

**Trust Headquarters**

City Hospital campus  
Hucknall Road  
Nottingham  
NG5 1PB

Please ask for: Chief Executive's Personal  
Assistant

Tel: 0115 969 1169 ext 76007  
Email: [Peter.Homa@nuh.nhs.uk](mailto:Peter.Homa@nuh.nhs.uk)  
[www.nuh.nhs.uk](http://www.nuh.nhs.uk)

Thursday 30 August 2012

Councillor G Klein  
Constitutional Services  
L H Box 28  
Loxley House  
Station Street  
Nottingham  
NG2 3NG

Dear Councillor Klein,

Further to our meeting on Wednesday 15 August 2012 and your earlier correspondence dated 22 May 2012, I am pleased to provide our first quarterly update on cancelled operations.

I am pleased to confirm that we have sustained our improved performance, with significantly fewer cancellations since the end of April 2012.

I include in this update:

- Background information on our publication of total cancellations (further to our briefing note in July 2012)
- A full response to the questions from the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee (this is our first quarterly update to the Committee).

## **BACKGROUND**

Earlier this year we recognised that we were cancelling too many patients on the day of their planned surgery. Between January and June we made 743 such cancellations. Unfortunately, many patients were cancelled more than once. Our review of many thousands of records subsequently found that we cancelled a further 2,541 operations prior to the day of operation over the same period (3,284 cancellations in total for the period January to June). We have apologised at every opportunity to patients, their relatives and loved ones for the distress, worry and inconvenience caused.

We cancelled operations predominantly because we had to prioritise more urgent clinical cases and operations to our available beds and critical care. This winter we saw a modest increase in emergency admissions compared to the last. This was compounded by unprecedented surges in Emergency Department attendances and emergency admissions at different times of the day and night. Although these individual changes were relatively small, they had the cumulative effect of using significantly more of our beds and theatres for emergency cases. 43% of cancelled operations January-June were due to unavailability of beds and 20% were to make way for emergency or cancer surgery.

We responded to these pressures over the winter by:

- Opening a new emergency day unit (December 11) which avoids up to 15 admissions daily
- Opening 30 new beds in early 2012 (December 11)
- Recruiting more nursing and medical staff to our Emergency Department (December 11)
- Increasing the number of specialists in the treatment and care of older people on our admissions wards (December 11)
- Extending the use of our patients' Discharge Lounge at QMC (March 12)

Additional actions completed/underway to further reduce cancellations include:

- Moving elective orthopaedics from QMC to City Hospital to ensure this activity is not disrupted by emergencies (completed August 12)
- Opening 28 medical beds on Ward F18 at QMC (during September 12)
- Opening a new 20-bed short-stay treatment and observation unit at QMC (October 12)
- Opening a 12-bed respiratory short-stay treatment and observation unit at City Hospital (November 12)
- Opening a further 20 medical beds at QMC (for the period January-March 13)
- Recruiting 120 nurses to these new beds (by January 13)
- Improving the way we use our theatres, particularly during holiday periods – (ongoing)
- Working closely with our health and social care partners across Nottinghamshire to ensure patients have ready access to a full range of care services prior to or after admission to hospital

### **Our decision to publishing the total cancellation figure**

NHS hospitals (and the Department of Health) routinely publish 'on the day' cancellations of planned operations. This winter we had more such cancellations than similar (our peer) hospitals. However, hospitals also cancel some operations earlier than 'on the day'. These numbers are not routinely collected or made available, but give a much fuller account of cancelled operations. Determined to learn from and share this information we looked at all of our cancelled operations since January 2012. Our

figures have been independently verified. We have reported total cancellations (and reasons for them) at our monthly public Board meetings since June. We believe we are the first NHS trust in the country to adopt this approach.

## DEFINITIONS

- **‘On the day’ (or ‘last minute’)** means on or after the day the patient was due to be admitted for their operation (usually on the planned day of the surgery). For example: if a patient is admitted on a Monday for an operation on Tuesday and we cancel the operation on Monday or Tuesday, this would count as an ‘on the day’ cancellation.
- **‘Prior to the day’** means before the day the patient was due to be admitted for their operation (this can range from one day before to several weeks before the scheduled surgery).

## QUARTERLY UPDATE: 1

Please find below our first quarterly update for the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, covering each area in turn where information has been requested by the Committee.

### **1. Levels of last minute (‘on the day’) & prior to the day non-clinical cancelled operations**

We can report a significantly improved position since the end of April 2012. January-July 2012 we cancelled 2,850 operations prior to the day and 712 operations ‘on the day’ (a total of 3,562 operations). In the same period, we performed 74,507 operations and procedures at our hospitals.

Please refer to Table 1 (below) for monthly reduction figures for NUH (for ‘on the day’ and ‘total’ cancellations) for all reasons January-July 2012 and Table 2 (also below) for the percentage of cancellations (vs total admissions) for the same period.

The total cancellation rate January-March 2012 was 10%, compared to 4.1% for April-July 2012.

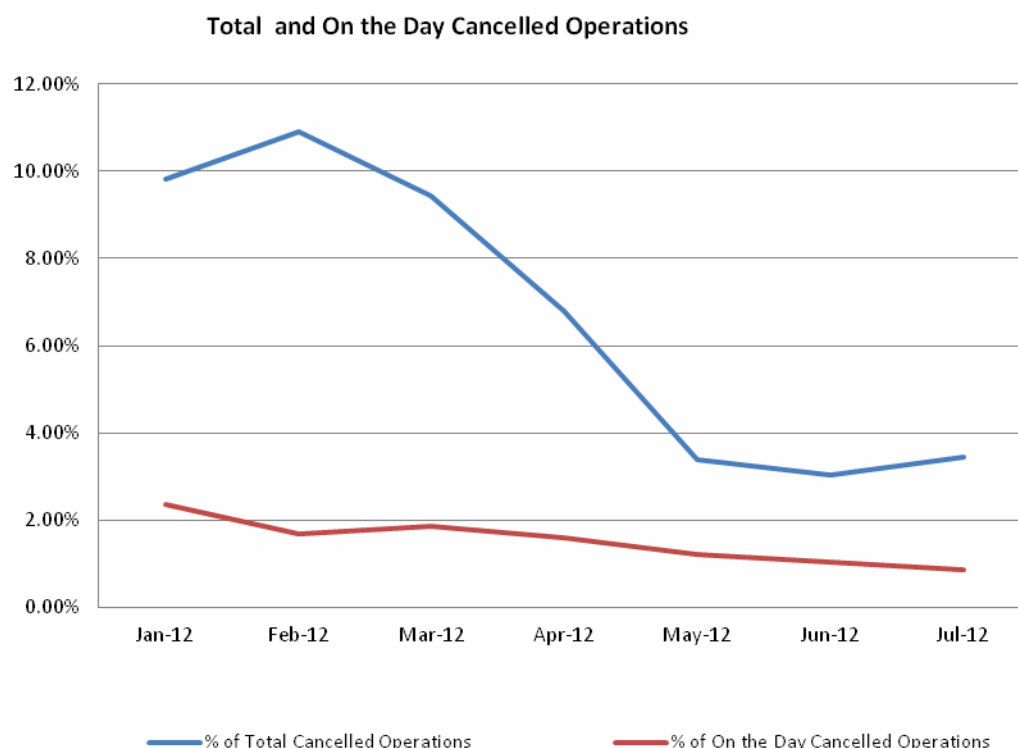
While the number of ‘on the day’ cancellations is reducing every month, in July we had a modest increase in total cancellations compared to the previous month (279, compared to 216 in June and 287 in May). This increase was largely attributable to equipment problems due to an international shortage of a chemotherapy treatment required for a specific cancer operation. Patients have been offered alternative treatments until the supply (to all NHS trusts) is resumed.

**Table 1: Cancelled operations ('on the day' and 'total') and reason Jan-July 2012**

| <i>Reason</i>                   | <i>Jan</i>  | <i>Feb</i>   | <i>March</i> | <i>April</i> | <i>May</i>  | <i>June</i> | <i>July</i>  |
|---------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Ward bed unavailable            | 417         | 463          | 348          | 156          | 20          | 13          | 21           |
| ICU/HDU bed unavailable         | 21          | 17           | 41           | 42           | 31          | 9           | 13           |
| Clinical priority*              | 110         | 105          | 152          | 117          | 89          | 89          | 86           |
| Staffing                        | 62          | 98           | 83           | 59           | 73          | 44          | 70           |
| Theatre time                    | 64          | 29           | 41           | 37           | 59          | 11          | 15           |
| Administrative error            | 29          | 29           | 31           | 14           | 4           | 9           | 11           |
| Equipment                       | 10          | 9            | 11           | 12           | 11          | 40          | 57           |
| Other reason                    | 38          | 53           | 52           | 30           | 0           | 1           | 6            |
| <b>Total cancellations</b>      | <b>751</b>  | <b>803</b>   | <b>759</b>   | <b>467</b>   | <b>287</b>  | <b>217</b>  | <b>279</b>   |
| <b>% admissions</b>             | <b>9.8%</b> | <b>10.9%</b> | <b>9.4%</b>  | <b>6.8%</b>  | <b>3.4%</b> | <b>3.1%</b> | <b>3.46%</b> |
| <b>On the day cancellations</b> | <b>181</b>  | <b>124</b>   | <b>149</b>   | <b>109</b>   | <b>103</b>  | <b>74</b>   | <b>70</b>    |
| <b>% admissions</b>             | <b>2.4%</b> | <b>1.7%</b>  | <b>1.9%</b>  | <b>1.6%</b>  | <b>1.2%</b> | <b>1.0%</b> | <b>0.87%</b> |

***\*urgent/emergency surgery prioritised***

**Table 2 – Cancellation rate (%) for total and ‘on the day’ cancelled operations**



Our Trust Board will agree a reduction target for 2012/13 for all cancellations by October 2012. The Board will review performance monthly. While it will never be possible to eliminate cancellations for reasons out of our control (eg equipment breakdown or sickness of key specialist staff) we are determined to continue to reduce cancellations for all reasons so that we reach an irreducible minimum as soon as possible.

## **2. Comparator information from similar major trusts in the region**

The Department of Health publishes comparative information for all NHS Trusts on a quarterly basis. This allows NUH to see how we compare with our peer organisations (and other Trusts around the region) for ‘on the day’ cancellations. The comparative data for Quarter 1 (April-June 2012) was published on 10 August 2012 (see Appendix 1). NUH had 286 ‘on the day’ cancellations for Quarter 1. This compares to 456 ‘on the day’ cancellations the previous quarter (December 2011-March 2012), as previously shared with the Committee.

The latest comparative data shows that despite a much-improved performance in Quarter 1 (compared to Quarter 4) of 11/12, we still did not perform as well as most of our similar-sized, peer organisations. We had the fourth highest number of 'on the day' cancellations, marking an improvement compared to the previous quarter (when NUH had more than any other trust), as below and in Appendix 1.

301: University Hospitals of Leicester

290: Barts & The London

290: South London Healthcare

**286: NUH**

272: Sheffield

248: Leeds

238: Cambridge

234: Bradford

230: North Staffs

225: Shrewsbury & Telford

207: Plymouth

We are confident that the Quarter 2 figures for 2012/13 will show a further improvement in our performance as a result of the exceptional actions we are taking to reduce cancellation (as described on page 2).

### **3. Benchmarking performance against the national standard, where available**

See response to question 2. The Department of Health comparative data (which is published quarterly) is only available for 'on the day' cancellations. We believe we are first trust in the country to report 'total' cancellations. As these numbers are not routinely collected or made available, as such no comparative data is currently available.

### **4. An assessment of the knock-on effect of the upsurge in cancellations on waiting times for non-urgent elective operations, the Committee being concerned that patients suffering cancellations could potentially face ever-longer waiting times for rescheduled operations**

We continue to prioritise patients who have operations cancelled when booking operations, to ensure patients have their operations as soon as possible. Patients who had their routine elective operations cancelled both 'on the day' and prior to the day between January and June 2012 had their operation, on average, 31 days later than originally planned.

**5. An update on the progress, and outcomes, of the external review commissioned by the Trust into the upsurge in cancellations**

An external review of our emergency and elective pathways over the last 18 weeks (and cancelled operations) is nearing completion. This will further enhance our learning. We will publish the final report and the NUH action plan at our September Trust Board meeting. We will ensure the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee receives a full, detailed briefing in due course.

If there is any further information that I can provide in advance of the meeting on 11 September please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to joining you at the forthcoming Committee meeting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Peter Homa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the start of the first name.

**Peter Homa**  
**Chief Executive**

## APPENDIX 1:

The number of last minute cancelled elective operations in the quarter for non-clinical reasons. NHS provider

|     |       |                                                                |     |    |
|-----|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Q31 | RJR   | COUNTESS OF CHESTER HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST              | 82  | 4  |
| Q31 | RM2   | UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OF SOUTH MANCHESTER NHS FOUNDATION TRUST   | 152 | 7  |
| Q31 | RM3   | SALFORD ROYAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                             | 41  | 0  |
| Q31 | RMC   | BOLTON NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                    | 80  | 2  |
| Q31 | RMP   | TAMESIDE HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                         | 28  | 2  |
| Q31 | RNL   | NORTH CUMBRIA UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                   | 121 | 2  |
| Q31 | RQ6   | ROYAL LIVERPOOL AND BROADGREEN UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS TRUST  | 75  | 2  |
| Q31 | RRF   | WRIGHTINGTON, WIGAN AND LEIGH NHS FOUNDATION TRUST             | 176 | 16 |
| Q31 | RTX   | UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS OF MORECAMBE BAY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST     | 141 | 10 |
| Q31 | RVY   | SOUTHPORT AND ORMSKIRK HOSPITAL NHS TRUST                      | 88  | 5  |
| Q31 | RW3   | CENTRAL MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST   | 100 | 3  |
| Q31 | RW6   | PENNINE ACUTE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                              | 131 | 0  |
| Q31 | RWJ   | STOCKPORT NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                 | 94  | 0  |
| Q31 | RWW   | WARRINGTON AND HALTON HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST           | 88  | 3  |
| Q31 | RXL   | BLACKPOOL TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST              | 75  | 0  |
| Q31 | RXN   | LANCASHIRE TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST             | 162 | 6  |
| Q31 | RXR   | EAST LANCASHIRE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                            | 104 | 3  |
| Q32 | NTP23 | ECCLESHILL NHS TREATMENT CENTRE                                | 2   | 2  |
| Q32 | RAE   | BRADFORD TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST               | 234 | 2  |
| Q32 | RCB   | YORK TEACHING HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                    | 58  | 7  |
| Q32 | RCC   | SCARBOROUGH AND NORTH EAST YORKSHIRE HEALTH CARE NHS TRUST     | 62  | 6  |
| Q32 | RCD   | HARROGATE AND DISTRICT NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                    | 20  | 0  |
| Q32 | RCF   | AIREDALE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                  | 21  | 0  |
| Q32 | RCU   | SHEFFIELD CHILDREN'S NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                      | 19  | 0  |
| Q32 | RFF   | BARNSELY HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                         | 49  | 0  |
| Q32 | RFR   | THE ROTHERHAM NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                             | 56  | 2  |
| Q32 | RHQ   | SHEFFIELD TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST              | 272 | 9  |
| Q32 | RJL   | NORTHERN LINCOLNSHIRE AND GOOLE HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST | 93  | 0  |
| Q32 | RP5   | DONCASTER AND BASSETLAW HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST         | 80  | 0  |
| Q32 | RR8   | LEEDS TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                             | 248 | 6  |
| Q32 | RWA   | HULL AND EAST YORKSHIRE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                    | 164 | 8  |
| Q32 | RWY   | CALDERDALE AND HUDDERSFIELD NHS FOUNDATION TRUST               | 86  | 1  |
| Q32 | RXF   | MID YORKSHIRE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                              | 81  | 1  |
| Q33 | RFS   | CHESTERFIELD ROYAL HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST               | 54  | 0  |



|     |       |                                                                           |     |    |
|-----|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Q33 | RK5   | SHERWOOD FOREST HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                            | 37  | 1  |
| Q33 | RNQ   | KETTERING GENERAL HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                           | 90  | 0  |
| Q33 | RNS   | NORTHAMPTON GENERAL HOSPITAL NHS TRUST                                    | 168 | 0  |
| Q33 | RTG   | DERBY HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                      | 89  | 0  |
| Q33 | RWD   | UNITED LINCOLNSHIRE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                                   | 200 | 83 |
| Q33 | RWE   | UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS OF LEICESTER NHS TRUST                               | 301 | 29 |
| Q33 | RX1   | NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                                 | 286 | 51 |
| Q33 | RY8   | DERBYSHIRE COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES NHS TRUST                            | 26  | 0  |
| Q34 | R1D   | SHROPSHIRE COMMUNITY HEALTH NHS TRUST                                     | 0   | 0  |
| Q34 | RBK   | WALSALL HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST                                              | 49  | 0  |
| Q34 | RJC   | SOUTH WARWICKSHIRE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                   | 80  | 2  |
| Q34 | RJD   | MID STAFFORDSHIRE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                    | 73  | 7  |
| Q34 | RJE   | UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OF NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE NHS TRUST                      | 230 | 0  |
| Q34 | RJF   | BURTON HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                     | 0   | 1  |
| Q34 | RKB   | UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS COVENTRY AND WARWICKSHIRE NHS TRUST                  | 117 | 3  |
| Q34 | RL1   | THE ROBERT JONES AND AGNES HUNT ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST | 26  | 0  |
| Q34 | RL4   | THE ROYAL WOLVERHAMPTON HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                               | 91  | 0  |
| Q34 | RLO   | WYE VALLEY NHS TRUST                                                      | 41  | 0  |
| Q34 | RLT   | GEORGE ELIOT HOSPITAL NHS TRUST                                           | 42  | 3  |
| Q34 | RLU   | BIRMINGHAM WOMEN'S NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                   | 2   | 0  |
| Q34 | RNA   | THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                     | 52  | 0  |
| Q34 | RQ3   | BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                       | 100 | 0  |
| Q34 | RR1   | HEART OF ENGLAND NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                     | 141 | 0  |
| Q34 | RRJ   | THE ROYAL ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                       | 6   | 0  |
| Q34 | RRK   | UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS BIRMINGHAM NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                      | 121 | 0  |
| Q34 | RWP   | WORCESTERSHIRE ACUTE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                                  | 98  | 0  |
| Q34 | RXK   | SANDWELL AND WEST BIRMINGHAM HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                          | 68  | 0  |
| Q34 | RXW   | SHREWSBURY AND TELFORD HOSPITAL NHS TRUST                                 | 225 | 21 |
| Q34 | RYW   | BIRMINGHAM COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST                                 | 2   | 0  |
| Q35 | NNQ01 | BRAINTREE CLINICAL SERVICES LTD                                           | 3   | 0  |
| Q35 | RAJ   | SOUTHEND UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                         | 100 | 2  |
| Q35 | RC1   | BEDFORD HOSPITAL NHS TRUST                                                | 60  | 3  |
| Q35 | RC9   | LUTON AND DUNSTABLE HOSPITAL NHS                                          | 30  | 0  |

|     |       |                                                            |                   |                   |
|-----|-------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Q36 | RP6   | MOORFIELDS EYE HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST               | 42                | 0                 |
| Q36 | RPY   | THE ROYAL MARSDEN NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                     | 8                 | 0                 |
| Q36 | RQM   | CHELSEA AND WESTMINSTER HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST      | 37                | 0                 |
| Q36 | RQX   | HOMERTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST          | 6                 | 0                 |
| Q36 | RRV   | UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST   | 197               | 10                |
| Q36 | RT3   | ROYAL BROMPTON AND HAREFIELD NHS FOUNDATION TRUST          | 103               | 0                 |
| Q36 | RV8   | NORTH WEST LONDON HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                      | 162               | 6                 |
| Q36 | RVL   | BARNET AND CHASE FARM HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                  | 83                | 0                 |
| Q36 | RVR   | EPSOM AND ST HELIER UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS TRUST         | 42                | 0                 |
| Q36 | RYJ   | IMPERIAL COLLEGE HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST                      | 136               | 5                 |
| Q36 | RYQ   | SOUTH LONDON HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST                          | 290               | 5                 |
| Q37 | NTP16 | WILL ADAMS NHS TREATMENT CENTRE                            | 10                | 1                 |
| Q37 | RA2   | ROYAL SURREY COUNTY HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST          | 108               | 9                 |
| Q37 | RDU   | FRIMLEY PARK HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                 | 61                | 0                 |
| Q37 | RN7   | DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM NHS TRUST                           | 53                | 0                 |
| Q37 | RPA   | MEDWAY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                | 69                | 0                 |
| Q37 | RPC   | QUEEN VICTORIA HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST               | 3                 | 0                 |
| Q37 | RTK   | ASHFORD AND ST PETER'S HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST      | 27                | 0                 |
| Q37 | RTP   | SURREY AND SUSSEX HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST                     | 59                | 4                 |
| Q37 | RVV   | EAST KENT HOSPITALS UNIVERSITY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST        | 124               | 6                 |
| Q37 | RWF   | MAIDSTONE AND TUNBRIDGE WELLS NHS TRUST                    | 63                | 0                 |
| Q37 | RXC   | EAST SUSSEX HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST                           | 99                | 7                 |
| Q37 | RXH   | BRIGHTON AND SUSSEX UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS TRUST         | 95                | 0                 |
| Q37 | RYR   | WESTERN SUSSEX HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                         | 142               | 9                 |
| Q38 | R1F   | ISLE OF WIGHT NHS TRUST                                    | 49                | 5                 |
| Q38 | RD7   | HEATHERWOOD AND WEXHAM PARK HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST | 181               | 9                 |
| Q38 | RD8   | MILTON KEYNES HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                | 37                | 0                 |
| Q38 | RHM   | UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL SOUTHAMPTON NHS FOUNDATION TRUST       | 150               | 18                |
| Q38 | RHU   | PORTSMOUTH HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                             | 105               | 0                 |
| Q38 | RHW   | ROYAL BERKSHIRE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                       | 32                | 3                 |
| Q38 | RN5   | HAMPSHIRE HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                   | 80                | 0                 |
| Q38 | RTH   | OXFORD UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                      | Data not returned | Data not returned |
| Q38 | RW1   | SOUTHERN HEALTH NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                       | 3                 | 0                 |
| Q38 | RXQ   | BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HEALTHCARE NHS                             | 17                | 1                 |

|     |     | TRUST                                                                 |     |    |
|-----|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Q39 | 5QH | GLOUCESTERSHIRE PCT                                                   | 0   | 0  |
| Q39 | RA3 | WESTON AREA HEALTH NHS TRUST                                          | 4   | 0  |
| Q39 | RA4 | YEOVIL DISTRICT HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                         | 52  | 0  |
| Q39 | RA7 | UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS BRISTOL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                     | 192 | 24 |
| Q39 | RA9 | SOUTH DEVON HEALTHCARE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                           | 98  | 17 |
| Q39 | RBA | TAUNTON AND SOMERSET NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                             | 128 | 4  |
| Q39 | RBD | DORSET COUNTY HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                           | 45  | 1  |
| Q39 | RBZ | NORTHERN DEVON HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST                                   | 56  | 1  |
| Q39 | RD1 | ROYAL UNITED HOSPITAL BATH NHS TRUST                                  | 152 | 6  |
| Q39 | RD3 | POOLE HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                   | 56  | 1  |
| Q39 | RDY | DORSET HEALTHCARE UNIVERSITY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                     | 0   | 0  |
| Q39 | RDZ | THE ROYAL BOURNEMOUTH AND CHRISTCHURCH HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST | 61  | 0  |
| Q39 | REF | ROYAL CORNWALL HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                                    | 138 | 0  |
| Q39 | RH5 | SOMERSET PARTNERSHIP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                             | 0   | 0  |
| Q39 | RH8 | ROYAL DEVON AND EXETER NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                           | 142 | 21 |
| Q39 | RK9 | PLYMOUTH HOSPITALS NHS TRUST                                          | 207 | 6  |
| Q39 | RN3 | GREAT WESTERN HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                          | 53  | 0  |
| Q39 | RNZ | SALISBURY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                                        | 61  | 0  |
| Q39 | RTE | GLOUCESTERSHIRE HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST                        | 130 | 0  |
| Q39 | RVJ | NORTH BRISTOL NHS TRUST                                               | 80  | 16 |

## **Appendix 2 - Copy of Health Service Journal column from Peter Homa (published August 16 2012)**

### **Let's be clear on cancellations**

16 August 2012 | By [Peter Homa](#)

The service has a duty to be transparent about cancelled operations - and keeping track of the figures has helped one trust improve its record

Recently I talked with a patient whose operation was cancelled on more than one occasion in the early part of this year.

She and her family were deeply upset, and understandably so. The effect this and related conversations had on me was profound.

This particular patient's operations were cancelled during a period of sustained emergency pressures on our hospitals. Many patients and their families have shared similar experiences over winter and deserved a better experience than we provided. But due to the pressure on our services, we had to prioritise more urgent cases and operations to our available beds and critical care.

At every opportunity during this period I, on behalf of Nottingham University Hospitals Trust, have apologised to patients, their families and their loved ones for the inconvenience, upset, pain and anguish the cancellations caused. I did so face-to-face, via letter and by phone.

### **Humbling experience**

My meeting with this particular patient was a humbling experience. She laid out her pain quite openly to me. It was an authentic account of her experience. We met after she had had her operation. She asked me for two things. A verbal and written apology and an answer to the question "what is the hospital doing to ensure this doesn't happen again?"

I wanted to reflect her openness and her honesty with my own spirit of transparency.

Much lip service is paid by public sector bodies about being open and transparent. But there are times when you have to put your money where your mouth is. And that's exactly what we have done in Nottingham.

Throughout our period of emergency pressures we have been asked, and quite rightly - "how many operations have you cancelled?" Like other NHS trusts we report "on the day" cancellations. We do so via our board's monthly integrated performance report which is in the public domain.

However, many operations are cancelled before the day of surgery. These figures are not currently routinely collected by NHS trusts or published.

### **Duty of openness**

We have a duty to our patients and as a public organisation to be open and transparent. In order to give as full an account of cancelled operations as possible we have completed a look-back exercise - which involved trawling through many thousands of records - and published total cancellations figures and the reasons for them.

We took this decision knowing - and experiencing from the contact we have had with patients and the staff who have to relay this unwelcome news to patients - the effect of every cancellation on our patients and their families. We believe we are the first trust in the country to adopt this approach. As of last month we are now reporting total cancellations and the reasons for them at our public board meetings.

More than 63,900 operations and procedures were performed at our hospitals between January and June this year. In the same period, we cancelled 3,283 operations in total (742 on the day). 43 per cent of cancelled operations were due to unavailability of beds and 20 per cent to make way for emergency or cancer surgery.

What influenced our decision to publish total cancellations? First and foremost, our patients. They deserve a better experience and because we want to be open about our plans to ensure fewer cancellations and continued improvement. Our extensive analysis has given us the opportunity to look in greater depth at cancelled operations and find better solutions to the way in which we can deliver more efficient emergency and elective care in our hospitals.

### **To measure is to manage**

Our performance is now much improved, with significantly fewer operations cancelled since the end of April (our cancellation rate has reduced from 10 per cent January to March to 4.3 per cent April to June). Our board is to set bold targets to further reduce the number of cancelled operations. We know this will considerably improve the experience of patients, their families and staff.

This is in the spirit of all that we do at Nottingham's hospitals. We are upfront with our patients and staff when we fall short or get things wrong. We talk openly with our patients and staff about our challenges. Last and by no means least, we recognise and celebrate our successes and achievements. Only by doing each of these things can we demonstrate that we truly are a learning organisation.

I believe that this represents true transparency in modern healthcare. Let's tell it exactly like it is. This is what we owe to our patients, to the public, our staff, and to one another.

*Peter Homa is chief executive at Nottingham University Hospitals Trust*