

## Emergency care

Looking at Watford as a single site our current year to date performance is 96.3%. Although ahead of the national standard of 95% this cannot be considered by the Board as a resilient position going in to the winter months. The November position up to and including the 13<sup>th</sup> November is 98.4%, October saw Watford deliver 96.9%.

Quarter 3 to date has shown improvement in delivery of this standard, which as Board members will be aware, is a good proxy for patients and staff experience. In terms of action taken to address weakness at Watford (93.5% delivered full year last year), I am able to report the following:

The temporary Clinical Decision Unit opened at the beginning of October. It is working well.

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Weekend discharge rounds led by Consultant Physicians started at the end of August.

Additional middle grade support is now in place in the A and E department from midnight to 8.00 am.

Process change has been introduced in the A and E department including pit stopping and clear roles and responsibilities for the shift leader. Pit stopping involves the senior consultant reviewing all attendances at the department, including both majors and minors and directing junior medical staff in establishing treatment plans.

Utilisation of all bed capacity at the Watford site including both cath lab and Elizabeth Ward has improved although emergency pressure has resulted in increased rates of cancellation in the cath lab. The impact will be reported later. The surge ward is scheduled to open on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December and this will represent a significant improvement in our operational capacity at Watford.

It is clear that the actions outlined above are improving performance. Looking at quarter 3 in closer detail, in October 2011 we reported a total of 209 breaches of the standard, delivering 96.9% against a performance of 356 breaches, resulting in a performance of 94.6% in October 2010. This should be seen against a backdrop of increased volumes of emergency admissions in October.

In November up to and including Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup>, we have reported 60 breaches of the standard, delivering performance in November of 98.4%. In November 2010 there were a total of 336 breaches of the standard, with performance at 94.6%.

In summary, Watford had already failed the monthly standard four times up to and including November 2010. We have not failed the standard in any month thus far this year.

Looking back at last year, the Trust failed the standard in all remaining months of 2010/11.

We are seeing evidence of increased admissions as we enter the peak winter months, along with sustained high levels of occupancy on ITU. This pressure seems to be arriving earlier than it did last

year and is occurring without us having experienced any particular challenges in relation to either the weather or H1N1.

I believe that the improved performance in relation to the emergency pathway at Watford General Hospital that we can demonstrated so far this year equates directly to an improved experience for both patients and staff. We await the formal report following the unannounced visit to A and E by the CQC and will be submitting an action plan to the Deanery on the 10<sup>th</sup> December.