

13 November 2020

Together We're Better Stakeholder Update



This week the Together We're Better welcomes Prem Singh as the Independent Chair of the shadow Integrated Care System (ICS) for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

As Independent Chair, Prem will play a key role in achieving the Together We're Better vision of working with local people to make Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent the healthiest places to live and work. With an extensive background in the NHS spanning 45 years, Prem will provide independent leadership to implement commitments set out in the NHS Long Term Plan that shadow ICSs will be created across

England by April next year.

The shadow ICS will build on the work of Together We're Better to transform health and care across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, bringing together health and local authorities, alongside the voluntary and third sector.

Prem was previously Chairman of Derbyshire Community Health Services NHS Foundation Trust and has served at board level for 30 years, with 11 years as a Chief Executive.

He is the Senior Independent Trustee of the NHS Confederation Board and member of the Chairs Advisory Partnership of 25 Chairs nationally hosted by the Chairman of NHS Improvement. He is also currently on the Midlands Strategic Transformation and Recovery Board and Chairs the Timely and Safe Restoration and Recovery of services working Group.

Prem was previously appointed to take the lead on Inclusive Leadership on the National Leadership Council and named in the inaugural HSJ listing, as a Black, Asian and minority Ethnic (BAME) Pioneer. He has a background in general and psychiatric nursing, having previously led community, mental health and learning disability services, including as an Executive Director of Nursing and Quality.

A big thank you goes to Sir Neil McKay for the work he has done so far in guiding Together We're Better to this point, where we are now able to begin the transition to an ICS. His support and dedication have been greatly appreciated.

Nationally, you will all be aware that restrictions came into force on Thursday 5 November as COVID-19 case numbers continue to rise across the country. The single most important action we can all take to fight COVID-19 right now is to stay at home. When we reduce our day-to-day contact with other people, we reduce the

spread of the infection. Whilst in effect, these national restrictions replace the Local COVID Alert Level tiered system. You can find out what you can and can't do under the new restrictions [here](#). To see a summary of the rates in your postcode area, including number of cases, deaths and hospital admissions follow this [link](#). One simple piece of guidance remains just important as ever – Hands. Face. Space. Washing your hands frequently, wearing a face covering if you do have to go out for essentials and always keeping a safe 2m distance is and has always been our best line of defence.



The new national restrictions are not the same as the lockdown in the spring, as these measures are time-limited and the science points to four weeks being enough. Before the end of restrictions, the Government will reassess rates in local areas in England and return them to tiered Local COVID Alert Levels, depending on the infection rates. That doesn't necessarily mean that they will be at the same level as they were before the lockdown so we all need to do everything possible to ensure that these four weeks are enough to allow us to return to some form of normality during December and beyond.

In the spring, this was all new and people were understandably fearful. As a result, we saw that compliance with the lockdown restrictions was high. People are now weary, and just as understandably tired of all the restrictions. However, the time to pull together and do your bit is now. The time to comply and make small sacrifices is again upon us and pulling together for a cause is something that the friendly folk of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent do so well. So please, make sure that what you're doing is enough to interrupt and reduce transmission rates and new cases – help your NHS and help to save lives.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 is still very much here and it is with deep sadness we announce that University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Trust (UHDB) has lost a dedicated and committed colleague this week to COVID-19.

Dr Krishnan Subramanian, a Consultant Anaesthetist at Royal Derby Hospital, sadly passed away yesterday (Thursday 12 November 2020) at Glenfield Hospital in Leicester.

Krishnan joined the Trust at the beginning of 2014 as a Consultant Anaesthetist. He had previously worked at University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust, and trained at hospitals across the East Midlands earlier in his career, including in Derby.

Our thoughts are with his family, friends and colleagues at this difficult time. A minute's silence to remember Krishnan will be held at the Main Entrance of Royal Derby Hospital at 11am on Monday 16 November 2020.

Although we are obviously still in the depths of this pandemic, it is of course extremely important to stress that, regardless of the current situation and "second wave", your NHS is still here for **you**. If you need urgent help, we're here for you. If you have an emergency, we're here for you. If you develop any worrying symptoms, we're here for you. It is of the utmost importance that you come forward with anything that is worrying you. If you're not sure, or if you have an urgent need, visit NHS 111 online or call 111. If it's an emergency then always call 999 without delay.

As Boris Johnson said on Monday, Matt Hancock has confirmed a further 66 local authorities will soon be starting mass testing programmes like that in Liverpool City and here in Stoke-on-Trent. Half a million rapid-turnaround tests, called 'Lateral Flow' tests, will be sent out local public health leaders this week. They are a new kind of technology that could be used to test lots more people, including those who don't have any symptoms at all, better enabling us to identify and isolate more people who are at high likelihood of spreading virus and therefore breaking the chain of transmission.

Lateral flow devices do not require a laboratory to process the test. Swabbing and processing of these tests must currently be conducted at a dedicated testing site by trained personnel. You can see the media release and the full list of the 66 local authorities on [the government website](#).

Testing is vital in the management of the pandemic, as we know that many people will have the virus but not have symptoms and so will be unknowingly spreading it to others. That's why this kind of testing is so crucial in the fight against COVID-19. Through mass testing, we now have a more efficient way of identifying the virus much earlier and this will help to reduce the spread by encouraging people to isolate and protect the wider community.

The big news this week has been about the progress with a COVID-19 vaccine. To echo [the government's response](#), while the findings look very promising, the vaccine can only be considered for public use once robust standards of safety and effectiveness are met. Details of how a vaccine would be rolled out and which groups would be prioritised are still to be detailed, but please be assured that preparation work is underway locally, so that vaccines can be administered as soon as they are available.

Elsewhere locally, the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Health and Care People Hub are searching for caring, compassionate and dedicated people for a number of clinical and non-clinical roles to help with the increasing pressures of the pandemic.

The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Health and Care People Hub is a Together We're Better programme and so involves working in partnership with local health and care organisations, finding the right people for the right job roles in the response to COVID-19.

The Hub has many urgent vacancies to fill within the health and care sector. We're looking for people already clinically trained but who could offer more hours; people who've left the sector but are interested in returning to help fight COVID-19; and also members of the public looking for paid work. You don't need former experience to apply for many of the roles and you'll set your own working preferences and any available and urgent placements that match to you will be shared with you. Follow [this link](#) for full details of how you can #StepForward and help your local health and care system.



It's likely that flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will both spread this winter and health and care systems could be overwhelmed treating both patients with flu and patients with COVID-19. This means getting a flu vaccine during 2020-2021 is more important than ever. While getting a flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19, there are many important benefits, such as:

- Flu vaccines have been shown to reduce the risk of flu illness, hospitalisation, and death.
- Getting a flu vaccine can also save health and care resources for the care of patients with COVID-19.

This year's flu campaigns are now well underway and the latest vaccination uptake rates for those groups currently being vaccinated, are overall 10% higher compared to the same period last year. Thank you to everyone who has come forward for their flu jab. A two-page leaflet is available to help to answer any questions on flu vaccine availability. This leaflet explains why, if a person is eligible, they may be asked to wait for their vaccine. You can download the leaflet [here](#).

Useful resources

National lockdown restriction resources can be found [here](#).

Materials are available for the following campaigns; please can we ask for your help to promote them across your networks:

- National lockdown restriction [resources](#)
- [Hands. Face. Space. resources](#)
- [Stay Alert to Stay Safe – new youth focused 'consequences' social animations](#) are now available on the campaign resource centre.
- [Stay Alert to Stay Safe posters](#): White background easy print for face coverings and distance
- [NHS Test and Trace posters](#): White background easy print for drive through testing and self-isolate
- [Symptoms posters](#): White background easy print for taste and smell

[NHS COVID-19 App resources](#)

[Wearing a face mask – translations](#) (Arabic/French/Kurdish/Lithuanian/Pashto/Polish/Portuguese/Romanian/Russian/Spanish/Tigrinya)

[Test and Trace materials](#) are available to use on the Public Health England Campaign Resource Centre. This includes BSL, easy read and large print formats [here](#).

[Signposting materials](#) with useful information on how people can contact their GP, order repeat prescriptions and manage wellbeing and existing conditions at home: <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/nhs-resources-facilities/resources/health-at-home/>

[Public Health England guide on how older adults can stay active at home during coronavirus to maintain strength and balance](#)

[Translated information leaflets for parents with new-borns during coronavirus](#)

[Mental wellbeing whilst staying at home](#)

[North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust mental health support and advice guide](#)

[Guidance on shielding](#)

[Blood donation materials](#)

Public Health England has updated its coronavirus guidance in light of changes to the government's advice and continue to ensure guidance for the public is timely and up to date. All guidance for members of the public, as well as for people in clinical and non-clinical settings, is published and updated regularly on the GOV.UK collection page.

For the latest information on coronavirus, please visit the [NHS](#) and [government](#) websites.

Together We're Better is the partnership of NHS and local government organisations, alongside independent and voluntary sector groups, that is working together to transform health and care services. You can find out more about us on our website: <https://www.twbstaffsandstoke.org.uk/>