

NHS Orkney Board Chair

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Professor Craig White
Divisional Clinical Lead
Via email: craig.white@gov.scot

Date: 13 September 2018
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Dear Professor White,

In her letter of the 5th of September 2018, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport enquires about the NHS Boards Governance Assurance Mechanisms in the context of the BBC disclosure Programme 'Harmed by my Surgeon'.

NHS Orkney is a very small Board with a 3 WTE General Surgical service (however the establishment has not been achieved for some time), a 2.41 WTE Obstetrics/Gynaecology service, and a 0.22 WTE Orthopaedics surgical service.

Our Governance arrangements are outlined in our 'Learning from Clinical Practice' Policy. The relevant aspects of this policy are outlined below under the headings in the Cabinet Secretary's letter:

NHS Complaints

- A weekly incident management meeting takes place every Tuesday with Medical Director and Nursing Director present. At this meeting new complaints are triangulated with clinical incident reporting, and medical litigation. The meeting aims to support the handling complaints and clinical incidents as reported on DATIX, and identify trends, including recurrent incidents relating to an individual clinical practitioner. The level of review for each complaint/incident is determined at this meeting and a timescale agreed for the review to be completed. For Category one incidents (SAE) this is usually between one and three months.
- If there is reason for concern about the practice of an individual Consultant, the clinical incident management meeting will make a judgement as to whether the Consultant should be suspended from (part of) their practice pending a review. The timescale for this should be within a week of any incident.

Surgical safety and M&M reviews

- Standard Operating Procedures are in place in theatres to ensure reliable delivery of pre-operative marking. The effectiveness of this process is reviewed by the theatre management team on a regular basis.
- The monitoring of surgical workloads, and list length is monitored by the general manager of the hospital sector in consultation with the clinical lead. The equipment in theatres is reviewed by the lead nurse for theatres in consultation with the consultant staff.



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Orkney NHS Board Headquarters:
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Kirkwall, Orkney KW15 1BQ

Chair: Ian Kinniburgh
Interim Chief Executive: Gerry O'Brien



- Every Wednesday morning 8am, a M&M meeting takes place where cases from across the hospital are presented. Surgical cases are presented here in consultation with the weekly clinical incident meeting. The meeting is invariably attended by all surgical consultant staff.
- The arrangement and effectiveness of on-call rotas are reviewed regularly by the general manager of the hospital in consultation with the clinical lead.

Supervision of junior medical staff

- Junior staff in Balfour hospital work across general medical and surgical specialties. The oversight of their supervision rests with a General Medical Consultant and a substantive middle grade doctor in consultation with the surgical Consultants. Handover of patients takes place every morning and every evening in the presence of all junior staff with Consultant medical and surgical staff.

Openness and Transparency

- The requirements for duty of candour are integrated in the NHS Orkney 'Learning from Clinical Practice' policy. The requirements relating to openness and transparency relating to incidents and complaints are considered when they present at the weekly clinical incident management meeting.
- The outcomes of the process of clinical incident management and review are reported to the NHS Orkney management and clinical governance structure. A direct report of the weekly clinical incident management meeting is submitted to the Chief Executive. The outcome of reviews, recommendations and actions are considered at the monthly NHS Orkney Quality and Safety Group which is chaired by the Chief Executive.

We hope that our response covers the nature and scope of your request in your letter 5/9/2018. If you have any queries do not hesitate to get back to us.

Yours sincerely



Ian Kinniburgh
Chair: NHS Orkney