


COVER SHEET

Meeting and Date of meeting	Trust Board Thursday 28 th September 2023	
Title of paper	Chairs Update	
Accountable Director	Name	Eileen Mullan
	Position	Trust Board Chair
Report Author	Name	Eileen Mullan
	Email	Trust Board Chair
This paper sits within the Trust Board role of:	Accountability	
This paper is presented for:	Information	
Links to Trust Corporate Objectives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Promoting Safe, High Quality Care
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Supporting people to live long, healthy active lives
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Improving our services
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Making best use of our resources
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Being a great place to work – supporting, developing and valuing our staff
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Working in partnership

	<p><i>The report author will complete this report cover sheet fully. The Accountable Director must satisfy themselves that the cover sheet is accurate and fully reflects the report. The expectation is that the Accountable Director has read and agreed the content (cover sheet and report).</i></p> <p><i>Its purpose is to provide the Trust Board/Committee with a clear summary of the report/paper being presented, how it impacts on the people we serve and the key matters for attention and the ask of the Trust Board/Committee</i></p>
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1. Pressures

The Southern Health and Social Care Trust has seen continued pressures during the summer months. The graphs below detail the decisions to admit to a hospital bed and the delayed discharges for those who are medically fit to leave the hospital for both Craigavon Area and Daisy Hill Hospital.

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I have outlined below some of the key messages for Trust Board in line data presented to the Performance Committee and have attached a copy of a presentation title “Using Information to Improve Patient Flow that was provided.

Access to Elective & Cancer Services

Reduced access to theatres, diagnostics services and outpatient capacity increases the journey time for those on the cancer pathway and the Trust continues to remain challenged. In 2022/23 56.3% of patients were seen within 14 days for suspect breast cancer with current position reflecting a decreasing position of 17.4% as at June 23. This position remains unacceptable, the regional average is 70%.

Waiting times and overcrowding at Emergency Departments

Whilst activity at Emergency Departments (EDs) continue to remain just below pre covid levels the challenges with delayed discharges continues to impact on the capacity of ED resulting in overcrowding. Patients waiting for admission continue to be cared for in the ED, reducing ED capacity and challenging patient flow through the department. Waits in ED over 12 hours continue to remain unacceptably high with 7,921 patients waiting over 12 hours from April – July 2023, +116% (+4,262) increase compared to 2019/20

Inpatient Bed demand for adult

Whilst admissions to acute hospitals have not increased; the length of stay has impacting on capacity despite a level of additional un-commissioned beds currently provided for within the hospital system. This, associated with challenges faced in timely discharge, contributes to reduced capacity. Capacity in the Acute Care at Home service continues to be maximised to increase this provision

Access to social care work force

Access to social work workforce in children’s services (with, increasing vacancies across the Gateway, Family Intervention and general recruitment into core Trust teams, and inability to cover leave and absence) will continue to impact on the level of unallocated childcare cases and challenge our ability to provide a responsive and accessible service. Constraints in the social care workforce impacts on adult safeguarding services also. Capacity has been directed to most critical services, impacting on wider social care provision.

Mental Health and Disability Services

Over occupancy in general mental health adult admissions is an ongoing local and regional challenge with service users managed in undesignated bed/chair spaces. The service continues to promote home treatment/crisis response to support individuals outside of hospital and also focus on active treatment and discharge planning and flow for those admitted to inpatient care. Staffing challenges, particularly in Consultant Psychiatry, across community services impacts on the frequency of contact

Fragility of Social Care Sector

The fragility of the social care sector continues to present significant challenges impacting hospital discharges and community care. Despite delivering more domiciliary care hours, demand and the ability of the sector to secure workforce has seen an unprecedented number of unallocated domiciliary care packages. Providers are also highlighting the impact of the current cost of living crisis. Whilst bed places in independent Residential and Nursing Homes sector appear available, challenges in placing clients which challenging needs continues and the need for 1:1 support is increasing.

2. Department of Health Strategic Business Plan

Department of Health published its Departmental Strategic Business Plan for 2023 – 2024. Department stated that pending the appointment of a Minister, the Department is working towards delivery of the objectives and targets specified in this Plan and within the limits of the financial and other resources allocated to the Department for the current financial year.

- [Department of Health – Departmental Strategic Business Plan 2023-24 | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

3. Accountability Meeting

The Chief Executive and I have the Trust Accountability meeting with the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Health on **Monday 25th September**. The Director of Finance Procurement and Estates will be joining us at that meeting.

4. Urology Look Back Review

The Southern Trust Urology Lookback Review Cohort 1 Activity outcomes report was released on the 09th August 2023. The Trust has been reviewing the care patients received from the now retired consultant urologist, Mr Aidan O'Brien, between January 2019 and June 2020. The purpose of this Lookback Review is to ensure patients received the treatment they required and if not remedy care where necessary and when possible.

The Urology Lookback Review is now being extended to patients who were treated by Mr O'Brien for a urology cancer which includes prostate, bladder, kidney and testicular cancers and treated for renal stone disease, who are alive today and have not had their care reviewed as part of the first Lookback Review group, or seen by another Southern Trust Urology Consultant. The Trust will make direct contact with individual patients, whose care will now be reviewed.

Separately, it is thought that there may be a number of people who received care from Mr O'Brien as a private patient. The Trust is calling on private patients of Mr O'Brien, who may be concerned about any aspect of their urology care and treatment and who would like to be included in the review. As the Trust has no direct access to Mr O'Brien's private patient records, we would encourage any private patient wishing to be included to make contact with us.

- [Urology Lookback Review | Southern Health & Social Care Trust \(hscni.net\)](https://www.hscni.net/urology-lookback-review)

5. Partnership Agreement between the Southern Health and Social Care Trust and the Department of Health

Following the Trust Board workshop on the 18th September, the Senior Leadership Team will undertake further work to complete the draft partnership. The final document will be presented to the October Trust Board meeting for approval.

6. Lucy Letby

The Permanent Secretary Peter May has written to all Trusts following the outcome of the trial of Lucy Letby in regard to quality and safety systems. A copy of the letter is attached to this update. Key areas of focus for Trusts and in particular their Boards are:

- Board-level Oversight and Assurance
- Leadership at all levels
- Being Open and Speaking Up
- Reporting and Learning from Serious Adverse Incidents

7. Revised Corporate Governance Structure

Following Trust Board approval on a revised Committee Structure, work took place (June – August 2023) to define the terms of reference for the revised committees as result of the new corporate governance structure. All Board Members, Directors and Board Assurance Manager have been engaged in his process. The revised composition of Committee Membership, Chairs and attendees is on today's agenda for Trust Board approval.

8. Non-Executive Director Recruitment

Recruitment of 16 Non-Executive Directors for the 6 Health and Social Care Trusts is currently underway. I understand that appointment decisions are anticipated in October 2023. The Southern Trust Board has been carrying two vacancies since 2020. The Department is also planning a further 12 appointments to fill upcoming vacancies which will include the Southern Trust vacancies arising in February 2024.

9. Local Government and Political Engagement

During the summer months regular updates were provided to the political parties on Daisy Hill Hospital and broader Trust issues and challenges. The Chief Executive and I are meeting with the political parties on Friday 29th September to update following the Trust Board meeting on the 28th September.

Meetings with Party Political health spokesperson:

Tuesday 26th September (in person)	Monday 09th October (virtual)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Linda Dillion, Sinn Fein• Paul Givan, DUP• Paula Bradshaw, Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Colin McGrath, SDLP• Alan Chambers, UUP

Meetings with local council Chairs and Chief Executives:

- 04th October Mid Ulster
- 09th October Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon
- 11th October Newry and Mourne

10. Upcoming regional events

- Health and Social Care Winter Summit - 04th October 2023
- RQIA Round table event: Quality and Improvement in an open Health and Social Care system – 09th November 2023
- NICON 18th & 19th October