

Welcome to the April edition of Monitor's FT Bulletin.

This bulletin is sent to foundation trust chief executives, chairs, trust secretaries, finance, medical and nursing directors and the Foundation Trust Network. Click on the links below to jump straight to the relevant sections of the bulletin.

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Latest correspondence

Supporting you with A&E this summer

We continue to support you to improve A&E performance this summer, but some parts of the process have changed. The parts of the process you found most useful are still in place. Find out more in our [letter of 24 March](#).

We're now working with NHS England and the Trust Development Authority to agree a single guidance document on operational and resilience planning for 2014/15.

Publishing staffing data: what to do and when

Following publication of the National Quality Board's guidance in November, we have developed guidance with the Care Quality Commission and NHS England on publishing staffing data. Find out [what your foundation trust needs to do](#).

Still using Windows XP and Office 2003? Microsoft support ends in 2015

[Following our letter of 31 March](#) about the IT security risk of Microsoft ending its support for Microsoft Windows XP and Office 2003, the Department of Health and Crown Commercial Services (CCS) have secured a [new agreement with Microsoft](#). This makes custom support for Windows XP SP3, Office 2003 SP3 and Exchange 2003 SP2 available to any NHS organisation needing it until 14 April 2015. You should have details from the Health and Social Care Information Centre on how ongoing support for these products can be put in place. Email CCS at xpsupport@ccs.gsi.gov.uk.

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For action

Annual report and accounts: your responsibilities

As set out in our [letter](#) to foundation trust finance directors in November 2013 and the 2013/14 [FT Annual Reporting Manual](#) (FT ARM), the deadlines for year end submissions for annual report and accounts to Monitor are:

- 23 April 2014, 9am – draft accounts and FTCs (electronic only)
- 6 May 2014, noon – updated FTCs for agreement of balances (electronic only)
- 30 May 2014, 9am – audited accounts, FTCs and associated submissions including quality report assurance (by post and electronic). See FT ARM for full details.

In addition, NHS foundation trusts are required to:

- Submit annual report and accounts for laying before Parliament to the DH Parliamentary Office by 25 June 2014 at the latest. The format must be approved by the DH Parliamentary Office prior to printing. It is very important the strict rules for the format of these documents are followed. Refer to annex 2 to chapter 1 of the [2013/14 FT ARM](#).
- Submit the final laid annual report and accounts (including quality report and auditor opinions) to Monitor via the Portal by 11 July 2014 as a single pdf file. Please refer to page 20 of the 2013/14 FT ARM.

Key reminders:

- When completing your annual report and accounts for submission to Monitor by 30 May, please ensure your accounting officer signs the *Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities* which is based on the updated pro forma for 2013/14. This is provided as annex 5 to chapter 7 of the [2013/14 FT ARM](#).
- Please ensure the member(s) of staff uploading documents to the Monitor Portal for each submission are aware of the instructions in Monitor's [timetable letter](#) regarding the Return/Submission content type and the activity name when uploading each file. These are important so Monitor can locate the submitted files.
- Please ensure those responsible for sending the annual report and accounts for laying to the DH Parliamentary Office pay careful attention to the requirements in annex 2 to chapter 1 of the FT ARM, particularly the two-stage deadlines for this process.

Trust finance teams are reminded that regular updates are posted to

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www.monitor.gov.uk/accountsprocess. Email FT.Accounts@monitor.gov.uk

Check the latest Accounts and FTCs process guidance issued this month

The latest guidance for foundation trusts relating to the accounts and FTCs process and Alignment Project is available on our website [here](#).

C.Difficile – guidance on new thresholds for 2014/15

NHS England has published the latest C.Difficile thresholds for NHS providers, along with [guidance on the concept of C.Diff cases arising from a 'lapse in care'](#).

Your co-ordinating commissioner should judge whether your assessment of 'lapse in care' is accurate.

In line with the guidance that *"all C.Difficile infections should still be reported as per national reporting requirements"*, and for the purposes of reporting C.Difficile levels to us, at the end of each quarter NHS foundation trusts should report all C.Difficile cases, including those resulting from a lapse in care and any cases for which the trust has not yet received formal confirmation that the case was not due to a lapse in care. We will adapt reporting templates accordingly.

In subsequent quarters, trusts should retrospectively revise – in the quarterly monitoring template - levels of C.Difficile to reflect any cases that have subsequently not met the 'lapse in care' criteria from previous quarters. This is to ensure your trajectory remains accurate and up-to-date for our governance monitoring purposes.

Trusts revising levels downwards in this way will need to provide evidence from commissioners.

Monitor will generally only consider investigating a trust where it is satisfied that the trust has either (i) breached its annual threshold; or (ii) breached its in-year trajectory for 3 quarters with cases of C.Difficile resulting from a 'lapse in care'. However, Monitor may also choose to investigate if there is a seemingly poorly controlled outbreak of C Difficile (or other infectious disease) at a trust, particularly if there is evidence of cross contamination in a group of patients.

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Where a trust is exceeding the threshold and there are still C.Difficile cases under examination by the co-ordinating commissioner, we will generally wait until the examinations have concluded that lapses of care took place at the trust. We may, however, request information on a monthly basis when this is the case.

[Our survey on clinical engagement with business/strategic planning and operations](#)

We plan to send a survey to the sector shortly (via chief executives and company secretaries) asking how provider organisations approach clinical engagement with business decision making. In part, we are seeking to establish how far providers are currently working with service line reporting and management and explore any additional learning or support that could assist with adoption. We will share the results so providers can compare their chosen approaches, see the benefits realised by service line management and how peers overcame any challenges with implementation. Contact Mark Redhead, Monitor's Development Advisor, for more information on 020 3747 0462.

[We're moving to GOV.UK - how should our digital content develop?](#)

Our website will soon move to GOV.UK/monitor. Please use this opportunity to let us know how our online content (including the FT Bulletin) should develop [here](#). Any questions about our move to GOV.UK? Email Rachel.Purkett@Monitor.gov.uk

[Panel for advising governors - 3 members needed](#)

We are [seeking three members to join the panel](#) for advising governors who answer questions raised by NHS foundation trust governors as to whether a trust has failed or is failing to act in accordance with its constitution, or to act in accordance with Chapter 5 of the NHS Act 2006. More details including the panel's terms of reference and application form are [here](#).

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Director training and development

A reminder to Boards that:

- Directors should have access, at the NHS foundation trust's expense, to training courses and/or materials consistent with their individual and collective development programme (B.4.1 in the Code of Governance); and
- FT chairpersons should regularly review and agree with each director their training and development needs as they relate to their role on the board (section B.4.2).

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[Monitor's strategy 2014 to 2017: Helping to redesign healthcare provision in England](#)

Earlier this month, we shared [our three year strategy](#) which describes our mission, responsibilities, values and commitment to quality care. We also describe how we plan to work with other system leaders and those who work on the front line **to make the health sector work better for patients**.

[Transactions: changes to how we share advice on this](#)

The way we communicate the advice we give to trusts who are considering making significant transactions – such as mergers, disposal of assets and large capex projects – is changing.

We're going to be more open and transparent about the process in future. While the correspondence between the trust and Monitor – and the sensitive information it often contains - will stay confidential, the key elements of that advice – such as the recommendation itself – will be shared with external stakeholders. We'll be doing this in a number of ways, including by issuing a press release.

[Changes to information sent to foundation trusts during the year](#)

We've made a number of changes to the APR process in 2014/15 resulting in a two-stage process to take place in Spring/Summer 2014. The first stage starts in April and overlaps with the Q4 2013/14 review which takes place in May.

In early June we will write to you with the findings of these reviews. A single letter will set out any specific issues that Monitor wishes to bring to the attention of your trust for Q4 2013/14 and will outline the Continuity of Service and Governance Ratings for APR 2014/15.

From Q4 2013/14 we will no longer share a detailed Executive Summary sheet alongside our quarterly and APR letters. We will continue to share with you the aggregate performance of your trust and a summary of the key findings across the NHS foundation trust sector.

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[FT financial data from 2005 to be published](#)

This week we will be releasing figures that show annual individual foundation trust surplus/deficit information since 2005/06. Although this information is publicly available via your annual accounts it is the first time we have collated and published them in this way. Look out for it on our website in the coming days.

[National Tariff: your views sought on our forthcoming methodology discussion paper](#)

We will shortly be publishing a 'National Tariff Payment System National Prices Methodology Discussion Paper' with NHS England. This discusses potential changes for national prices in 2015/16 as we develop the national tariff payment system. The paper gives you an early opportunity to influence our thinking and work through key issues as we develop the methodology for setting national prices for 2015/16. Responses will be welcome in May, ahead of a detailed engagement document in the summer.

[Register for our webinar](#). This will outline Monitor and NHS England's thinking on the 2015/16 national tariff. Takes place on **29 April 2014** at **12.30pm**.

[National Tariff - questions on maternity services on our website](#)

To help providers and commissioners comply with their obligations relating to the 2014/15 National Tariff Payment System, we have included on our website [answers to frequently asked questions on maternity services](#).

[Better Care Fund: your involvement to benefit local people](#)

[The importance of providers' sustained effort and involvement](#) to develop and deliver the Better Care Fund was stressed by Norman Lamb (Minister for Care and Support, Department of Health) and Brandon Lewis (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government) in a letter to the sector last month.

[Licensing update](#)

All providers of health care services for the purposes of the NHS now need an NHS provider licence unless exempt. We have licensed 87 independent providers so far. View the register of licence holders [here](#).

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Publications

[Risk assessment framework – appendix c updated following consultation](#)

After [consulting](#) the sector, we updated Appendix C of the [Risk assessment framework](#), which only relates to NHS foundation trust transactions.

[Your duties: a brief guide for NHS foundation trust governors](#)

With new structures and processes in place across the NHS to improve outcomes for patients, we've published [a guide for governors](#) on what is expected of their role. The guide was produced in association with the Care Quality Commission, Department of Health, Foundation Trust Governors' Association and the Foundation Trust Network.

[Our advice for commissioners deciding on the best services to purchase for patients](#)

Our first investigation under the NHS procurement rules highlighted important lessons around commissioning services for patients. This month we published these lessons as [guidance for commissioners](#) who might face similar circumstances in future. The guidance covers what to do in the face of competing priorities, using evidence in decision-making, acting transparently and publishing details of all contracts awarded. The investigation, which we closed in February, looked into the commissioning of radiosurgery services by NHS England after a complaint was submitted to Monitor.

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[Governance review – learning lessons event – Tuesday 20 May](#)

In partnership with the FTN, we're holding a free, one day event to share the learning from the three pilot NHS foundation trusts using the proposed governance review framework and approach. The event will offer direct insight into how the foundation trust pilots applied the guidance and what it means for them in the future. Learning from the pilots will be fed into the final guidance which will be published shortly.

Why attend?

The event is an opportunity for delegates to:

- learn in more detail about the final governance review framework and approach;
- understand what the framework and approach means for FTs and how it impacts on them and their organisations;
- learn how FTs can adapt the framework for their own needs;
- hear first hand the challenges/barriers in applying the guidance and how to overcome them; and
- share views with peers and question Monitor and the FTN on areas of concern.

Who should attend?

The event is open to all **foundation trust board members** but space is limited and only one person per organisation can attend. Please do not register if you are not a member of an NHS foundation trust board.

The event starts at 11am and will finish by 3pm. A full agenda will be sent nearer to the date of the event.

Please register [here](#). Any queries? Contact Rachael.McAdam@Monitor.gov.uk or telephone 020 3747 0425.

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[Joint Monitor and FTN induction programme for new non-executive directors - 15-16 May](#)

Open to any new NHS foundation trust non-executive directors or non-executive directors from NHS trusts nearing completion of the foundation trust application process.

Programme includes:

- background to the NHS and where NHS foundation trusts fit in;
- governance, risk and assurance in the foundation trust sector;
- regulation: Monitor's regulatory regime, the licence, Risk Assessment Framework, continuity of services regime;
- regulation and where the Care Quality Commission fits in;
- NHS foundation trusts, governance and the law;
- governors, stakeholders and the public;
- patients, quality and safety;
- finance; and
- the future of regulation in the provider sector; pricing and competition; and information from Monitor.

Venue: Wellington House, 133-155 Waterloo Road, London.

Cost: £240 – to cover cost of room, speakers, lunch and refreshments.

To book your place, visit www.foundationtrustnetwork.org/events. Further queries? Contact: Carolyn May, Monitor's Senior Development Adviser on 020 3747 0083 or Kim Hutchings, Head of Development and Engagement at the FTN: 020 7304 6881.

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Opportunities to develop with Cass Business School

Subject to demand, it is likely the following Cass Business School programmes will run only once this year on the dates below. Please book as soon as possible to secure your place.

Programme	When?	Details and how to book
Non-Executive Director Programme	19-21 May	Book here by 25 April
Strategic Financial Leadership Programme	16-20 June and 14-18 July <i>(10-day programme)</i>	Book here by 23 May
Executive Directors Programme (sponsored by the Foundation Trust Network)	1-3 July	Book here by 31 May

For more information email: lizzie.mullier.2@city.ac.uk or zoe.naylor.1@city.ac.uk

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External updates

[Changes to the competition, consumer and credit regimes](#)

As part of the government's reforms to the arrangements for competition, consumer protection and consumer credit regulation, the Office of Fair Trading closed on 31 March, and its work and responsibilities passed to a number of different bodies. Learn more and [find out who to contact here](#). You can also contact the [Competition and Markets Authority](#) on 020 3738 6000 or at [general.enquiries@cma.gsi.gov.uk/](mailto:general.enquiries@cma.gsi.gov.uk)

[Making the NHS safer – Jeremy Hunt's message to NHS staff](#)

The [Secretary of State for Health's message](#) looks at a new campaign he has launched called 'Sign up for Safety' which aims to halve avoidable harm and save up to 6,000 lives in next 3 years.

[Increases to Optical Voucher Values from 1 April 2014](#)

Find out about [increases to the NHS optical voucher values and Hospital Eye Service charges](#) on GOV.UK

[Future-Focussed finance newsletter](#)

In January, the six heads of the finance profession in the NHS came together to initiate Future-Focused Finance which offers a vision for NHS finance to aspire to over the next five years. To keep you updated on their work, they have produced the [Future-Focussed finance newsletter](#).

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Monitor update: our monthly newsletter

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