The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn
NHS Foundation Trust

Meeting:	Board of Directors (in public)		
Meeting Date:	7 April 2021	**Agenda item:**	17
Report Title:	COVID-19 update		
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Executive Sponsor:	Denise Smith, Chief Operating Officer		

Implications

Link to key strategic objectives
[highlight which KSO(s) this recommendation aims to support]

KSO1	KSO2	KSO3	KSO4	KSO5	KSO6
Safe and compassionate care	*Modernise hospital and estate*	***Staff engagement***	***Partnership working, clinical and financial sustainability***	***Healthy lives staff and patients***	*Investing in our staff*

Board assurance framework		
Significant risk register	2699 2703 2708	
	Y/N	If Yes state impact/ implications and mitigation
Quality	Y	Impact: There is a risk that the COVID-19 pandemic will result in the Trust being overwhelmed with an increase in infectious patients experiencing acute respiratory symptoms and requiring admission and/or intensive care. There is also a risk that a significant proportion of staff will experience sickness or be required to self - isolate or commence social distancing and be away from work. This could result in the hospital being unable to safely and effectively manage or isolate infectious patients and deliver its normal services or standards of care. Mitigation: robust emergency planning and governance arrangements
Legal and regulatory		
Financial		

Assurance route

Previously considered by:	Monthly update to Trust Board

Executive summary

Action required: *[highlight **one** only]*	Approval	**Information**	Discussion	Assurance	Review

Purpose of the report:	The purpose of this paper is to provide the Board with an update on the Trust's response to COVID-19 and restoration of elective services.
Summary of Key issues:	As at 29 March 2021, 1688 patients have tested positive for COVID-19. Of these:

	• 5 are inpatients with confirmed COVID-19 • 1014 have been discharged • 495 have died As at 28 March 2021 the Trust has administered 28,574 COVID-19 vaccinations, of these 22,486 are first doses and 6,088 are second doses. As at the end of February 2021, the Trust delivered the following levels of activity compared to February 2020: • 63.5% of new outpatient appointments • 77% of follow up outpatient appointments • 43,5% through main theatres • 51.7% of endoscopy activity • 83.4% of CT and MRI activity
Recommendation:	Trust Board is asked to note the report.
Acronyms	

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Board with an update on the Trust's response to COVID-19 and restoration of elective services.

2. Background

On 25 March 2021 the national incident level for the NHS COVID-19 response reduced from level 4 to level 3. This is in response to the overall cases of COVID-19 in England steadily declining since the peak in demand in late January, with pressures on bed occupancy and critical care reducing accordingly.

3. COVID-19 update

3.1 Operational status

As at 29 March 2021, 1688 patients have tested positive for COVID-19. Of these:

- 5 are inpatients with confirmed COVID-19
- 1,014 have been discharged
- 495 have died

All patients continue to be tested on admission to hospital and these tests are repeated at day 3 and day 6 from admission.

The RED Emergency Department remains in the Day Surgery Unit, together with a RED Same Day Emergency Care Unit. The AMBER Emergency Department remains in the Emergency Department original footprint. There are now 2 wards being used for patients with suspected COVID-19 and for patients who have tested positive for COVID-19. The Sandringham Unit and Endoscopy Suite are GREEN elective areas. The Trust plans to close one winter ward in early April and the second at the end of May.

3.2 COVID-19 related deaths

In February 2021 there were 78 patient deaths from COVID-19 (or within 28 days of a positive COVID-19 swab).

3.3 COVID-19 outbreaks

In the context of COVID-19 an outbreak is nationally defined as two or more positive tests or clinically suspected cases among individuals, i.e. staff and/or patients, in the same ward or department. The Trust has declared 21 outbreaks since 31 October 2020 and, as at 29 March 2021, all have now been closed.

3.4 COVID-19 vaccination

As at 28 March 2021 the Trust has administered 28,574 COVID-19 vaccinations, of these 22,486 are first doses and 6,088 are second doses.

The Trust opened the vaccination centre in Downham Market on 15 March 2021, the centre is open 3 days per week on Mondays, Thursdays, and Sundays.

3.5 Patient Experience

Compassionate visiting arrangements remain in place and the Trust recognises that this can cause increased anxiety as it reduces the opportunity for families and staff to communicate regularly. To address this, the Trust launched a COVID-19 patient helpline on 25 January 2021; this is staffed from 8:30am – 5:00pm during the week and 9:00am – 4:00pm at the weekend. To date the helpline has been receiving an average of 35 calls per day and feedback has been positive.

The Trust has also invested in Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) who provide communication support between patients and their families. There are nine ward-based FLOs (eight whole time equivalents and two undertaking a job share role) recruited to a 12 month fixed-term contract. The roles and responsibilities of the FLOs include relaying messages between families and patients, referring clinical questions to the nurse in charge, assisting with virtual visiting and helping patients to contact their families using their own devices. Over time, the FLOs will supersede the COVID-19 patient helpline.

Children, patients at end of life, vulnerable patients (with mental health problems, learning disabilities or autism) and those living with dementia are welcome to have one daily visitor to support them to have a better experience in hospital. Virtual visiting via handheld devices and daily calls to families remains in place and patients with their own mobile telephones are calling their families independently.

For maternity, one partner is welcome to support at all antenatal appointments, dating and anomaly scans. In addition, women can have one partner with them during labour and birth. We just ask that they wear a mask and if either of them are COVID-19 positive, they must phone ahead for an individual plan to be made.

Patients are permitted to bring a friend or family member to accompany them for cancer diagnostics and clinics or if support is required for those who are children or vulnerable patients (with mental health problems, learning disabilities or autism) and those living with dementia.

3.6 Staff absence

As at 24 March 2021, 25 members of staff were on medical suspension and 49 were on medical suspension- shielding. A further 8 staff were on sick leave with COVID-19 related sickness. Overall, 2.34% of staff were unavailable for work due to COVID-19 related absence

3.7 High risk staff groups, including Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic staff

In line with national guidance, the Trust has undertaken risk assessments for BAME staff, pregnant staff and those staff with high risk underlying health conditions. 99.96% of risk assessments have been completed. Those outstanding risk assessments are for individuals who joined the Trust in February 2021.

3.8 Health and wellbeing

The Trust continues to ensure that staff feel well supported and listened to and regularly promotes the various avenues for doing so, which includes 24/7 Clinical Psychology

Support for staff either working from on site, working from home or shielding, a new PTSD specialist also joined the team in February.

Following on from the National Staff Survey the Trust produced a comprehensive action plan to drive the improvements; adopting a “You Said, We Did” philosophy to demonstrate that staff voices are listened to. In addition, staff are also asked to give feedback through other channels during the year which help identify improvements to the staff experience which also benefit patient experience.

3.10 Staff engagement

The Trust Staff Networks have started to form three clear aims and objectives with underpinning action plans on how they will work to achieve these over the year. The Long Service recognition programme is now running in real time with all members receiving recognition within their anniversary month rather than at the end of the milestone year, this has been received favourably by staff.

Planning is underway for this year’s annual staff awards where three new categories are planned, it is hoped that it will be possible hold a gala dinner again rather than a virtual event.

The staff engagement programme for 2021/22 is currently being finalised and will be shared next month.

3.11 Communication

As national lockdown begins to ease, the Trust will commence communications to staff and the local community around changes to ensure everyone is informed of the Trust plans for operational recovery.

4. COVID-19 Restoration of services

During the second wave of COVID-19 the Trust, in line with guidance, the Trust has minimised the footfall on the hospital site. Clinically urgent elective activity has been maintained during this period and, where clinically appropriate, outpatient appointments have been undertaken virtually by video call or telephone.

4.1 Outpatient activity

In February 2021, the Trust delivered 63.5% of new outpatient appointments and 77% of follow up outpatient appointments compared to the same period last year. During the second wave of COVID-19 the Trust has maintained all clinically urgent outpatient activity, including 2 week wait appointments.

4.2 Day case and main theatre activity

In February 2021, the Trust delivered 43.5% of elective activity through main theatres compared to the same period last year. During the second wave of COVID-19 the Trust has maintained cancer surgery activity.

The Trust did not undertake any elective activity through the Day Surgery Unit in February 2021 as the unit is currently being used as the RED Emergency Department .

4.3 Diagnostic activity

In February 2021, the Trust delivered 51.7% of endoscopy activity and 83.4% of CT and MRI activity. During February, a reduced endoscopy programme was being delivered through the Sandringham Unit while the Endoscopy Unit was being utilised as a GREEN elective surgical area.

5. Recommendation

Trust Board is asked to note the report.