

Chair's Report to the Forest of Dean Health Forum 2021 AGM 051021

Covid - 19 has continued have a fall out effect on meetings, reducing them to Teams or Zoom affairs.

Health Forum meetings began (Zoom) again, in July and the Forum is very appreciative of the assistance of Nick Penny, Mayor of Coleford, and the town council, for enabling these meetings to take place.

As chair my thanks go to secretary, Linda Vaughan, treasurer, Jim Spiers and to all the committee member for their support plus to all those Forum members who have Zoomed in.

Throughout the year I have attended a wide range of meetings, A&E Delivery Board, Blood Transfusion Committee, Integrated Locality Partnership (ILP), Forest Connectors and the Health Forum. Recently there have been Gloucestershire Health Care (GH-C) and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) annual meetings and a meeting of the GH-C Board to approve the business case for the new Forest community hospital.

The CCG closes at the end of March, to be replaced by an Integrated Care Systems Board (ICS) from April 1st. The chair is Dame Gill Morgan and it is expected a CEO will be in place very soon.

The Forum has held two meetings, so far in 2021 and a number of committee meetings.

Caroline Smith, CCG and Jackie Jenkins GH-C Community manager for the Forest gave us their up dates relating to the Forest. Bren McInerney, local and national community 'Action Man', popped up to give a flavour of his forthcoming September visit to the Forum.

In September he told members about his lay role in the developing national Community Nursing Plan and the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) Five Year Strategy 2021-26 aiming for a more patient centred approach.

The committee held a number of meetings and discussed concerns relating to variations in access to GPs, vaccinations, cross border patients transport and community services. A prime ongoing concern to the committee is the continuance of care in the South Forest following the hospital closure.

The ILP got going again in July with a new, local government chair, Philippa Lowe. Strong evidence was offered, verbally to suggest partnership working was effective. At its second meeting in September Terms of Reference (ToRs) were discussed and their implications for the shaping of care in the Forest.

At this meeting I robustly raised concerns about the perceived continuance of care gap set to occur in the South Forest when the community hospitals close and a new Medical Centre is awaited.

There has been increasing pressure across the acutes sector as Covid had a significant effect on capacity. Ambulance handovers have been delayed, discharges delayed. All the partner agencies have made valiant efforts to mitigate the difficulties with a strong degree of cooperation and collaboration.

An interesting dichotomy is developing throughout all of this between healthcare and public health prompting thoughts on priorities. Two themes arise, Treat and Prevent, where and how will they interface? Public Health Management (PHM) is very much coming to the fore. A developing clinical tool CINAPSIS is increasingly available to GPs to obtain rapid contact with consultants and accurx allows the transmission digital data such as x rays to be flashed to a waiting doctor.

The Blood Trans Fusion Committee has a new manager, Stuart Lord and he has swiftly made a significant impact.

Forest Connectors has established itself as a dynamic, valuable local resource hub.

Albert Weager Chair 051021