



Our reference : SPF/04

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All Staff
By Email

Colleagues,

Our organisation is under tremendous pressure to ensure we deliver safe and effective services to our patients. In particular the manifestation of a growing risk is evident through the pattern of tail breaches. While our assurance mechanisms indicate that no harm to patients has occurred, we have had to increase the escalatory nature of our response to ensure this remains the case.

At this stage you will have seen the Executive Update that we released last Wednesday related to this matter. Some of the actions set out in that update are potentially unpalatable, specifically from the perspective of our acute hospital colleagues. These measures have been discussed verbally with many of our acute colleagues and in addition were communicated last week in writing to Acutes, CCGs and the TDA.

We also took the opportunity at our recent regular MP briefing to outline these difficult measures and the reasons for them. At this early stage we have had a varied degree of reaction from acute colleagues, however the consensus view from those MPs present at the briefing was that they were supportive.

We must now turn our attention to the impact of the service delivery pressures we are experiencing amongst all of our colleagues including some actions within our existing staff processes that may be a contributory factor

In this regard, the Executive Team has considered the impact of these processes on patient safety, what impact would occur for colleagues if they were changed and how we can improve the balance and tension that must exist between supporting the wellbeing of staff and safe guarding the safety of patients.

To this end, there are two documents attached to this correspondence. The first (**Appendix I**) is a **Briefing Paper** on the steps we are taking to improve our capacity while the second (**Appendix II**) is a **Proposal – Balancing Staff Wellbeing and Patient Safety**. Both of these documents were sent to UNISON, as our recognised union, in advance of our Staff Partnership Forum (SPF) on the 15th March 2016 and were discussed in some detail for the first time at our Joint Working Action Group (JWAG) on the 16th March 2016. The contents of both documents now reflect some of that initial feedback.

UNISON is our recognised union and hence, the Trust intends to consult with staff side through UNISON through the established partnership structures. However, the Trust also recognises that not all EAST colleagues are members of a trade union, recognised or otherwise. Hence, in the interests of transparency, we are releasing these documents to all internal staff for your awareness of what discussions are ongoing.

Any feedback you wish to make should be channelled through your UNISON representative or Line Manager.