

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--|-------------|----------------------------|
| Report Title: | Gold update on COVID-19 | | |
| Sponsoring Executive: | Liam Kennedy – Chief Operating Officer | | |
| Report Author: | Liam Kennedy – Chief Operating Officer Mel Roberts – Chief Nursing Officer Frieza Mahmood – Chief People Officer | | |
| Meeting: | Public Trust Board | Date | 6 th April 2022 |

1. Suggested discussion points *[two or three issues you consider the Committee should focus on]*

The Report covers the current Covid position in the organisation and highlights any changes in IPC regulations since the last update.

The report also note's the progress and plans to reset the flow in the organisation as part of a reset programme moving into 22/23 financial year.

The report highlights the position on Vaccination as a Condition of Deployment (VCOD) and the latest position in terms of the regulation.

The recommendation is for this paper to only come to Quality & Safety Committee (Q&S) and Trust Board moving forward when there is any significant change in working practice and that the management of Covid-19 and the corresponding Infection Prevention Control (IPC) be managed through the Trust Strategic structure.

2. Alignment to our Vision *[indicate with an 'X' which Strategic Objective this paper supports]*

| Our Patients | X | Our People | X | Our Population | X |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| To be good or outstanding in everything that we do | X | To cultivate and sustain happy, productive and engaged staff | X | To work seamlessly with our partners to improve lives | X |

3. Previous consideration *[where has this paper been previously discussed?]*

CLE, Q&S March 2022

4. Recommendation(s)

The Board is asked to:

- a. **DISCUSS** the content of the report
- b. **CHALLENGE** and **ACCEPT** the changes in IPC
- c. **NOTE** the VCOD policy update
- d. **APPROVE** the removal of the standard agenda item around Covid 19

5. Impact *[indicate with an 'X' which governance initiatives this matter relates to and where shown elaborate]*

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|---|---|-----------------------|--|
| Trust Risk Register | X | | | | |
| Board Assurance Framework | | | | | |
| Equality Impact Assessment | Is this required? | Y | N | If 'Y' date completed | |
| Quality Impact Assessment | Is this required? | Y | N | If 'Y' date completed | |

SANDWELL AND WEST BIRMINGHAM NHS TRUST
Report to the Trust Board April 2022
Gold update on COVID-19 position

1. Community infection Rate

1.1 The community infection rate has seen a small increase again, as expected following the relaxation of national regulations. We will monitor this closely, but has not had a material impact on the hospital admission trend.

2. Inpatients

2.1 We now have fewer than 50 Covid patients in the organisation. This has allowed us to start the reset programme in terms of our wards, which is outlined below:

- D17 our Covid respiratory ward has been cleaned and restored as a non-Covid ward, but with areas to house Covid patients
- Lyndon 2 our surgical ward that has been accommodating medical patients, this has now been emptied and cleaned and returned as a surgical ward to support our elective recovery programme
- Newton 5 our Sandwell Covid ward area is being emptied and will be cleaned and returned as an Acute Medical Unit (AMU) short stay ward by the end of March, in line with the model for MMUH.
- The above increased capacity allows our temporary ward on N1 at Sandwell to be closed and creates the space for our discharge lounge. This sequence will also create medical capacity to focus on Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC).

2.2 The overall reset programme will be concluded by the end of April, with the exception of returning our ED departments back to pre Covid, options are being explored to remove the dual streaming, but it may take some time. This will bring about increase flow and enhanced safety for our patients

3. IPC changes

3.1 We have implemented an infection control return to business as usual road map which has included:-

- Reopening to visiting on March 2nd,
- Reintroduction of face to face meetings from mid-march strictly following the room rules in relation to the number of people safely allowed in any room.
- The move from LAMP testing which we are no longer able to access nationally to lateral flow tests twice weekly
- Return to using surgical face masks unless undertaking a aerosol generating procedure
- Reset programme as above

- 3.2 The 1 metre social distancing rule remains, as does mask wearing for patients both inpatients and outpatients and any visitors to the Trust. We are expecting further infection control guidance in April 2022
- 3.3 National guidance for reintroducing visiting was received March 4th 2022. We undertook a comparison against our visiting rules and those of the national guidance (included within annex 1) and due to our environment, the number of patients that still remain in hospital with COVID and community cases slowly increasing we have made the decision via strategic command to remain with our own visiting guidance other than stopping lateral flow tests for visitors until the end of March 2022 and then review.

4. Workforce cell

- 4.1 The Workforce Hub that has continued to ensure daily follow up of Covid related and other sickness absence, which has successfully reduced our absence rate down to 6.6% at the time of writing, from a peak of 13% with our average rate in recent weeks being maintained at 6.4%. We are targeting reducing this to 6% by 31st March 2022.
- 4.2 The Workforce Hub has also continued to support the coordination of staff vaccination efforts linked to the Vaccination as a Condition of Deployment requirements (VCOD) legislation, which was anticipated to become law with effect from 1st April 2022. However, following a recent Health Secretary announcement, The Department of Health and Social Care are now revoked the legislation.
- 4.4 Despite the above change we continue to promote and encourage staff vaccination as a means of supporting the wider public health agenda. This includes targeting communications for staff who are anxious about taking up the vaccine, by providing them with bespoke health advice sessions e.g. on the clinical safety of the vaccine. The current number of staff who are fully vaccinated is 86% with partially vaccinated at 91%.

5. Place Vaccination Programme

- 5.1 The 12-15 year old programme at schools continues and will be completed by the end of March. We are undertaking this programme on behalf of both Sandwell and Dudley Place.
- 5.2 The 5-11 year old clinically vulnerable programme has commenced. Tipton has developed an area just for this group of children and named it "Vaccination Street". This has gained national interest and we have been asked to present across the work on national webinars.
- 5.3 We have also attended a national government meeting to present as a partnership the vaccination work we have implemented in Sandwell with vulnerable patients such as care homes, housebound and the pop up clinics.

6. Recommendations

6.1 The Board is asked to:

- a) **DISCUSS** the content of the report
- b) **CHALLENGE** and **ACCEPT** the changes in IPC
- c) **NOTE** the **VCOD** policy update
- d) **APPROVE** the removal of the standard agenda item around Covid-19

Liam Kennedy
Chief Operating Officer

Melanie Roberts
Chief Nurse

March 2022

Annex 1: National Guidance on visiting compassion