

Leah Joseph (Swansea Bay UHB - Corporate)

From: Simon Cookson (NWSSP - Internal Audit)
Sent: 01 April 2020 11:24
To: Dafydd Bebb (HEIW); Georgina Galletly (CTM - Interim Director of Corporate Services); Helen Bushell (Public Health Wales - No. 2 Capital Quarter); Joanne Wilson (Hywel Dda UHB - Board Secretary); Justine Parry (BCUHB - Office of the Board Secretary); Keith Cox (Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust - 020); Kevin Smith (CTUHB - Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee); Lauren Fear (Velindre - Trust Governance); Nicola Foreman (Cardiff and Vale UHB - Executive Headquarters); Pamela Wenger (Swansea Bay UHB - Corporate Governance); Peter Stephenson (NWSSP); Rani Mallison (Powys Teaching Health Board - Corporate Services); Richard Bevan (Aneurin Bevan UHB - Executive Board)
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Subject: Board Secretaries Update no. 1
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear all

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at Friday's meeting.

As I said on the call, I this note provides an update on where we are with 2019/20 opinions, our thoughts on 2020/21 programmes and how we will aim to support you through this year's formal closedown process and timetable.

First can I say a big thank you for the incredible support we've had from you to get our work done as the pandemic has escalated, it has been very much appreciated, and I know all of you have been in regular contact with your Heads of Internal Audit over the last few weeks and months as the situation has developed.

2019/20 opinions

We will be able to give a full opinion for each HB, Trust and SHA. All Heads of Internal Audit have confirmed that they have completed sufficient work to be able to issue an opinion (final reports, draft reports and work completed but not reported formally). Also, of the 17 national reports we were planning for 2019/20 – NWSSP, NWIS, WHSSC and EASC – we expect to have 16 completed to at least draft report stage (1 audit at EASC has been deferred – The Amber Review).

The Head of Internal Audit annual report will be structured in the same way as previous years but there will be additional narrative around the impact of COVID 19 and on the work that has not been reported formally to date. There will be more reports in draft than in previous years and some draft reports will not, by necessity, have covered the whole scope originally agreed and this will be made clear in those reports. The draft reports will not have management responses. This does not stop us giving an overall opinion but how we deal with management responses and recommendation tracking/follow-up more generally going forward will be something we all need to pick up when things are in a more stable state.

We have agreed with some of you locally that we will not undertake any further work on the 2019/20 plans and that is now pretty much the default position unless we have agreed anything specific with you – and that's very much about getting reviews that are very close to completion over the line. Our aim is to be supportive and pragmatic so

we are, of course, happy to be guided by you as we are comfortable we can give an opinion based on the work done to date. I don't anticipate that we will pick up any outstanding 2019/20 work later in the year unless the area or topic makes its way back into the key risk areas we and you need to focus on.

I have discussed this approach with WG as the standard setter for Internal Audit in NHS Wales.

2020/21 Plans

For all Health bodies, we have issued or have produced a draft plan for 2020/21 (and as you know that's a requirement of the PSIAS and the work of the Audit Committee). We recognise that even where these plans have been through Audit Committee and approved, they will have to change and change significantly. Over the next few weeks myself and the Heads of Internal Audit will be working to put together an approach to reassess risk and undertake audit programmes for 2020/21 assuming a number of scenarios – the main ones being a start date for audit work of either October 2020 or as late as January 2021 and what work will need to be prioritised and can be delivered in either a 7 or 4 month window (assuming audits run to the end of April 2021). We will also be picking up the points I made earlier around management responses and recommendation tracking/follow-up and whether or not any outstanding work from 2019/20 plans should be included. I will keep you, Audit Committee Chairs and Helen Morris at WG informed fully of our thinking and how our approach develops and what process we will recommend to you to get audit programmes completed in 2020/21. We will also look to review the position formally with you at the end of June (as that's the end of quarter 1) and I'm scheduled for a slot at the June BS meeting, assuming it does go ahead, which will be a good opportunity to revisit this.

2019/20 year end closedown

Over the next few weeks we expect a number of our staff to be redeployed – all have offered to be redeployed and many have asked if they can support their local health boards given where they live. However, we will have staff available to ensure we can help with any requirements you may have around year end closedown.

I will continue to send numbered emails to you so you can see how we address the points I've outlined as time goes on. We will, of course, keep in regular contact with you over the coming months. Please do contact me or your Head of Internal Audit with any questions, comments or suggestions.

With regards

Simon

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I'm not able to understand Welsh. However NWSSP welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English.

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