

Thank you to our snow heroes

Priorities for 2018-19

Work to identify Sirona's priorities for the next year has been on-going with staff groups, Sirona's Members, Senior Leadership Team and the Board.

Julie Sharma, Director of Business Development, pictured, presented an update to the Board.



Julie highlighted the strong emphasis on ensuring high performance and robust financial health for Sirona moving forward. This would reinforce the already strong foundations that Sirona has for continued growth.

She also spoke about the importance of Sirona as a Social Enterprise and a priority for the year would be identifying and building on the additional value Sirona creates through the delivery of its contracts to provide wider community and/or public benefit.

More detailed plans to support the high level objectives will be agreed with key service and corporate leads over the next months and monitored by the Board at quarterly intervals.



Heavy snow caused widespread disruption across the country in March but Sirona's essential services kept running thanks to the sterling efforts of staff.



Chairman Simon Knighton, pictured, paid tribute to all who trekked, and worked, in difficult conditions to ensure those in our care were supported.

He said: "I know our chief executive Janet Rowse has personally written to those who coordinated our efforts and asked them to convey her thanks and there has been a long, long list on the intranet of the names of individuals and teams who went above and beyond.

"Following our March meeting, more snow fell and again teams went out of their way to ensure vulnerable individuals and their families received the care and support they needed as well as ensuring staff were available for our residential homes, Extra Care facilities and in-patient rehabilitation units.

He told the Board that the moving stories he heard about what staff achieved were numerous and he wanted all staff to know the Board recognise what was achieved; he said it demonstrated our ethos of Taking it Personally in its truest form.

- Stories included:-
- Staying at the homes of relatives to ensure easier access for work.
 - Borrowing cars and 4x4s

- Getting to work early to make sure cover was in place and where able, staff worked late.
- Staff reporting for duty on days off and on annual leave.
- Corporate staff working shifts in our residential homes or offering to be on standby.

Janet Rowse, Chief Executive, pictured, informed the Board that Sirona's contract to provide residential and Extra Care facilities in Bath and North East Somerset had been extended by six years with an option to extend for a further three years beyond this taking it to 2027. This was welcomed.



She also advised there had been inspections recently by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to Sirona's residential home in Keynsham — Charlton House and its Extra Care facilities across Bath and North East Somerset; detailed reports are due to be published. There were some immediate actions highlighted for Charlton House and Tricia Davis and her team had put steps in place to address these.

Janet also praised the hard work of staff who enabled the opening of Sirona's newest rehabilitation unit in Yate. Pictures and a story from the official opening attended by senior representatives from North Bristol NHS Trust, South Gloucestershire Council and staff are overleaf.

Skylark officially opens



Getting up, getting dressed and keeping moving are key messages for residents on the newly opened Skylark rehabilitation unit in South Gloucestershire.

With 10 days in bed resulting in the equivalent of 10 years of aging muscles for the over 80s, the specialist unit in Yate is embracing the “End PJ Paralysis” campaign which aims to get people recuperating from illness or injury up and moving.

Skylark was set up in just 55 days from being given the go-ahead by Sirona care & health working with North Bristol NHS Trust and South Gloucestershire Council.

Sirona’s Director of Operations and Nursing Jenny Theed also revealed in the first 40 days of opening, the Skylarks Rehabilitation Unit at The Meadows, a purpose-built care home, had admitted 40 people and, of those, 10 had already been discharged home.

“It is absolutely crucial that people get out of pyjamas and into their normal clothes and are as active as they are able. The Skylark Unit is built in such a way that people are able to leave their rooms to eat together in the dining room and socialise and enjoy activities in the sitting room.

“It’s not uncommon to visit and discover songs and dance movement being undertaken in one area with physiotherapy in another.”

The service is funded by the South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group and enables people who are medically well to “step down” from a hospital bed for an individual programme of rehabilitation and reablement to support them to go home as soon as they are safe to do so.

The unit is located on the top floor of The Meadows, a new purpose built residential home developed and owned by Windmill Care. The rehabilitation service was previously provided by Sirona and NBT on a ward at Southmead Hospital in Bristol; this new initiative has freed up beds on the hospital site for those who need medical care.

Current users of the service - Lisa Campbell and Michael Court - cut a ribbon to declare the unit officially open.

Janet Rowse, Sirona’s chief executive, said: “This unit is part of a whole series of service developments which we run in conjunction with NBT. We work hard to provide services which are aimed at getting people out of hospital and being cared for in the community or at home. Skylark provides us with a real opportunity to further develop a new and exciting approach to rehabilitation in a more domestic setting; it is great to be at the forefront of this helping people to return home safely.”

Richard Deverson, Operations Director at Windmill Care, said: “Every day we hear of the challenges facing both health and social care budgets across the country; social care provision needs to be seen as part of the solution to this. Windmill Care and The Meadows are delighted to be working with North Bristol NHS Trust and Sirona to provide the rehabilitation service at Skylark.

“Where providers can be imaginative and remain open minded to opportunities, integration of services across health and social care can work. Combining our own expertise with that of Sirona enables a wide range of services to be offered in one location.”

Also on the Agenda

Winter is always a challenging time for the health and care system, Director of Operations and Nursing Jenny Theed reminded the Board.



However, Jenny, pictured left, said Sirona was performing well and she paid tribute to Infection Control Nurse Debra Nicholson for her efforts to ensure bedded units were able to stay open.

“She has done a phenomenal job this year,” said Jenny.

The focus of the community teams has been on supporting the hospitals to have as many beds as possible for those in greatest need by making sure we avoid admission for individuals where possible as well as helping people to get home without unnecessary delays.

In line with this our initiative Discharge to Assess which supports people to leave hospital and undergo their assessments at home to determine what further community support is required saw numbers increase by 20 per cent in January.

Jenny also praised the efforts of staff in making Skylark live in a short space of time.

She also informed the Board Sirona had achieved its CQUIN — Commissioning for Quality and Innovation — award for ‘flu vaccinations for frontline staff and thanked all those who helped with this initiative for their hard work.



Spring meetings by the Board.

Financial director Paul Butler, pictured left, outlined initiatives to tackle high mobile phone spend. He said an audit of phone usage was underway with messages regarding use of data already issued to staff and further initiatives to bring costs down would be introduced soon. In

addition, he said key for 2018-19 would be not just monitoring the budget but also performance levels and improving forecasting across all services.

Paul said Sirona was in a stable position financially and this was sustainable moving into the next financial year. This, he said, was due to the hard work of managers in identifying savings to meeting the challenging financial agenda that all parts of the health and care sector are currently facing. Paul did point out, however, that the Board needed to monitor closely the impact of the savings on overall performance to ensure that Sirona continues to deliver on its contract commitments.

The budget for 2018-19 had included a one-per-cent pay award which is currently subject to discussion with Unions locally. The situation has more recently been updated for staff on the intranet following the announcement of national discussions.

Janet Rowse informed the Board of the decision by Liz Richards, HR Director, pictured right, to leave Sirona in the summer. She said there would be opportunities nearer to time to say a formal farewell to Liz.



Since this meeting, it has been announced that following a recruitment process, Head of HR Sarah Margetts will be taking on the role of Director of HR alongside aspects of her current role and she and Liz have already started transition work to ensure a seamless handover.

A programme of visits by the Board to services is well established and a section of each meeting outlines this work by the Chairman and the Non-Executive Directors. Deputy chairman David Purdon is due to go out on rounds with a District Nurse in the community shortly and Amanda Cheesley is planning to visit Skylark soon. Simon Knighton has taken on the mantle of Board champion for Sirona’s Staff Forum and will attend meetings from time to time and will also ensure that at Board meetings the views of the Staff Forum have been sought for relevant and key items.

Also on the Agenda



Jenny Theed, Director of Operations and Nursing, presented the annual Service User Safety report which provides a snapshot of progress on the safe care provided by Sirona.

She told the Board that the recommendations contained in the Francis Report which followed a public inquiry into failings in Mid-Staffordshire had become “normal business” for Sirona.

These included committing to Duty of Candour and saying sorry when things go wrong; publicising key performance information and sharing learning; engaging with services and service users when handling complaints and concerns, and developing a leadership strategy.

Sirona like all health and care providers are required by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to demonstrate services are safe and people are protected from abuse and avoidable harm.

Highlights from Jenny’s report included:-

- The ward manager at Henderson Ward at Thornbury Hospital being a dementia champion to train staff and also support family and carers.

- Piloting a new nursing associate role.
- Promoting the “End PJ Paralysis” campaign as outlined in the story on page 2 regarding the work at Skylark and other in-patient units.
- Maintaining MRSA screening within 24 hours of admission at 100 per cent.
- Completing an action plan to ensure an overall compliance rate of 90% of staff having completed safeguarding training.
- Work is ongoing with our school nursing service to increase update of childhood vaccinations; the percentage of children who have received the meningitis jabs has increased slightly in both Bristol and South Gloucestershire.
- Discharge to Assess is demonstrating consistent success.
- Successful use of Adverse Event reporting which is showing that although the numbers reported are increasing, the severity is reducing which illustrates a good reporting culture.

Keeping people at home and independent is key



Grandmother Christine Gamlin joined the Board meeting to share the experience she and husband David had over Christmas. David has diabetes; has suffered two strokes and a heart attack plus had major surgery to address blocked arteries in recent years.

He took ill on Boxing Day and Emergency Care Practitioners to make arrangements for him to be supported at home. This involved accessing antibiotics to treat the urgent issues and arranging for equipment to be delivered to help him maintain his independence.

This was followed up with regular visits including occupational therapy and physiotherapy.

Christine said huge improvements had been seen and said: ““It helps me because it is helping him,” she said, “I cannot fault the help we have received; it has been so brilliant. We have calls asking about progress and if there’s anything else which can be done to help us. It has been the most amazing experience.”

The Board said their story was a powerful demonstration of the high levels of support that can be carried out in the community to help people to remain independent and safe at home.