

Cover Sheet

Trust Board Meeting in Public: Wednesday 10 September 2025

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Title: Chief Executive Officer's Report

Status: For Information

History: The content of this report has largely been discussed in other forums, including Board committees, but has been amalgamated for the first time in this report

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Confidential: No

Key Purpose: Performance

Chief Executive Officer's Report

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report outlines the main developments since the last public Board meeting on 9 July, under our four strategic pillars: People, Performance, Patient Care, and Partnerships.

2. People

Trust Board news

- 2.1. I am pleased to inform the Board that [Lisa Hofen has been appointed as our new Chief Estates & Facilities Officer](#). She will be joining OUH on 27 October.
- 2.2. Lisa is currently Director of Infrastructure Delivery at Coventry University and previously spent 20 years working for the University of Oxford in a variety of senior roles including Head of Strategic Facilities Management. Her knowledge and experience will strengthen the Trust Board and provide leadership for our teams working in Estates and Facilities across OUH, including PFI colleagues.
- 2.3. Robert Steele will be Acting Chief Estates & Facilities Officer until Lisa joins us in October.
- 2.4. We look forward to welcoming colleagues who work at OUH Cowley to our next quarterly Meet the Chief Officers engagement event on 16 September.
- 2.5. [Our third Quarterly Recognition event was held on 5 August at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford](#). Invitees included staff nominated for a Monthly Recognition Award, teams and individuals nominated via our Reporting Excellence programme, and colleagues whose long service was recognised. I was joined by Yvonne Christley, our Chief Nursing Officer, and Douglas Graham, Chief Executive Officer of Oxford Hospitals Charity whose generous support makes our staff recognition programme possible.
- 2.6. More than 1,000 staff attended two virtual Q&A sessions in July which I hosted together with Chief Officers to talk through [the Government's new 10 Year Plan for the NHS](#), to discuss what it means for us here at OUH, and how we will refresh our OUH Strategy to align with the national plan.
- 2.7. Over the coming months we will engage with a wide range of stakeholders in order to hear from as many people as possible during our strategy refresh.

Values Based Appraisal window

- 2.8. I am delighted to report that 95.2% of eligible staff (all colleagues except doctors who have a medical appraisal) had an appraisal conversation during this year's window, which was open from 1 April to 14 August. This is the highest appraisal rate that we have achieved at OUH.
- 2.9. Appraisals are a very important opportunity for colleagues to reflect on the last year, celebrate their successes, and plan for the next 12 months. I would like to thank you to everyone for their help, support and commitment to ensure that more than 10,000 staff had a high quality, values based appraisal conversation this year.

Annual Public Meeting

- 2.10. Our Annual Public Meeting takes place on Thursday 18 September in Tingewick Hall at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford – refreshments will be available from 5.30pm and the meeting will start at 6pm.
- 2.11. It will include presentations on the extraordinary story of [a baby 'born twice'](#) by surgeon Mr Hooman Soleymani Majd and on [a new treatment pathway which is enhancing cancer care in OUH's two Emergency Departments](#) by consultant nurse Kay McCallum.
- 2.12. Everyone is welcome to attend – [pre-event registration is available via Eventbrite](#).

Staff awards

- 2.13. Isabel Pallera, a specialist biomedical scientist in the Neuropathology department at OUH, won the Rising Star Award at the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) Awards 2025 on 4 July. [Read Isabel's nomination and the judges' note on the IBMS website – Rising star](#).
- 2.14. The Trust's internal communications campaign in support of the refreshed OUH Staff Recognition programme is shortlisted for the [Institute of Internal Communication \(IoIC\) Awards 2025](#). The Trust will receive an Award of Excellence and is in the running to win the 'Best Employee Experience Programme' category at the IoIC Awards ceremony on 18 September.
- 2.15. [Congratulations to our OPTIN trial team, from the Physiotherapy Research Unit at the NOC, on being shortlisted](#) for the Chief Allied Health Professions Officer's Awards 2025. Winners will be announced on 14 October.
- 2.16. The OUH Rewards Advent Calendar internal communications campaign is shortlisted for the [Healthcare People Management Association \(HPMA\) Excellence in People Awards 2025](#). The Trust is in the running to win the 'Browne Jacobson Award for Excellence in Employee Engagement' category at the HPMA Awards ceremony on 20 November.

- 2.17. Two OUH teams are shortlisted for the *Health Service Journal (HSJ)* Awards 2025 on 20 November – the Spine Awake Surgery Oxford Protocol in the ‘Acute Sector Innovation of the Year’ category and the Oxfordshire Breathlessness Diagnostic Pathway pilot, with a number of partner organisations, in the ‘Modernising Diagnostics Award’ category. [Read more in our news story.](#)

3. Performance

- 3.1. A comprehensive Integrated Performance Report (IPR) is included in the Board papers for this meeting. The IPR sets out how we are performing against the plans we have agreed with NHS England and against national standards more broadly.

Finance

- 3.2. Income and Expenditure (I&E) was a £1m in-month deficit at the end of Month 4 (July), which was £0.2m better than plan.
- 3.3. The plan included a £7m savings requirement in July, as our level of recurrent savings has improved in-month.
- 3.4. Cash was £13.5m at the end of July, £4.6m higher than the previous month and £9.9m higher than planned.

4. Operational Performance

Elective Care

- 4.1. Work continues on reduction of waiting times and a recovery action plan is in place to reduce Referral to Treatment (RTT) times. At the end of July, 175 patients were waiting longer than 65 weeks. All specialities are working to deliver the plan, which includes the delivery of a reduction of patients waiting more than 52 weeks. This includes a real focus on first outpatients appointment for all patients in the patient cohort of 52 week waiting patients, where significant progress has been made to date. This is including, but not limited to, actions including a patient engagement validation exercise for first appointments being undertaken, and overall validation of our total waiting list. Our referral growth compared to the previous year is 2.9% to date.

Urgent and Emergency Care

- 4.2. Our Urgent and Emergency Care performance was 82.1% in July for all types. This exceeds the national target and our planned performance trajectory for the year. This has been supported by the excellent improvement work within our Emergency Departments and in hospital patient flow. Most notably as a result of this work, there has been a reduction in the percentage of patients with a length of stay in ED of over 12 hours to just 1% in July, this is after a specific piece of work to support a zero tolerance to 12 hours for a patient in the department. We are driving further improvements now in using any breaches as an opportunity for thematic review and we have a specific improvement plan for improvements in four-hour access standard for children and young people.

Cancer

- 4.3. Cancer performance against the 28 Day Faster Diagnosis Standard and 62-day combined standard (Month 3 - June) is below the operational plan, by 0.6%. Cancer performance is reported one month in arrears due to a nationally extended reporting period. For August the unvalidated data indicates that 28-day performance is above plan and above standard. Key challenges include capacity for surgery, diagnostics and oncology together with delayed inter-provider transfers. Specific actions taken to improve performance include tumour recovery plans, tumour site specific workshops and pathway mapping against best practice timed pathways, and addressing surgical capacity through theatre reallocation.

5. Patient Care

Successful ‘Super Surgery Day’ at the Horton General Hospital

- 5.1. A total of 15 patients underwent successful day case hernia surgery, all within just nine hours, during a single, high-efficiency theatre list at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury in July.
- 5.2. This ‘Super Surgery Day’ was designed to deliver rapid hernia treatment to a high number of patients, ensuring timely and efficient care. All patients were able to return home on the same day and gave positive feedback about their experience. [The full story is available to read on the Trust website.](#)

OUH performs well in Cancer Patient Experience Survey

- 5.3. Cancer patients have rated the level of care which they received at OUH as 9 out of 10 for the fourth year in row and praised the dignity and respect with which they were treated by staff, according to the [results of the national Cancer Patient Experience Survey which were published in July](#).
- 5.4. The survey asks a variety of questions about people's experience of care, including how involved they feel in decisions about their care, whether the information they are given is easy to understand, and how supported by staff they feel. Thank you to all staff working in Cancer Services who contributed to these encouraging patient survey results.

Patient safety and staff wellbeing prioritised during industrial action

- 5.5. Thank you for the combined effort of colleagues who maintained excellent care and patient safety during the five-day period of industrial action by resident doctors in the last week of July, together with those who supported the preparations, including teams who postponed and rebooked patient appointments. We were able to minimise disruption to our patients while ensuring that all care was safe and appropriate, and maintaining the wellbeing of our staff. However, I would like to apologise to any patients who did experience any disruption to their care during this period.

From addiction to advocacy – a patient story

- 5.6. A former Hepatitis C patient presented her story at the Trust Board meeting in May. She had a long history of substance misuse and drug addiction from a young age, which also led to other issues including brushes with the law and spending time in prison, until in 2019 she decided she wanted to change her life for the better.
- 5.7. Engaging with the charity Turning Point in Oxford and with treatment and support from the OUH community nursing team following her diagnosis, she now volunteers with the Hepatitis C Trust to break down stigma and barriers to people living with addiction accessing services.
- 5.8. Trust Board members were blown away by this powerful testimony and our Communications team have worked with the former patient, whose name has been changed to protect her privacy, to share her story more widely to encourage people to get tested for Hep C. [You can read her story in full on the Trust website](#).

6. Partnerships

Neonatal Transfer service celebrates 10th anniversary

- 6.1. The [Southampton Oxford Neonatal Transfer service \(SONeT\)](#) celebrated its 10th anniversary in July. Staffed by neonatal nurses, doctors, ambulance crews and administrators, SONeT is a joint initiative between the neonatal intensive care units at OUH and at University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust.
- 6.2. In the last 10 years, the team has transferred or supported more than 10,000 newborns across hospital sites in the south.
- 6.3. Thank you to all colleagues who help deliver this valuable service in partnership with clinical teams across the Thames Valley and Wessex regions.

Friends of the Horton support lymphoedema patients at Katharine House

- 6.4. The League of Friends at the Horton General Hospital, also known as Friends of the Horton, recently made a generous donation of £16,000 to lymphoedema care at [Katharine House Hospice](#). This donation has funded two pieces of specialist equipment for the hospice's newly established lymphoedema clinic room, enhancing the quality of care for patients with complex needs, while helping staff to provide care more effectively and efficiently. [Read more on the Trust website.](#)

Spotlight on our partnership with Oxford Hospitals Charity

- 6.5. The benefits of having pleasant outdoor spaces on our hospital sites for patients, visitors and staff to enjoy are clear, and this has been a recent focus for the Oxford Hospitals Charity team.
- 6.6. On the Churchill Hospital site, where many of our cancer services are based, the Jane Ashley Garden has been completely refurbished, with new planting throughout and lots of extra seating areas. The Charity is hosting an evening event on 23 September to celebrate the re-opening of this valuable space which cancer patients and their families are already enjoying.
- 6.7. The Children's Ward at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury has benefited from a magical makeover of its outdoor play area and the Women's Centre at the John Radcliffe Hospital now has a new garden near the entrance. Both new areas are being officially opened this month.
- 6.8. The NOC also has a new green walking route with an accompanying app to help rehab patients on the road to recovery.
- 6.9. A big thank you to Oxford Hospitals Charity for all their support for patients, visitors and staff at OUH.

Oxford Biomedical Research (BRC) News

- 6.10. Oxford researchers have developed the first mathematically supported cellular map of lung tissue in idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) and uncovered [key immune cell interactions](#) that could explain why lungs fail to repair in this deadly disease with no known cure. The study was supported by the Oxford BRC.
- 6.11. A new UK-wide clinical study aimed at transforming liver cancer surveillance in people with cirrhosis has opened to recruitment. The AMULET study, led by the University of Oxford and supported by the Oxford BRC, is [comparing a new MRI technique to standard ultrasound](#) surveillance, in order to improve early detection of liver cancer and patient outcomes. Liver cancer incidence is increasing, with most cases arising in people with liver cirrhosis. While earlier detection means treatment is more likely to be successful, current liver ultrasound has poor sensitivity in some patients, meaning that early cancers can be missed.
- 6.12. An Oxford BRC-supported study has established that different biological mechanisms underlying the common heart disorder atrial fibrillation (AF) result in different characteristics and complications. The most serious complication of AF is stroke, and this research showed how using large-scale genetic data could [improve our understanding of AF](#) and potentially lead to more tailored approaches to treatment of those with irregular heartbeats.
- 6.13. The Alan Davidson Foundation has [renewed its funding](#) for another three years for the ACORN study, which is creating a national register of people with motor neurone disease (MND) and frontotemporal dementia (FTD). The study is led by the Oxford Motor Neurone Disease Centre in the Nuffield Department of Clinical Neurosciences and is supported by the Oxford BRC.
- 6.14. Three OUH nurses have completed the first stage of their clinical academic journey after presenting the findings of their [Oxford BRC internship](#) research projects. This second internship cohort of 2025 was made possible thanks to an additional £170,000 from the NIHR to spend in areas that deserved extra investment. As well as the internship, the BRC launched its [Preparatory Award for a Research Career](#) (PARC) programme with the funding.
- 6.15. The Oxford BRC has published a [profile of Corina Cheeks](#), a member of its Diversity in Research patient and public involvement and engagement group and a patient and public representative on the BRC's Steering Committee, its main governance and oversight body.

Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley news

- 6.16. The Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley (HIOTV) [2024/25 impact report](#) demonstrates the organisation's contribution with partners to improving health and wealth.
- 6.17. More than 10,000 NHS patients and in excess of 2,500 NHS staff benefited from HIOTV initiatives during the year.
- 6.18. The report features case studies illustrating HIOTV support in finding, testing, and implementing innovations. These include a number of examples with strong OUH input, notably relating to improvements in stroke care, hospital at home, and preterm births.

Recommendations

- 6.19. The Trust Board is asked to:
- Note the report.