

Media Statement

30 June 2016

Interim Chair's Review: May – June 2016

Tim Smart, Interim Chair of Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, said:

Following my appointment as Interim Chair on 5 May 2016, I am today publishing a summary of a comprehensive review of the issues and a recommended course of action.

I would first like formally to extend my deepest apologies to the individuals and families who have been deeply affected by recent events. I can only imagine the pain they are suffering.

I was appointed to make an objective assessment of the reasons behind the failings at Southern Health and the best way forward for the Trust, its patients and its staff.

In the last six weeks I have reviewed the available evidence. I have met with many individuals and organisations, including patients, families, staff and Governors. I have also initiated an independent Board Capability Review.

I am confident that we are making progress, and I know that our staff are doing everything they can to deliver high quality care. But it is clear that some of our more complex services feel less connected to the organisation.

It is my opinion that the Board of Southern Health should have spent longer in its early years creating an integrated, patient focused, operationally efficient culture. Before it did that, it acquired the Ridgeway Partnership despite understanding the risks. Ever since, the Executive team has been too stretched to guarantee high quality services everywhere that Southern Health operates. To resolve this failure changes are being made to the Board.

On the basis of the evidence before me, I am recommending that Southern Health transform the way in which it delivers services, and makes changes to the structure and strength of its leadership team:

- 1) Following the outcome of the Board Capability Review, I am satisfied that whilst the Board should have acted in a more united way, I have found no evidence of negligence or incompetence of any individual Board member. As we progress with delivering the strategic plans for the organisation, consideration will be given to the findings of the Board

capability review and further strengthening of the Board will be required to ensure the best balance of skills and expertise.

- 2) I know there is interest in the Chief Executive of the organisation and I can confirm that Katrina Percy will continue in this role. However, until now she has been too operationally focused in her role. She will shift her focus to delivery of the future strategy of the Trust which I believe needs to be accelerated. The Executive team will be restructured, to allow a more concentrated effort on the day to day delivery of high quality, safe services for patients. This will require a much more outward looking Board, which will at the same time put absolute priority on improving the quality of services provided.
- 3) It is clear to me that the Trust needs to change the way it delivers services because currently it operates across too broad a spectrum of clinical services and too wide a geography. The plan is for Learning Disability Services provided by Southern Health in Oxfordshire to be transferred to Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust as soon as agreement is reached. Other changes will occur.
- 4) I will establish a Steering Group to further develop and accelerate implementation of Southern Health's strategic vision for the future, alongside the soon-to-be published Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The Steering Group's first task will be to commission a review of the way Southern Health's services are organised. This will be led by clinicians and commissioners, and it will result in the future form of Southern Health being changed.

Based on my experience and the evidence presented I am confident that these recommendations will see an improvement in the running of the Trust and most importantly in the care provided to patients. We must acknowledge, however, the failures that have occurred in the past and I again unreservedly apologise for this.

The way forward is complex and difficult and success will be dependent on excellent team work within Southern Health, and first class collaborative working with all local stakeholders, patient groups, provider organisations, commissioners, regulators and staff. Southern Health provides good and essential services to a very large population. The Board must now work together to ensure that care quality continues to improve.

I would like to extend my thanks to all of those individuals and organisations who have lent their time and commitment to this important review process.

ENDS

The Trust will not be providing media interviews.

For further information, please contact the Communications Team on 02380 874666 or email communications@southernhealth.nhs.uk.