

Message from Dr Gillian Fairfield Chief Executive regarding Care Quality Commission Warning Notice

Dear colleague,

I am writing to tell you that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has issued the Trust with a Warning Notice under Section 29A of the Health and Social Care Act.

The Warning Notice comes following the full inspection of our Trust by the CQC in April. It is critical of the quality and safety of the services we provide to both inpatients and outpatients in a number of areas. It also highlights concerns regarding privacy and dignity of our patients and sets out a number of failings in patient care which were witnessed by their inspectors. The CQC has given the Trust until 30 August to make significant improvements.

It is clear from the Warning Notice that, in the areas identified, we have failed our patients and for that I have offered a public apology. Our task now is to do everything we can to put matters right by making vital changes to the way we operate and continue at pace the improvements we have already started.

We have already taken action on the most immediate concerns since the CQC's April visit, which includes:

- Escalation processes being changed to better manage patients at the County during periods of high demand in our Emergency Department.
- A redesign of the County Emergency Department, which will provide more cubicles for patient assessment and treatment from the beginning of July.
- Implementing patient quality and safety checklists incorporating 'comfort rounds' into the Emergency Department for patients awaiting a cubicle who have been brought in by ambulance.
- The opening of a 24/7 surgical assessment unit for patients referred by GPs.
- Increasing the critical care nursing establishment with specialist neurosurgical critical care expertise.
- Immediate action being taken on breaches of hand-hygiene policy, and a Trust-wide 'Hand Hygiene Campaign' is planned for later this month.
- Revising processes for managing outpatient prescriptions to align to national standards.
- Putting in place new corporate governance arrangements
- We have a plan to redesign clinical governance throughout the Trust from 'ward to Board'.
- We are advertising for a Director of Clinical Governance to lead the clinical governance changes required.
- Creating a Programme Management Office (PMO) to manage amongst others the Trust-wide programmes for quality and safety, workforce and leadership and clinical transformation.
- Ensuring robust and up-to-date fire risk assessments.
- Ensuring adequate staffing levels.
- We have also taken steps to ensure we bring further skills into the organisation in the areas where we require support, for example performance reporting and use of information to support care.

I know from the relatively short time I have been here that there are some amazing things going on every day in our Trust and that we should be proud of this. My weekly message highlights examples of this great work. However, the CQC Warning Notice makes difficult reading and we have much to

do to put things right. The improvements needed will require a lot of work and a lot of things to happen, very quickly. We must build on what is excellent but tackle relentlessly what is not.

Since I arrived in the Trust I have witnessed hard working staff who care about their patients and who want to deliver the best care. I have no doubt that we will all rise now to the challenges ahead to make BSUH the place we want and know it can be. In addition, we must work closely with our health and social care partners to ensure we all work together for the benefit of our patients.

The CQC have today issued a press release about the Warning Notice and there is likely to be media coverage of this over the next few days. Members of our Senior Management Team will be out and about across the organisation today and the rest of this week to provide staff with support and to answer any questions you or our patients may have. A list of visits is attached to this message. I also attach the CQC statement and our media response.

We are working on developing and delivering an improvement plan designed to tackle all the issues raised by the CQC. We are working closely with staff in the areas affected to ensure the improvements are clinically grounded and embedded. We will share this plan widely with you as it develops, along with more details of what has been set out in the Warning Notice.

The CQC's full report will be published later in the summer and when it is we will invite the local media into the Trust to see what progress we have made.

I know that this will be a difficult time for staff but I see the CQC feedback as a pivotal moment in taking the organisation forward and an opportunity to make real improvements that are sustainable in the future.

I will be out and about in the Trust throughout the week and hope to speak to as many of you as possible. Can you please ensure that staff who do not have regular access to email see this message in your area.

Thank you

Gillian