



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

New Improvement Alliance set to improve services for patients in Shropshire

A leading teaching hospital will provide targeted support to improve services for patients at The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH).

University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHB) has entered an Improvement Alliance with SaTH to provide leadership expertise that will support the Trust to offer clinically safe and sustainable patient services.

It will be a time-limited alliance that will set up a 'Committees in Common' structure to enable the development and delivery of a rapid quality improvement plan. The strategic relationship will address the governance and leadership issues to make the necessary service improvements at SaTH.

Facilitated by NHS Improvement (NHSI) in the Midlands, the Improvement Alliance is part of the strengthened package of support for SaTH, announced last month.

Louise Barnett, Chief Executive of SaTH, who joined the Trust in February 2020, has welcomed the support. She said: "I welcome the creation of this Improvement Alliance and the opportunity to work with our colleagues at UHB to improve patient safety and quality of care for patients and families in the communities we serve. SaTH cannot accomplish the necessary transformation alone and the provision of this extra expertise will be a really positive step forward on our improvement journey."

Dr David Rosser, Chief Executive of UHB, said: "We are looking forward to working with colleagues at SaTH in this new Improvement Alliance. I believe that this development should give confidence to the people served by SaTH that improvements in patient safety and quality of care will be delivered."

Ben Reid, who has been Chair of SaTH since 2018, has decided to take this opportunity to step down and allow a new Chair, Dr Catriona McMahon, to lead the SaTH Board. A physician with over 16 years' experience in pharmaceutical medicine, Dr McMahon has been a Non-Executive Director and Senior Independent Director at UHB since 2014.

Dr McMahon said: "I am delighted to be the new Chair at SaTH and look forward to working with my Board colleagues, Louise and her team, as well as everyone who works for SaTH to deliver improvements. In particular I believe patient safety and quality of care will be improved with this strategic Improvement Alliance. I am determined to work hard to provide the right strategic leadership to ensure the whole team can be successful."

Dr Nigel Sturrock, Regional Medical Director for NHSI in the Midlands, said:

"The challenges facing SaTH are complex and substantial. To achieve the improvements that patients rightly expect, the Trust needs the strong support of the surrounding system. As a leading teaching hospital with outstanding leadership, UHB are well placed to provide the wide range of expertise needed to address some of the key patient safety and quality challenges faced by SaTH."

ENDS

For further information please contact the NHSE/I Midlands communications team at england.midlandscomms@nhs.net

Why is the Improvement Alliance being formed now?

SaTH face complex and substantial challenges that cannot be solved by them alone. The targeted resource and expertise from UHB, in addition to a strengthened package of support will enable SaTH to deliver the change necessary to improve the quality of care provided to patients.

What does this mean for SaTH and what does success look like?

SaTH will gain greatly from the additional resource and expertise provided by UHB, a leading teaching hospital rated outstanding for leadership by the Care Quality Commission. All parties are committed to seeing measurable improvements in patient safety and quality of care.

Is this a takeover or a merger?

No. UHB will not have responsibility for the day to day operational management of SaTH, which remains as a separate entity accountable to the Board.

How long will the Improvement Alliance last?

This is a medium-term arrangement, with effect from 1 September, that will see UHB provide leadership capacity and capability to SaTH in order to deliver the necessary improvements in patient safety and service quality.

Are UHB being compensated?

Yes, UHB will be reimbursed for their costs.

Will there be leadership changes at SaTH?

Ben Reid, the Chair of SaTH, will take the opportunity to step down. Dr Catriona McMahon, a physician with over 16 years' experience in pharmaceutical medicine, will take up the position of Chair at SaTH and will work with the CEO and her colleagues.

Why was the Chair position not advertised?

Chair and non-executive appointments to NHS Trusts are made by NHSE/I and are subject to the Governance Code for Public Appointments and the alternative arrangements for NHS Trust appointments agreed with the Cabinet Office and the Commissioner for Public Appointments. This includes provision for NHSE/I to make appointments without open competition where a Trust is in special measures and needs urgent leadership support.

Will there be redundancies at SaTH as a result of this Improvement Alliance?

There will be no redundancies as a result of this Improvement Alliance.

How will this new partnership affect the Ockenden review into maternity services at SaTH?

SaTH will continue to cooperate fully with the ongoing Ockenden review.

Notes to Editors

- Since 2013 UHB has been commissioned by the NHS to provide clinical, governance, managerial and leadership capacity and capability to support the wider health economy, particularly trusts in distress or special measures. UHB has successfully supported George Eliot NHS Trust, Wye Valley NHS Trust and Medway NHS Foundation Trust, as well as acquiring Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust following a two-year intervention
- Last month, NHSI announced a strengthened support package for SaTH in agreement with the Trust's Chief Executive. This includes:
 - A strengthened improvement team, led by a newly appointed on-site senior improvement director who brings broad experience to the role
 - Senior on-site nursing support, focusing on professional standards, nursing engagement, roles, responsibilities and accountability
 - A dedicated maternity programme lead with the specific remit of supporting the Ockenden review and to enable lessons to be learned rapidly and effectively
 - A Financial Improvement Director to provide financial governance support to the Director of Finance