Dear Mrs Gardner

Feedback from the Sharing Intelligence for Health & Care Group – Golden Jubilee National Hospital

The Sharing Intelligence for Health & Care Group (referred to as ‘the Group’) considered the Golden Jubilee National Hospital at our meeting on 14 June 2021, as part of our routine annual programme of work. We are writing now to summarise the main points we discussed collectively as seven national organisations.¹

First, we would like to thank colleagues from the Golden Jubilee National Hospital for their tremendous efforts in the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We know that the pandemic will continue to cause enormous challenges for front line services for some time to come, and there will be an impact on those heavily involved in the COVID-19 response even once the current challenges recede.

The pandemic has also impacted on the work programmes of the seven national organisations on the Group, and in doing so on some of the intelligence that is available to us. We are, however, continuing to share and consider intelligence regularly – as this helps us identify things that are working well, and also any emerging problems which can then be acted upon. The remit of the Group does not,  

¹ The Sharing Intelligence for Health & Care Group is a partnership involving: Audit Scotland; Care Inspectorate; Healthcare Improvement Scotland; Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland; NHS Education for Scotland; Public Health Scotland, and: Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.
however, extend to making a comprehensive, system-wide assessment of the quality of care. The intelligence we considered on 14 June should already be known to the Golden Jubilee National Hospital, including a range of information which is already in the public domain. This is somewhat different to the information we look at for territorial NHS boards, reflecting the hospital’s unique position in Scotland.

Golden Jubilee National Hospital

When we considered the Golden Jubilee National Hospital on 14 June 2021, the partner agencies on the Group found it helpful to learn from each other about various aspects of your NHS board. This will help inform the work we carry out as national organisations. The Group agreed that, at this time, there are no actions beyond any already planned that any of the seven national agencies need to take.

We learned that, over the past year, the Golden Jubilee National Hospital’s core work programme has changed significantly, including the implementation of your COVID-19 Remobilisation Plan and also progress with the Hospital Expansion Programme. We note that your Remobilisation Plan describes how you will resume elective surgery, and the Golden Jubilee National Hospital is also a national resource to accelerate recovery in urgent cancer diagnostics and surgery, cardiothoracic services and high volume elective orthopaedics and ophthalmology. Audit Scotland explained that phase 1 of the expansion programme (ophthalmology elective care capacity) is complete, and work continues on phase 2 (orthopaedic and other elective surgery unit) which is expected to be completed towards the end of 2022. Your NHS board’s services have also expanded with the establishment of the NHS Scotland Academy and Centre for Sustainable Delivery.

Audit Scotland informed the Group that the Golden Jubilee National Hospital has appropriate arrangements in place to manage your finances and use of resources, including consideration of financial sustainability in partnership with other national and regional NHS boards. We learned that the unaudited annual accounts for 2020/21 report that the Golden Jubilee National Hospital met all three key financial targets. We noted your financial plan, covering the three years from 2020/21, forecasts a breakeven position across each of the three years. This is dependent on the realisation of a savings plan which your Board has recognised will be challenging over the coming years, eg challenges in achieving recurring savings, and also related to the response to COVID-19.

NHS Education for Scotland explained that your consultant vacancy rate is higher than the Scottish average, with vacancies highest in anaesthetics, ophthalmology, and clinical radiology. We also learned that there has been an increase in your costs for medical locum and nursing bank and agency staff. We note that workforce figures should be considered in the context of changes to workforce at the hospital, eg for the expansion of services. Healthcare Improvement Scotland highlighted that strategic planning by the Golden Jubilee National Hospital has included assessing safe staffing levels and all elements of the Common Staffing Method. This will provide important baseline information of staffing levels, which is particularly important given the expansion of your clinical services.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland’s Community Engagement function highlighted that the Golden Jubilee National Hospital has a positive approach to engaging, recruiting and retaining volunteers. New volunteer roles have been created and established during COVID-19 to support the launch and delivery of the Eye Centre. There is an ongoing need to engage with the public about the expansion of the hospital and about existing services.

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman identified the clear reporting of public service complaints performance data within your Board’s papers, and noted the importance of the provision of whistleblowing performance data going forwards in line with the new Independent National Whistleblowing Officer Standards regarding reporting.
We hope you find this summary of our discussions helpful, and we would be grateful if you share this letter with the Board of the Golden Jubilee National Hospital. We will also welcome your feedback on how we can improve how we share and use intelligence as a Group, including how this can be of greatest value to the Golden Jubilee National Hospital.

Yours sincerely

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