

Interim Chief Executive Update on Emerging Issues – for Trust Board (Public)
on 4 September 2025

1. Emerging Risks/Updates on Risks

None highlighted.

2. Key Achievements

2.1 Cancer & Specialist Services -Spirit of Biomedical Science Award' held as part of BMS Day celebrations

Congratulations to this year's winner Samantha Jackson. Samantha began her healthcare career in the year 2000 and works as a Medical Lab Assistant in Blood Sciences and has been recognised by her colleagues for her dedication to patient care, her love of learning and teaching others and for her drive for continuous personal development. She aspired to become a Biomedical Scientist, but did not have the correct qualifications. She enrolled in Tech to gain the required A level equivalents, then completed an Access course, attaining the required grades. She applied and was successful to begin a part time distance learning BSc in Biomedical Science with the University of Ulster, all whilst working fulltime hours and in addition to many outside work commitments. She is now approaching her final year in university and will be completing her final year project in the Haemostasis Laboratory – all in her spare time!

2.2 Regional Fertility Centre

The Regional Fertility Centre had a very successful inspection by the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority (HFEA), the UK Fertility Regulator during August 2025. There were a very small number of minor recommendations made by the inspectors and the license will therefore be renewed. The inspectors also commended a number of elements of good practice which they are keen to see implemented in other providers across the UK.

2.3 BoneView Launch

The NIPACS AI board has rolled out BoneView in full for BHSCT on Monday 1 September 2025.

BoneView AI is an x-ray processing tool that processes plain film x-ray studies ED clinicians can then review the BoneView findings to influence their own clinical evaluations of the patient.

It is used as an assist tool for ED clinicians to make clinical judgements on processed x-rays when hot reporting is not available.

BoneView AI was launched and tested in NHSCT at the start of this year and has been live in a production state since approximately March of this year.

BHSCT had been running BoneView in shadow mode for a week prior to go live.

3. Other Updates

3.1 Improving Ambulance Handover Performance

As part of the work being taken forward under the Strategic Financial Management Group, all major HSC organisations have agreed to focus on improving ambulance handover performance. This been identified as an urgent system priority and SPPG has made £10m recurring funding available to assist Trusts to put targeted measures in place which will help to deliver against this priority.

The NI Ambulance Service organised a workshop for all partners on Friday 29 August to establish a strong, shared starting point for practical delivery across all Trusts, reaffirm the regional mandate and expectations for handover reform, and provide an opportunity to share evidence and learning, including national models such as London45, that can inform local implementation. In addition to outlining the Trust's plans to bring Ambulance handovers under 2 hours by November 2025, the event provided an opportunity to hear from representatives from London on their successful experience of bringing handovers down to under 45 minutes.

The Trust has split the funding available between acute and community services in order to ensure that there is equal attention to patients arriving at the front door, those who are ready to leave the acute service, and those for whom conveyance to the ED could be avoided. The main focus of this investment will be on:

- ensuring senior, multidisciplinary decision making for patients arriving by ambulance;
- enhanced social work presence on the RVH and MIH;
- additional social workers for intermediate care to maintain flow out of care homes and into the community and for early review;
- additional advanced nurse practitioner and pharmacist to support residential and nursing home staff and manage deteriorating patients to prevent conveyance to ED.

The impact of these measures on ambulance handover will be monitored through the Trust's unscheduled care programme board.

3.2 Service of Thanksgiving for the 'Gift of Life' and work of Northern Ireland Kidney Research Fund

On the evening of Sunday 31 August I attended a service of thanksgiving at St Patrick's Church, Drumbeg. The Minister of Health for Northern Ireland took part in the service, during which the world class service provided by the Trust was acknowledged.