broadly, four areas of focus.

## **1 The development of closer collaborative working across the eight CCGs.**

During this period we have, through the collaborative programme structure, undertaken further development of the definition of the role and function of the Joint Committee of CCGs. This included finalising the terms of reference and proposed revised constitutions for our CCGs to the point where they are now out to consultation with members and endorsement by governing bodies. We have also developed the terms of reference for the other parts of joint governance, such as the Quality and Performance Committee and the Finance Committee, and we expect to emerge from shadow form by the end of the year.

On 2 August, we held a joint seminar for CCG Governing Body members, to discuss the arrangements for closer collaboration between the CCGs via a Joint Committee and to update them on our latest thinking about the STP. The event was well attended and we discussed a number of issues around how the joint committee would operate, what decisions would be made by the committee as opposed to locally, and who would be represented on the Committee and its supporting groups.

We have also finalised the roles and job descriptions for the remaining senior posts in the joint structure through a collaborative engagement process and will be advertising the roles in September. New structures are being consulted on in Finance, and about to be consulted on in Performance.

## **2 Planning the next stages for our Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP)**

We have now engaged widely with stakeholders on proposals to improve the organisation and governance of the STP, with discussions taking place with governing body members, the Joint Health and Care Transformation group and at the STP Health Programme Board as well at various STP programme board. There has been widespread support for new arrangements which make the programme simpler to understand, and with improved clarity about the role of different parts of the system. The final proposals are being drafted for sign off in the September round of governance meetings.

The strength of our collaboration as a system was tested by the wave four capital process which required STPs to agree a prioritised list of capital submissions against a national allocation. The STP Leadership had to form an estates group involving all NHS stakeholders and achieve consensus on our submission against the national criteria. As a group we agreed a prioritised submission covering three areas:

- Schemes which supported the Shaping a Healthier Future strategic outline case one (SOC1). These are schemes which expand and modernise hospital care in outer

NW London and provide investment in primary and community care. These schemes were given our highest priority.

- Schemes that support the modernisation and development of mental health.
- Schemes that deal with urgent backlog maintenance and capacity issues in inner NW London.

We expect to hear the results of our submission in the autumn when, if we are successful there will be a drive to implement the outer NW London elements of the SaHF strategy.

We are already seeing how working together across NW London is benefitting patients by removing unnecessary variation and the outpatients patients work is one example of this. In August, we launched new NW London-wide referral guidelines for dermatology, chronic kidney disease and gynaecology. These are for all GPs and hospital clinicians and will improve consistency in referral decisions for patients across the region. This is just one example of where joint working can help us deliver better, more consistent services for all our patients.

NW London was an early leader in the development of integrated care. Discussions with NHS England and with London's other accountable officers and provider leads from the STPs are beginning to shape the alignment of national policy in this area and a London-wide approach. It is clear integrated care needs to work at multiple levels, sub-borough, borough and at STP level. We are well advanced in our development of borough models, and have agreed to do work to establish a NW London wide framework to develop integrated care at this level.

A stocktake of where each of our eight CCGs is with collaborative working and integrated care with provider trusts has shown that all our CCGs have progressed in this area, though there are different approaches at different stages of development. We will share lessons learned and guidance on best practice at NW London level and look to develop a NW London framework for integrated care through a series of stakeholder discussions in the autumn. NW London has been asked to consider being part of the next wave of national pilot areas, and a decision on this will be part of our discussion with stakeholders.

### **3 Meeting with teams across the eight CCGs to help deepen my understanding of the people, opportunities and challenges across NW London.**

I have met with lots of new colleagues and spent time in each CCG since I took up the post in June. This has included attending a range of team meetings, seminars and events where I have learned a great deal about how our various teams work.

The other area we have been looking at is our approach to communications and engagement. We are putting in place plans to improve our internal communications, update people on where we are with our NW London strategy, develop a more coordinated approach to public and stakeholder engagement across the patch and ensure that we properly evaluate the impact of our communications and engagement. It is important that we are transparent, accountable and listening to the views of local people and stakeholders in all that we do.

On that note, the next meeting of the NW London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for North West London is on 18 September. Their focus is likely to continue to be on the STP and other issues which cross borough boundaries and I look forward to working with them.

#### **4 Finance and Performance**

All of the above serves one purpose, to improve the health and well-being of the residents of NW London, and to improve the quality and value of the services we commission on their behalf. I end this report with finance and performance because the new arrangements at a NW London level need to help us drive improvements in finance and performance in our next phase.

Although it is relatively early in the year still we can see financial pressures already building up. We will need to focus on how our new commissioning arrangements keep acute spend and activity to plan, and how we ensure QIPP is delivered both at borough and NW London level.

Given that some of our biggest financial pressures sit outside our boundaries I will be looking to the other STP areas lending weight to our efforts with out of sector issues.

Similarly, there are pressures on the performance side that we will need to give collective action to. We face a potentially difficult winter period with parts of our acute urgent care system well already below their planned trajectory. We will need to work closely with partners to make sure there is a fact based understanding of the performance problems and agree on the actions required to address them. Equally we are seeing a growth in waiting list sizes for planned procedures and we shall begin to be pressured to seek additional capacity if this is not remedied through other means. Mental health performance also needs to be carefully scrutinised to make sure the recent improvements in some key areas are maintained and reflected in CCG performance ratings.

I have taken the opportunity in this report to look back over the last three months to give an account of my focus to date. I would expect future reports to be giving a monthly commentary on these and other key issues, with periodic looks back at key milestones to review progress.

**Mark Easton**

Accountable Officer