

**TO:** West Gloucestershire PCT

**FROM:** PCT Chair, Liz Boait

**DATE:** 20th November 2003

**SUBJECT: CHAIR'S REPORT**

## **1.0 IMPROVING WORKING LIVES UPDATE**

- 1.1 Since I last updated the Board in September 2003 considerable progress has been made in taking forward the Improving Working Lives Standard. The Improving Working Lives (IWL) Steering Group has been meeting on a monthly basis to coordinate and support this work and to help prepare the PCT for the IWL Practice Stage Assessment which takes place the week commencing 24th November 2003.
- 1.2 As previously reported the IWL Steering Group decided to hold a number of "Speak Easy" events. The sessions were designed to enable multi-disciplinary groups of staff across the PCT to speak freely about their views, to discuss the key themes arising from the Staff Survey undertaken in February 2003 in more detail, to consider priority areas for action and to identify whether there were any other areas that needed to be addressed as part of IWL. A total of 12 sessions have been held and over 120 staff have attended. The sessions were undertaken at different locations across the PCT area to help ensure that a representative cross-section of employees were able to attend. A Director or Senior Manager from the PCT attended each session in a "listening" capacity and took notes of the issues raised.
- 1.3 The IWL Steering Group received an Interim Report outlining the key themes emerging from the "Speak Easy" sessions at their meeting on 2nd October 2003. Members felt that it was important to ensure that the feedback from the sessions was shared openly with all staff and as a result the interim report was subsequently re-produced in full in the October (Issue 9) Edition of the PCT Staff Newsletter "Look West". A Draft Action Plan was also discussed and it was agreed that this should be further developed, with full staff involvement, in order to respond to the findings of the "Speak Easy" sessions. The draft plan was further considered by the Steering Group at their last meeting which took place on 7th November. A number of actions have been identified where improvements can be put in place relatively quickly; other areas are more of a challenge and the Trust will need to be open and honest about issues that may be more difficult or take a longer time to resolve.

- 1.4 Areas of work which are currently underway following discussion by the IWL Group include the following:
- **Production of a “Who to Contact” List**  
This will include the names and contact details of individuals within the PCT identified by key topic areas. The list will be widely circulated to all staff and will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis by the Corporate Services Team
  - **Production of Improving Working Lives leaflets**  
The leaflets are intended to summarise a range of policies and procedures that the PCT has in place that support the Improving Working Lives initiative, for example Bullying and Harassment, Staff Support Services, Flexible Working, Childcare
  - **IWL Information Points**  
IWL Information points will be installed at a number of PCT sites. These will include a leaflet for staff on the IWL standard as well as the other leaflets identified above
  - **Communications to Practices**  
Work is underway to improve communications from the PCT Headquarters to Practices, ensuring that all key staff, either Practice employed staff or community based staff working within Practices receive information in a timely and co-ordinated way
- 1.5 It is hoped that the “Speak Easy” sessions will become a regular feature of staff involvement within the PCT to support the Improving Working Lives initiative.
- 1.6 The Trust, with the support of the IWL Steering Group, has also been busy preparing for the forthcoming IWL Assessment. The Assessment Team will be visiting the PCT on Friday 14th November for an “Orientation” meeting. They will meet with Stephen and me, together with the key team supporting IWL, to discuss our approach to IWL and to prepare themselves for the Assessment week. This will include a review of our Self-Assessment and Action Plan for Practice Stage Accreditation together with a review of our Portfolio of Evidence. News of the Assessment week together with briefing materials for Managers and updates for staff have been included in “Look West”, “Look West Express” and team briefings.
- 1.7 As previously mentioned the Assessment week will take place between 24th to 28th November. The Assessors will attend focus groups, meet with staff and undertake interviews with key Directors and Managers during their assessment. A draft programme has been produced and this will be discussed with the Assessment Team at the Orientation meeting.
- 1.8 It is expected that the outcome of the Assessment will be communicated to us at the end of the Assessment week

## **2.0 NATIONAL NHS STAFF SURVEY**

- 2.1 From April 2003 the Commission for Health Improvement took over responsibility for developing a new national staff opinion survey. The new survey will run annually and it has been designed to replace Trusts' own annual staff surveys, the Department of Health 10 core questions and the CHI Clinical Governance Review staff surveys. It is obligatory for all Trusts, including PCTs, to participate in the survey which was circulated to all staff the week commencing 27th October 2003. Feedback from this latest survey is expected in the New Year and the IWL Steering Group will ensure that the issues identified are fed into their forward action planning for Improving Working Lives in West Gloucestershire PCT.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The Board are asked to note the contents of the report.