

<p>NORTH EAST AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST HEALTHCARE COMMISSION ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK PROGRESS REPORTS ON CORE/DEVELOPMENTAL STANDARDS 2008/09 TRUST ASSURANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – 6TH MARCH 2009 BY THE BUSINESS PLANNING MANAGER</p>
--

INTRODUCTION

Monthly audits are carried out by the writer on Core Standards, also recorded as a KPI for the Executive Team. Periodic progress reports are updated by the relevant Leads for reporting to the Assurance Committee/Trust Board.

A progress report on Developmental Standards has also been updated (*Appendix 2*) and timetable (*Appendix 3*), which sets out the important dates leading to the declaration of compliance with Core Standards and subsequent publication of 2008/09 ratings.

Changes to Core Standards elements

Changes to the elements of Core Standards mentioned at the last Assurance Committee meeting, which were not previously assessed, but will be in 2008/09 – C3 'Compliance with NICE', C4e 'WEEE regulations', C9 'NHS Number' and C22b 'Director of Public Health Annual Report recommendations' (*3 March 2009 - notification C22b will not now assessed by the HCC*).

I have now met with all Leads on an individual basis and can confirm that the necessary statements and evidence is recorded in the reporting template and available for scrutiny (*Appendix 1*).

HEALTHCARE COMMISSION ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK

Core Standards 2008/09 – At 12th February 2009

Monthly audits undertaken in January and February 2009 are attached (*Appendix 1*) – Leads are progressing well with the gathering of evidence in support of the proposed statements of compliance with Core Standards and will be in a strong position to declare full compliance all of the relevant Core Standards.

An invitation to third parties to comment on the Trust's healthcare declaration will be sent out to all 12 Local Involvement Networks and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committees in the service area. Guidance issued by the Healthcare Commission in December 2008 states: "We recognise that not all LINKs will be able to contribute to the annual health check to the same extent that third parties have done in previous years..... If you (LINKs) are invited to comment and say no, neither you nor the trust will be penalised."

Internal Audit

During the period from November 08 – February 09, the Internal Audit Team (*Sunderland Internal Audit Services*) carried out an in depth audit on the process leading to the Trust's declaration of compliance with Core Standards, and inspected a sample number of elements (*C4c,d,e, C5c, C7e, C11a,b, C13a,b, C20a, C21 and C24*) – statements and supporting evidence, in detail.

A positive *draft* report – "Significant Assurance" has now been received which recognised the Trust's compliance with core standards and progress towards developmental standards, which will form part of the Trust's declaration of compliance. (*Appendix 4*).

Developmental Standards – At 12th February 2009

Progress report on Developmental Standards is attached (*Appendix 2*) although we do not envisage that these will subject to scrutiny in the process for 2008/09, it is important that progress is made, which is demonstrable.

Timetable for 2008/09 – At 12^h February 2009

A timetable (*Appendix 3*) demonstrates the calendar for 2008/09; which is updated and presented at each Assurance Committee meeting.

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

The Trust has registered as a provider of Healthcare Services with the Care Quality Commission; to protect patients and staff from healthcare associated infections (HCAI) within the required deadline date for registration (*by 6 February 2009*)

CQC and Ambulance Service Consultation Event – 9 March 2009, London

The writer will be attending the above event, to be held in London on 9th March; the event is expected to provide an opportunity for ASN members to acquire an understanding of the CQC as regulatory body for health and adult social care, its procedures and current timetable and feed in the Trust's views about the CQC's proposals for periodic and special reviews in 2009/10.

There will also be an opportunity to network and establish internal working relationships with the CQC. I will prepare a report for the Assurance Committee.

*A report on the CQC's consultation (*Appendix 5*) is attached with *Draft* responses to questions posed by the CQC. Given the tight deadline to submit the Trust's responses (12 March) it would be useful for the writer to add any additional responses following the event in London.

Advanced notification

It is worth noting that an assessment on Standards for Better Health will be undertaken by the CQC mid year (in November 2009), instead of previous full years; a further declaration of compliance with Core Standards based on statements supported by the necessary evidence for the period April – September 2009.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members are recommended to note the progress being made by the relevant Leads in the provision of statements of compliance with Core and Developmental Standards, supported by the relevant evidence, for 2008/09; confirmed by the positive report provided by Sunderland Internal Audit Services.
2. Members are asked to approve the reports and recommend approval of the proposed submission; 'declaration of compliance with Core Standards 2008/09' at the next meeting of the Trust Board – 26 March 2009.
3. *I would appreciate Members approval to amend/add to the proposed responses.

J B Hehir
Business Planning Manager
17 February 2009