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Following an inspection in May 2013, the CQC returned in October 2013 to review the Trust's progress against the requirements to meet essential standards, in particular those related to:

- Respecting and involving people who use services
- Care and welfare of people who use services
- Cleanliness and infection control
- Management of medicines
- Safety and suitability of premises
- Safety, availability and suitability of equipment
- Staffing
- Assessing and monitoring the quality of service provision
- Records

The CQC found that we had made significant improvements in some areas and that many of our wards were well led and managed. They remained concerned about 3 wards, noted the hospital was in need of refurbishment and redecoration, and felt the standards of cleanliness were still not at the level required. In addition whilst standards of basic care were improved there were still some incidents where care fell below acceptable norms.

Because of remaining concerns in all the standards the CQC has issued further action against the Trust.

The Trust is pleased that the CQC recognised the "significant improvements in A&E and general capacity in the hospital". Since November 2012 when the Trust, like others, started to experience increased demand for A&E services the Trust has:

- Re-furbished the A&E Department to provide 35% more capacity at a cost in excess of £1m
- Developed 3 new wards providing an additional 56 beds at a cost of £2.3m
- Plans to provide a further 28 beds at the end of February at a cost in excess of £1m

These improvements have been effective and the experience for our patients and staff is far better than this time last year. We are also reaching the quality target of 95% of patients seen in A&E within 4 hours.

The report also noted that “a number of wards were well led and managed”. To achieve this, the Trust has invested in a development programme for over 100 Senior ward based and expert clinical Nurses. This started in October and is providing nurses with time to share expertise and learning across the Trust.

We hope that this development programme will enable our Senior Nurses to manage wards better and resolve the problems around quality of care which the CQC highlighted. Since the last inspection, there has been substantial discussion in the Trust as to monitoring and improving patient care. We are taking a two-pronged approach of extra training as seen in the Senior Nurse development programme and improved performance management to ensure all our staff deliver an acceptable standard of patient care.

The CQC felt our staffing levels were low on occasion. The Trust has been working hard to recruit nursing and medical staff to provide care in the additional capacity we have developed through the building of more wards and to maintain staffing levels. In the last 12 months we have invested in excess of £2.2m in new staff and recruited:

- 33 new Doctors
- 60 new nurses

There are national shortages of staff within the whole NHS and recruitment will always be a challenge. However, as with all hospitals, we will continue to actively recruit and use temporary staff to manage vacancies where necessary.

The CQC also commented on the fact that some of our buildings needed refurbishment and redecoration. Since 2012 the Trust has been provided with

capital support from the Department of Health to address these issues and is in year 2 of a 5 year refurbishment programme. To date, in excess of £15m has been spent on the fabric of the building including providing new generators, essential roofing work and the refurbishments already described. The plan will continue over the next 3 years and is being completed as fast as is possible within a busy, working hospital environment. Our next projects include replacing the MRI scanner and Cardiac Catheter Laboratory at Wexham, both due for completion by the end of Spring.

The CQC remained concerned about cleanliness. We have a building greatly in need of repair and this does pose a challenge. To address these concerns, we have commissioned both hospitals to be professionally “deep cleaned” by an expert commercial company. That clean will be complete by the end of January and the Trust has made changes to the management of cleaning services to ensure that these changes are sustained and that there is greater focus and attention on this from now onwards.

We are disappointed that we have not made as much improvement as the CQC believed we should have in 5 months. We are committed to making sustainable change and will continue to work hard to drive the improvements we all want to see.

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To arrange interviews please contact Anne Diamond, Communications, HWPH FT on 01753 634242 or 0797 128 5106 or email me on anne.diamond@hwph-tr.nhs.uk.