

**Chief Executive Update on Emerging Issues and Achievements – for Trust Board
(Public) on 23 July 2026**

1. Emerging Risks/Updates on Risks

There are no additional details for this update.

2. Key Achievements

There are no additional details for this update.

3. Other Updates

3.1 Update on Care of the Elderly Inpatient Ward Move - C McMullan and B Armstrong

The Trust is moving forward with plans to relocate three Care of the Elderly inpatient wards to level 7 and 8 in the Belfast City Hospital. The wards involved are Ward 5E at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Ward C at the Mater Hospital and Meadowlands Ward 3 at Musgrave Park Hospital. Our overall vision for Care of Elderly Services is to have the wards co-located together and to establish a 'Direct Access Unit' so older people will be able to come directly to BCH and not have to go through our Emergency Departments. There will be an access pathway for NIAS and GPs to contact the unit directly. There will also be a pathway to the wards for older people who continue to arrive at our Emergency Departments in the Royal and Mater Hospitals. At all times we will consider if we can treat individuals safely at home or in the community and they will only come to hospital if necessary.

We had planned to start to move the three wards from 10th August 2026. We have considered the impact of this change on medical cover and patient flow in the Mater Hospital. We have, therefore, recently agreed to amend our plan by postponing the move of the Mater Ward C until November. This will allow some time for additional acute medical consultant recruitment and also to consult and agree for a ward in the Royal Hospital to move over to the Mater Hospital into the vacated ward space. We are aiming to agree which ward will move to the Mater in the coming weeks following consultation with staff and Trade Union colleagues. We would anticipate the Royal Victoria Hospital ward would move into the Mater Hospital a few weeks following the transfer of Ward C to the Belfast City Hospital.

A recent visit by the Acute Medicine Getting It Right First Time Team (GIRFT) recommended that there should be geriatric presence in adult Emergency Departments. This is a model that we do not currently have, however, we recognise this is best practice. The Care of the Elderly and Acute Medical teams will work collaboratively to develop a model of Front Door Frailty in both sites.

We continue to have regular engagement meetings with all staff impacted to keep them updated on progress.

3.2 Staff Experience Survey – B McConaghy

In May we ran our 7th Staff Experience Survey.

The survey was designed in 2021 in conjunction with Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (who are consistently ranked as the number one acute Trust in England in terms of staff experience) to allow for the collection of more frequent data points relating to staff experience and to help direct towards areas of focus organisationally and at a team level.

The survey asks 43 questions, grouped under 8 domains, and are scored through a 5 point likert scale.

This year's results are overall very positive.

We have seen an increase in response rate of 5310 vs 4728 in 2025 (an increase from 21.5% to 24%)

There have been improvements across all 8 of the domains.

Of note, our engagement score (calculated across the standard 9 NHS engagement questions) has also increased to 3.84 /5 (from 3.8 last year)

Directorate reports have been distributed and Service and Team level reports are being finalised and distributed over the next week.