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Introduction

Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) was formed on 1 April 2017 following the merger of South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (SEPT) and North Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (NEP). The new Trust provides community health services and mental health and learning disability services for a population of approx. 2.5 million people in parts of Bedfordshire, Suffolk, Essex and Luton.

The purpose of this Summary Operational Plan document is to outline our key areas of delivery for 2018/19 which form part of our five year organisational strategy.

The strategy was produced pre-merger with input from the interim Board of Directors, the Trust’s Leadership Team, health economy partners and the Council of Governors (CoG). In addition, a number of economy wide discussions have been held with partners at Board and Executive level on the delivery of the Five Year Forward View and system wide Sustainability and Transformational Partnerships (STPs).

Each year to shape our Operational Plan a stakeholder planning event is held. Those in attendance include commissioners, representatives from statutory and voluntary partners, staff, governors and service users and carers. We also gain feedback from the public through our ‘Your Voice’ meetings and internally through engagement activities with our staff.

Over the next year we will continue to face challenges as we respond to the Five Year Forward View including the supporting of four STPs. However, our focus is always on our patients, who are at the very heart of all that we do, our workforce of over 5000, and volunteers who work hard to deliver safe, high quality services within the NHS to the population we serve.

Our ambition to provide high quality services to the population we serve. Our vision is therefore:

‘Working to improve lives’

We will do this through living our values of:

Compassionate  Empowering  Open

As a new organisation we have four strategic objectives to support the delivery of our vision. A summary of the Trust’s vision, values and strategic objectives is shown in Figure 1.
Each year our Board will review the values to ensure they remain valid, connected to our vision, and the behaviours we expect all our employees to exhibit in everything they do.

To support the achievement of our strategic objectives detailed in figure 1:

- continuously improve patient safety, experiences and outcomes.
- attract, develop, enable and retain high performers.
- co-design and co-produce service improvement and quality.
- top 25% performance for operational, financial and productivity measures.

The Trust has in place a number of strategies underpinned by enabling frameworks, figure 2 details these. In addition to the 7 strategies and 16 frameworks the Trust sets stretching corporate objectives, which are then supported by directorate objectives, team and personal objectives set during employee appraisals.
Quality

EPUTs approach to quality is firmly aligned to the quality governance framework principles as detailed in figure 3.

Figure 3 Quality Governance Framework

At EPUT we aspire to provide care of the highest quality, in collaboration with those who use our services. As a result quality has been embedded as a key driver in each of the four strategic priorities for the Trust. Safety, patient experience and effectiveness are themes that run through each of them and are articulated in our annual objectives for 2018/19.

The first of our strategies to be developed and ratified by Trust Board was our Quality Strategy. This illustrates the Trust’s commitment to providing high quality services that meet our patients’ needs.

EPUT’s three year Quality Strategy ‘Looking forward together’, has been developed to align with our strategic objectives, corporate objectives, vision, values and the CQC’s five domains of safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led. Through further development of our Quality Academy we will embrace and embed a culture of continuous improvement and learning where every member of staff has the confidence and skills to champion and deliver outstanding care.

We have identified the following quality priorities for 2018/19:

- implementation of a new mental health clinical model
- continued reduction in harm
- record keeping and care planning
- mortality review processes
- using technology
- standardisation and reducing variation.

EPUT has in place well established mechanisms to ensure that continuous improvement in quality is achieved. This includes:

- the identification, sharing and delivery of best practice; and
- the identification of any lessons learned from incidents / feedback and ensuring that appropriate actions are taken to address these and to share that learning across the organisation.
Our workforce is key to delivering our strategic priorities an achieving EPUT’s vision of ‘Working to improve lives’. We want our staff to share the values and belief systems that engenders trust from our patients and their carers.

To support our ongoing cultural work have developed a HR and Workforce Framework, and Organisational Development (OD) Framework as detailed in Figure 2 which support the delivery of the Trust’s Engagement Strategy. At EPUT we recognise that every interaction we have is an engagement opportunity, and an opportunity to live our values. Without clear, meaningful, fair and equitable engagement with our stakeholders including our workforce we cannot achieve our 4 strategic objectives and therefore our vision of ‘Working to improve lives’ and live our values of ‘Open, Compassionate and Empowering’.

The frameworks will include priorities on Trust leadership and capabilities from Board to Base ensuring the organisation is well led.
Our key aims for our workforce are to:

- Sustain and enhance our reputation as a recognised employer of choice so that we attract and recruit to meet our workforce needs.
- Retain a compassionate, expert workforce that is proud to work at EPUT and feels developed and supported to make decisions, innovate and improve the lives of our patients and each other.
- Enable change through innovation, transformation and productivity improvement to secure a stable future.
- Improve and maintain learning, leadership and development to continually enhance opportunities for staff to progress their careers and further develop their skills to develop capabilities and build capacity for the new organisation to be able to deliver its objectives.
- Maintain a high level of staff satisfaction through trained, supported, healthy, resilient and diverse workforce. This work includes taking forward the actions required from the Workplace Race Equality Standards (WRES).
- To be a high performing organisation.

The Trust has an experienced and skilled workforce but in common with other health and social care organisations, is facing challenges in terms of recruitment and retention. To assist in addressing this, the Trust continues to be part of NHS Improvement’s second wave retention pilot and has drawn up an implementation plan as part of the overall strategy. This includes a number of new or revised initiatives:

- Improved preceptorship support and training.
- Develop mentoring / coaching for all professions.
- Increased support for students and earlier introduction to employment opportunities
- Recruitment ‘open days’ across Trust sites.
- Develop and implement guidelines on career development, retire and return, flexible working, absence management and raise awareness.
- Introduce new benefits/initiatives for staff to access, raise awareness and centralise access.
- Improve the experience for all new starters.
- Improved staff engagement.
- Develop new recruitment branding and streamline processes to reduce engagement timescales.
- Improve our national staff survey scores for bullying and harassment.
- Reduce our turnover, vacancy and sickness absence rates.

The Trust continues to do all it can to reduce spend on agency staff and reduce the number of vacancies Trust wide. We are working with both local universities to increase recruitment and are planning to extend our in house “work based learning” nurse training programme and “Grow our own” with closer links with the apprenticeship scheme. We will continue to develop innovative solutions to attract new employees, making the best use of technology and social media/marketing techniques in areas where we have hard to fill positions.
The merger of former NEP and SEPT to create EPUT supports the direction of travel recommended by the Essex Strategic Review of Mental Health Services and is also in line with Delivering the Forward View and the Mid and South Essex STP. Our combined clinical expertise, local understanding and existing partnerships makes us best placed to contribute to the transformation of the wider health systems in the areas we serve.

Our drive to ensure quality patient services must be undertaken in conjunction with our finances. The Trust is forecasting an income of £332.2m in 2018/19. NHS Services are facing a continuing year of significant financial pressures requiring efficiencies to be delivered across health economies. The EPUT plan for 2017/18 is forecasting an income and expenditure deficit of £2.73m.

To support a reduction in the forecasted deficit the Trust has a number of transformational programmes in place. In addition, the strategies and frameworks detailed in Figure 2 will drive efficiencies and enable us to attain new contracts in 2018/19.
EPUT recognises the need to engage with our partners to provide the best possible service to our patients. As detailed the Trust has in place an Engagement Strategy which sets out how we will engage with our stakeholders. This strategy is underpinned by a range of frameworks including our Patient Experience and Carers frameworks which focus on our patients’ and carers’ experience whilst involved in our services.

Integrated working with our partners in health, local authorities and the third sector is crucial to meet national targets set, and to achieve a truly integrated service.

We have been working with our partners to produce STPs in our four planning localities, helping to decide the best service model going forward for each locality. This work will continue in 2018/19 when the STP plans are executed by locality.

As a Trust we have robust mechanisms in place to ensure our stakeholders are involved during our planning cycle and then throughout the year in different forums.
Patient Experience Team
If you have any concerns or need advice about accessing NHS services, you can speak in confidence to the Patient Experience Team on 0800 085 7935 or you can email epunft.pals@nhs.net

This leaflet can be produced in large print, CD, Braille and other languages on request.

Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust regards equality and diversity as integral to the way it works. Our staff will ensure that everyone is treated fairly and no one is discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

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