

September 2017

CCG Quarterly Update

NHS England and the 2016/17 CCG Assurance Ratings

On Friday 21 July 2017 NHS England published its 2016/17 Assurance Ratings for all of England's 211 clinical commissioning groups. Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) was rated as 'inadequate'.

Somerset CCG's Assurance Rating highlighted poor performance in three key areas: a rising budget deficit; slow progress towards developing the county's Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP); and lack of progress addressing growing patient demand and longer waiting times for treatment.

Mr David Slack, Somerset CCG's former Managing Director, left the organisation after completing a period of notice. Mr Nick Robinson has been appointed Chief Accountable Officer for Somerset CCG and took up his post on Monday 15 August 2017.

Work is underway to develop a Clinical Commissioning Strategy for the county and a programme of organisational development to strengthen leadership, commissioning capacity and expertise.

Full details of all England's CCG Assurance Ratings for 2016/17 can be found on the NHS England web site at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/cg-assess/>

"We must restore trust"

Dr Will Harris reflects upon the way forward since Somerset CCG's 'inadequate' performance rating



What a time Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has had since I became involved a year ago. Those who predicted boredom for me in the world of commissioning were so wrong!

Firstly, I want to extend our huge appreciation to our members and to all those who work so hard to continue to provide compassionate safe care for the people of Somerset.

Times have been challenging and your dedication and professionalism has, once again, kept 'the show on the road' – thank you.

You will no doubt be aware that your CCG has been on a significant journey of its own over the last 12 months.

Continued overleaf

"We need a fresh start. A new opportunity to genuinely and meaningfully work together to develop a clear clinical strategy for our county."



Dr Will Harris

This has at times meant facing some uncomfortable truths: our NHS England assurance rating of 'inadequate' highlighted shortfalls in our leadership and failure, together with our health system partners, to tackle the worsening financial deficit in 2016-2017. This has required unflinching honesty, self-inspection, reflection and, most importantly, learning and change.

The CCG commissioned an independent 'Capacity and Capability Review' to take a hard look at the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation. This has set in motion a train of events resulting in some changes to our team – most notably the departure of the CCG's former Managing Director, David Slack, and the arrival of our new Chief Officer, Nick Robinson. It has also led to a re-think about how we harness the best from

our commissioning team and secure the continued commitment from patient representatives and our colleagues across Somerset.

It is no overstatement to say that 'the winds of change' are blowing through the CCG – and I am delighted to be able to say that everyone I have spoken to within the organisation feels re-energised, re-empowered, re-focused and above all hopeful.

Nick Robinson has started several meetings by acknowledging the hard truth that the organisation had failed to deliver its fundamental objectives: failed to provide strong leadership to 'the system' based on a sound clinical strategy, failed to achieve our collective financial targets. He has apologised for this and given his assurance that this will change.

But Nick Robinson can't improve the CCG and healthcare system's performance alone. He needs your help, our help – the challenges we face will only be overcome by working together, the opportunities that are there can only be grasped through our collective efforts.

Several members of the CCG's Clinical Operations Group (COG) were having a conversation about 'trust' last week. 'Is it possible to earn trust back once it has been broken?' 'If there is a lack of trust that we as a CCG will provide the clinical strategy and system leadership required for us all to succeed, how can we earn it back?'

Trust between our members and the CCG, between system partners in our Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP), perhaps between our health and care system and some of the populations it serves will, of course, take time to re-build where it has been eroded, and will require tangible actions and results to become established and strong. So your CCG can't simply ask for and be given your trust that we can and will do better.

But I wonder if we can ask for something else that might prove equally powerful in unlocking the solutions that we all want but that have evaded us so far: a mistrust amnesty. A fresh start. A new opportunity to genuinely and meaningfully work together to develop a clear clinical strategy for our county, to work through the detail collaboratively, then to roll up our sleeves and to get on with delivering it together.

I, for one, have a renewed sense of optimism that it might just be this simple.

Thanks as always.

Dr Will Harris
Editor


Somerset
Clinical Commissioning Group

Published by:
Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group
Headquarters, Wynford House, Lufton Way,
Yeovil, Somerset BA22 8HR
Tel: 01935 384000
www.somersetccg.nhs.uk