

In July, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) announced that our Trust would be one of the first to be visited as part its new inspection programme. As you know, this visit is taking place now and will be followed by unannounced visits within the next few weeks.

Yesterday the CQC also revealed the results of its new intelligent monitoring system which looks at a range of indicators to establish which areas it needs to focus on when carrying out inspections.

The indicators are used to raise questions, not to make judgements about the quality of care.

The CQC has grouped all NHS trusts in England into six bands based on the risk that people may not be receiving safe, effective, high quality care - with band one being the highest risk and band six the lowest. Our Trust has been grouped in band one based on mortality indicators.

Firstly we would like to stress that the overall level of mortality observed in our Trust is within the expected range. There have been six mortality areas that have been flagged by the CQC as an 'elevated risk':

- congestive heart failure; non hypertensive
- acute cerebrovascular disease
- senility and organic mental disorders
- chronic renal failure
- some neurological conditions
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and bronchiectasis

Detailed reviews of these conditions that we have undertaken have not given us any cause for concern and have included some data anomalies. The issues raised by the GMC in relation to support provided to doctors in training have also all been actioned and we anticipate the CQC reflecting this in a revised assessment of our Trust.

While areas of risk have been identified, our patients should be reassured we are a very safe hospital trust with many outstanding services that receive strong and supportive patient feedback. We are continually investing and improving the care we provide. Recent investments include additional nursing and medical staff across a variety of wards and clinical areas. A new ward-based electronic alert system for acutely ill patients is also being rolled out.

The CQC is currently inspecting our Trust and we welcome this visit and look forward to showing the inspectors around the services we provide. We are always striving to provide an even better experience for our patients so the inspection is an opportunity to work with the CQC and to learn and improve even further.

Tony Spotswood
Chief Executive

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Director of Nursing

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