


COVER SHEET

Meeting and Date of meeting	Trust Board Thursday 26 th October 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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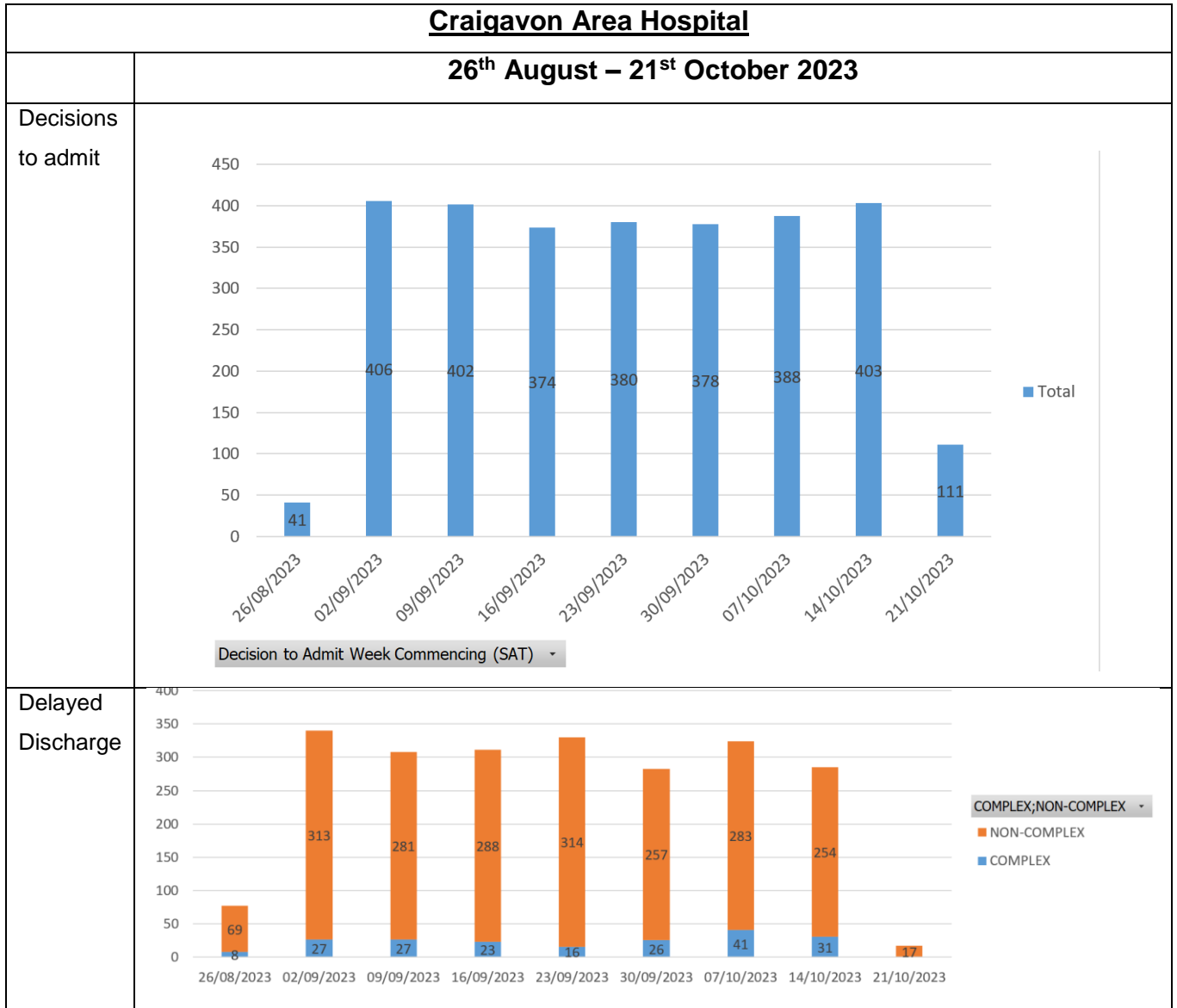
1. Permanent Secretary Address to NICON 20203

The Permanent Secretary Peter May, gave an opening address at the NICON 2023 conference on Wednesday 18th October. I found Peters address to be open, honest and realistic. The challenge and opportunity for us all is in working together, taking the right decisions and bringing our staff and population along with us. I have provided a couple of of the statements that stood out for me. The full speech is attached to this Chairs update.

- “I also want to say at the outset how frustrated I and I am sure all of you are that we are being kept in this half-life I say again – without the ability to take the sustained action needed on so many vital fronts. We are in an **unacceptable and unsustainable** position. Unacceptable for our patients and service users. And unsustainable for **our staff** who contribute so much and I want to welcome the intervention for the Trust Chief Executives on pay yesterday“
- For many years, we have relied on external experts to come and tell us the answer to our problems, And we have lots of answers now – **the challenge is to get on and deliver**. And increasingly when we need them at all we now bring in the external experts to help us do things rather than tell us the answer”
- “One of the big challenges we face is how we **engage our community**. How we engage the individuals who receive the care and treatment our system offers. How we both listen and hear what they tell us without becoming defensive, without appearing to close ranks and without **failing to learn lessons**”

2. Pressures

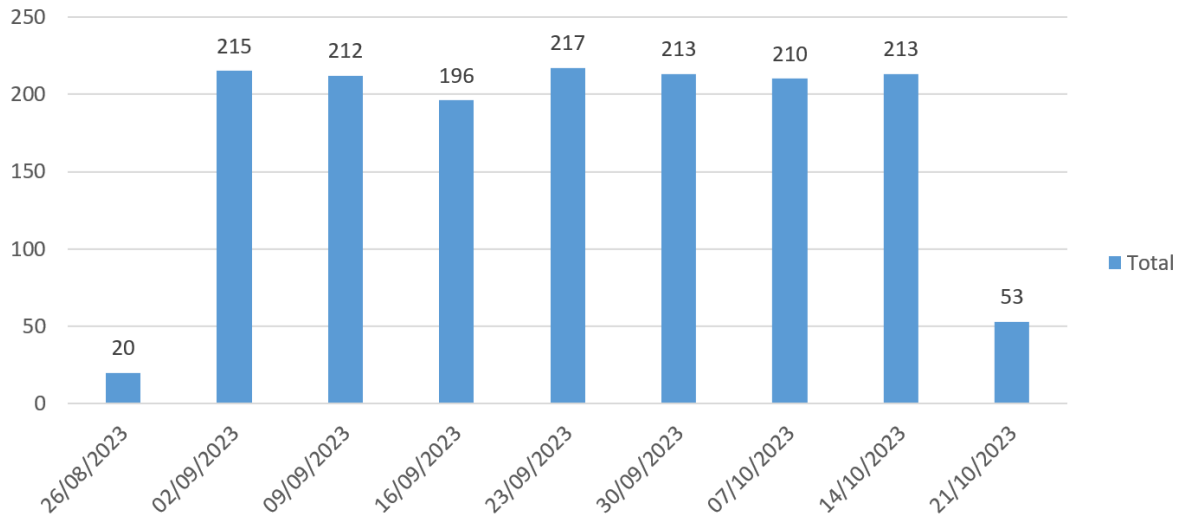
The graphs below detail the decisions to admit to a hospital bed and the delayed discharges for those who are medically fit to leave the hospital for both Craigavon Area and Daisy Hill Hospital for 26th August – 21st October 2023.



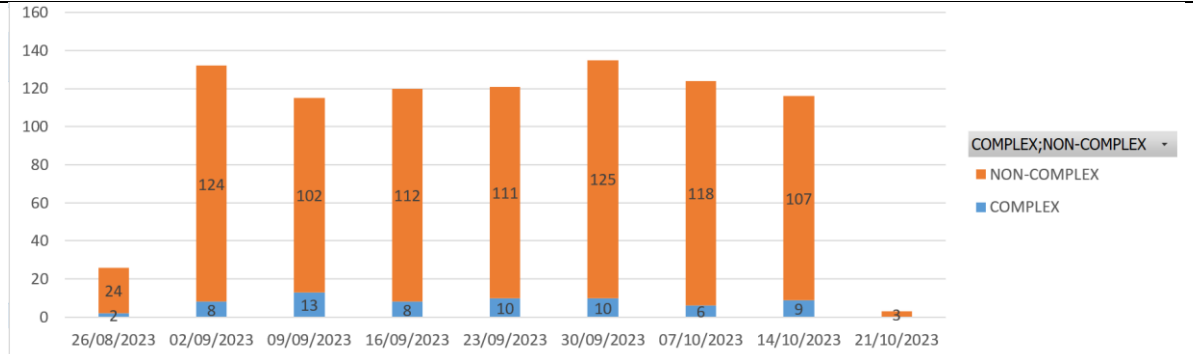
Daisy Hill Hospital

26th August – 21st October 2023

Decisions to admit



Delayed Discharge



3. Northern Ireland Audit Office – Tackling Waiting Lists

Northern Ireland's Comptroller and Auditor General, Dorinnia Carville, published (10/1023) a report outlining the critical situation within the local health service as it struggles with rising waiting lists for elective care.

The report describes alarming growth in both the number of patients on elective care waiting lists, and the length of time they wait for assessment and treatment, with Department of Health statistics showing that:

- Between March 2014 and March 2023, the total numbers waiting for either an initial outpatient appointment, inpatient treatment, or a diagnostic test have risen by 185 per cent (from around 244,000 patients to 696,000 patients);
- At March 2023, 49 per cent of patients (around 197,000) were waiting over a year for an initial outpatient appointment, compared to 21 per cent in March 2017;
- At March 2023, 54 per cent of patients (around 64,000) were waiting more than a year for inpatient treatment, compared to 14 per cent at March 2017; and
- At March 2023, 46,500 patients (27 per cent) were waiting over 26 weeks for a diagnostic test compared to 9,700 (14 per cent) at March 2017

A growing gap between rising population demand for care and available funding has significantly contributed to lengthy waiting times. While the report acknowledges that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the challenges, it also notes that the deterioration in waiting times has been longstanding.

The report highlights that a failure to secure longer-term budgets for NI Civil Service departments has persistently hindered the development of more sustainable funding and planning. A five-year Departmental plan to substantially reduce waiting times had been estimated to cost up to £909 million to implement fully - in practice, only £136.5 million was made available (with a further £56 million allocated from Confidence and Supply Agreement funding).

The full report is attached to this update for your review.