



Board of Directors

subject	Chair's Report – Quarter 1 2019/20
Date of meeting	29/07/2019
author	Jonathan Wells
purpose	For Discussion

1. Summary.

This has been a very active first quarter of the year, with our performance indicators showing that we are on track to achieve our key targets. Our profile continues to grow, and staff are clear about their aims of reaching out to all those with an interest in better mental health and substance misuse services locally.

Joint projects with CPFT have not been as productive as they should, and continue to be an issue for us. As chair I will be raising these issues again through the appropriate channels with the Trust.

2. Achievements.

In Quarter 1 the main achievements that I would like to highlight are as follows:

- New team members have been assimilated very quickly into the team and have added value
- We further consolidated the team at a team-building away day earlier this month which was successful in bringing the team together and was enjoyed by all
- It has been a busy quarter with team members reaching out to service users/seekers across the patch and at the same time promoting what we do
- I believe the intelligence provided by us has enabled the Clinical Commissioning Group and CPFT to move fast when in May the opportunity arose to bid for significant new investment into core community mental health services. The bid was definitely co-produced with myself and a team member both being involved from start to finish. I have been told this week that the bid was successful, subject to some minor amendments. We look forward now to being fully part of the implementation phase, bringing more effective and accessible services for people with personality disorders, eating disorders and those needing primary care mental health interventions, in the Peterborough area.
- As a Board we have used our three year strategy to agree a clear and achievable strategic business plan for the year 2019/20. This will provide an important reference point for us as we continue on our journey to strengthen the voices of people with substance misuse and mental health issues across the area.



3. Challenges.

These include:

- Disappointingly, two challenges highlighted in my last chair's report remain unresolved. These all concern our relationship with CPFT. Our memorandum of understanding with them, first drafted over a year ago, remains not signed off, despite our prompt responses to any requests for further information or clarification during the process. It appears that three Executive Directors (one of whom is the Chief Executive) are all required to sign off this innocuous document, and this is taking a very long time. The delay has made it harder for us to negotiate effectively with more junior managers around joint projects. As a result, both the primary care mental health quarterly patient experience reports, and the project on people's experiences of being assessed by the Locality Teams in Peterborough and Wisbech, have been significantly weakened.
- The frustrations outlined above are created in part by our reliance on other agencies to complete the projects that we have identified as most necessary in understanding people's experiences of services. We are committed to partnership working, but at the same time we need to seek to avoid reliance on partners for access to people with lived experience. The new task for us is to develop ways of engaging with these populations directly or through "generic" services.
- A third issue to note in this report is the financial context within which we, like so many commissioned services, large and small, are obliged to operate. The major ongoing financial pressures on the local health and social care economy have become more apparent than ever in the past month with the CCG's published plans to close or reduce several small voluntary organisations across the county. Such plans are less devastating now than when first proposed, but this unpredictable but very real threat remains. We have robust relationships with our local NHS commissioners but we know that the decisions facing them and their colleagues are grave. I want us in The SUN Network to use these risks as incentives to continuously improve the quality of what we do.

4. Conclusion.

I am very grateful to all colleagues at The SUN Network for their dedication to the important work that we do, over the past three months. In these insecure times I am keen that we continue to rise to the challenge of demonstrating the crucial role we play in the local mental health system by making ourselves indispensable to it.