

**Report to Trust Board – 29<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

Title	Health Records Update
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Purpose	(a) To update the Board on progress around the action plan relating to our health records service (b) To brief the Board on initial thoughts relating to future plans for the service.
Previously considered by	NA

**Executive summary**

### **1.0 Introduction**

This paper provides a briefing to Board members regarding the health records action plan and the next steps being taken to explore future strategies for the service by investigating the costs/benefits of a paperless health records service.

### **2.0 Background**

An action plan was created to deal with a range of issues facing the service that included:

- Tackling health and safety concerns within record stores
- The need for updated standard operating procedures
- The need for comprehensive staff training to assist implementation of new procedures and policies
- The lack of appropriate notes tracking and open access to record libraries
- The lack of storage capacity in the short term as a result of an ineffective record retention policy.

In addition to these issues above, the Trust was given six months notice in March 2012 on its Hortonwood records store and reconfiguration plans at the Princess Royal Hospital site have necessitated the relocation of both clinic preparation facilities and a part of the health records library.

### **3.0 Current position**

With the exception of creating storage capacity for the medium and longer term all actions have now been completed following the move of clinic preparation and part of the health records store at the Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) site on 18<sup>th</sup> November. The completion of these actions has created a stable service that is now in a position to look to the future to explore further improvement plans.

**4.0 Next steps**

The challenges for the service over the next two years and beyond relate to storage capacity and improving access to the records.

Firstly when the new Women’s and Children’s facility is completed at the PRH site there is a need to identify storage space to transfer notes from the RSH site in 2014. The health records team are therefore exploring options to reduce the number of records stored at the Queensway site to make capacity for the maternity records. Agreement on an approach to deal with this issue will be finalised early in the new calendar year to allow sufficient time to complete the key tasks ahead of 2014.

Secondly and more generally the Trust needs a plan that future proofs the service. Although recent changes have allowed for a certain level of growth, the number of records created each year will, in the medium term (2 years), outstrip our capacity. We therefore need a new strategy and consequently work has begun to put together a case for the digitisation of our records that not only deals with the storage issues but also has the potential to improve clinical access to records and deliver efficiency gains. An outline case will be shared in due course with Board that will set out the longer term plans for the service and include options ranging from simple electronic scanning to an electronic patient record. This work stream is being led by the Director of Finance and Associate Director of Estates and Facilities.

**5.0 Conclusions**

A significant level of improvement has taken place over the last 10 months to ensure the Trust has a fit for purpose health records service. However there are risks that remain to be resolved relating to future storage requirements that need a more radical solution. With this in mind an outline business case is being drawn that will obviously be shared with the Board early in the new calendar year.

Related SATH objectives	SATH Sub-objectives
<p><i>A., Financial Strength: We will develop and deliver robust plans that generate surpluses to reinvest in quality</i></p> <p><i>C. Quality and Safety: We will always provide the right care for our patients</i></p>	A4, C2, C3

Risk and assurance issues	Non-compliance of government standards around the storage and retention of health records.
Equality and diversity issues	
Legal and regulatory issues	Adoption of best practice in relation to the scanning and storage of health records. Data Protection Act 1998

<b>Action required by the Trust Board</b>
<b>To receive</b> the update on progress to complete objectives set out in the agreed action plan and <b>to note</b> the newly commissioned work to create a longer term plan for health records management.