

LAS Trust Board Meeting held on 2nd February 2016 –

Brief note

I attended this meeting at short notice and was not able to read most of the background papers which require time and often intensive concentration.

Having been to a few such meetings in previous years I feel there is a new dynamism and more connections with key issues. This must be partly because some new staff have added additional enthusiasm and insight together with current colleagues and the CQC inspection, which has required an in-depth analysis across all of LASs work. This meeting certainly seemed more relevant and more engaged with the real world than I felt previously.

Some comments and observations from the Board meeting:

\* Dr Finella Wrigley had been appointed as LAS Medical Director and was congratulated by the Board.

* A mental health patient worked with an independent consultant specialising in public involvement, to set up 6 focus groups on mental health issues – 5 with current or ex-patients and one with staff. They were asked what the LAS meant to them and the responses were mostly positive. Patients were asked what was important when they contacted LAS: they wanted those responding to know they were fearful; help with de-escalation; not to be treated differently; an understanding of ‘capacity’; that the lack of community based services had a serious impact; that there is nowhere else to go but LAS; that they didn’t want to go to hospital but there was nowhere else to go.

What made patients want to say thank you was to be treated as a human being and not as a “fruit and nut case”, and when carers were treated as experts. Services should take each person seriously, not use fancy words, don’t leave them alone. For mental health staff they know they get a guaranteed response when they ring 999 and the lack of specialist mental health services is very serious. There were a number of problems and suggestions raised and slides were used for the presentation – we have asked for a copy and will make these available on our website.

This seemed an excellent initiative.

* A Safeguarding conference will be held in March 2016.
* 5/6th of the mental health nurses are now in post.
* N/E London Mental Health Trust is looking to partner with LAS with joint use of a database.
* LAS developing co-responses with Police and Fire for cardiac arrests.
* New public education team concentrating on outreach.
* There will be a united response exercise at the end of March for 4 days involving all blue light services and 2,400 staff – with events such as that in Paris in mind.
* Generally performance is improving and vacancies are down.
* Team leaders are being recruited from the workforce and will have 50/50 responsibilities – half time on the front line.
* Looking to improvement in the number of BME staff.
* FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) being integrated into training.
* Collective working with Fire Brigades – for example when extensive hoarding by patients creates dangers to reaching and responding to them.
* LAS academy being developed to train non-paramedics up to paramedic level (Jan Marriott is participating in this development)
* HR looking to restructure departments and improving/developing workforce data and information – to complete within 6 months. Considering how to best work with Trade Unions.
* Continuing development of training for all managers.
* Chairman creating a Quality Improvement Board which he wants to first meet in February 2016.
* Quality objectives/standards not yet met nor have the plans yet fully in place to meet quality criteria. Work in progress and challenging.

Papers for the Board meeting are on the LAS Internet site. www.londonambulance.nhs.uk/about\_us/how\_we\_are\_run/trust\_board/board\_papers\_-\_2016.aspx

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