

Final Integrated Annual Operational Plan for United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust (ULHT)

We are proud to provide our first Integrated Annual Operational Plan for ULHT. The Plan outlines how the vision for the Trust will be delivered, with a clear focus on how we will strive for sustainable improvement in safer and better quality patient care.

In my first couple of months we have been busy meeting and spending time with patients, staff, volunteers and key stakeholders, and their feedback has helped shape our priorities, which will shape the future of our services to meet patients' needs and expectations.

We have welcomed our New Chair, Dean Fathers, who shares our ambition for the Trust to develop the potential to become a national, if not international, Centre for Rural Health and Care, and we will be working with our health and care partners, together with stakeholders in the wider community, including our local businesses, regional developments, universities and schools to build a reputation which reflects this ambition.

Our services need to be delivered by skilled and dedicated staff. We have been working hard to recruit and retain staff, but face national and local shortages of key skills, and need to make Lincolnshire a place of choice, a place where people choose to live and work, so that we do not have to rely on agency staff to meet our staffing shortfalls, which significantly impacts on cost and sustainability of our services.

We also recognise that one of our biggest challenges is our financial position, but whilst we are tightening our controls around the deficit for 2015/16 of £56.9 million, we are confirming our share of the national Sustainability and Transformation Fund of £16.1 million and looking forward, we are setting our 2016/17 planning around a challenging deficit of £47.9 million.

The national Sustainability and Transformation Fund offers us a great opportunity to not only reduce our deficit next year but to improve services to our patients. We want to harness this momentum through a five year Medium Term Plan, which will set out our priorities to increase the Trust's pace to improve our capacity and capability to meet our financial, operational and clinical challenges. We will grasp this opportunity to design and deliver new approaches to service delivery with our Health and Care partners which will support Lincolnshire's five year Sustainability Transformation Plan.

As part of the Clinical Strategy process we will be working closely with our colleagues at Lincolnshire Health and Care (LHAC), to run consultation later this year to seek public opinion on options for redesigning services. There will be public consultation on opportunities including working in our communities to deliver non-acute services for elderly people through co-location and integrated locality working with our GPs and health care partners. These opportunities will also allow us to focus on improving our estates, improving our built environment and maintenance.

We look forward to delivering this plan and celebrating our successes over the coming months.