



Wandsworth Health News

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Cardiac Surgeon Illegally Suspended By St George's Gains Highest Accolade



Last year, readers may remember, Professor Marjan Janangiri a leading cardiac surgeon and whistle blower at St George's took the hospital to court over its decision to exclude her from working at the hospital.

She won an outright victory and the judge ordered her immediate reinstatement. He commented that the decision to exclude her was,

'irrational and did not follow the required procedure'. Her barrister was even more explicit and called the hospital's actions a 'witch hunt.'

Now, what must embarrass St George's top brass even further, Professor Janangiri has been appointed the Chair of the Society for Cardiothoracic Surgery; an

honorary post of three years in duration.

This prestigious position was awarded to Professor Janangiri after the selection process had looked at applications from a number of highly qualified individuals.

No mention of this award on the hospital's website. !!

Vacancy rate back into double figures -worse this year

No wonder NHS staff are feeling under valued and under pressure.

Vacancy rates nationally are rising.

At St George's the proportion of unfilled posts is now back into double figures.

At the October meeting of the hospital's Trust Board it was announced that the vacancy target of 10% had been exceeded. It now stands at 12.8%. The worse vacancy figure this year.

With over 9,000 employees that equates to over 1,200

staff missing, with the rest having to cover their workload.

That is why patients are waiting longer for appointments and targets are being missed.

A&E goes from bad to worse

The turnaround target for A&E was set by the last Labour government at four hours.

That is, no patient should wait more than four hours in A&E between arriving and either being discharged or taken into hospital.

That target figure has been missed by St George's all this year.

The situation seems to be getting worse rather than better.

In July 86.4% of patients had been seen within the four hour target. By October this figure had dropped to 83.3%

The Trust Board were told at their last meeting that the situation would be addressed by 'establishing an Emergency Department Performance Group that would meet weekly and be chaired by the Chief Executive'

No problem there then-that will soon get it sorted.

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All information in WHN is taken from the publicly available papers of the St George's Hospital Trust Board meetings and the Health Service press

Any comments, suggestions, further information, contact the editor.

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For more information about what is happening in our NHS

See: <https://keepournhspublic.com/>

Trust Board Top Brass off to Florida for Christmas

As reported in previous issues of *Wandsworth Health News* the Trust Board at St George's seem to have an uncanny fascination with the US private company Orlando Health based in Florida.

So besotted are they that every so often the lucky ones amongst the hospital's top brass are chosen for a sightseeing tour.

The main sight in question that they will be looking at will be the Orlando Health HQ.

The trip will start on 9 December, ideal for Christmas shopping, and will involve, quote, 'ten key leaders of the trust'

To add insult to injury the trip is being financed by the hospital charity. So that is where the pennies go from grateful patients. And they thought that the money would go towards making hospital improvements.

Just one member of the board raised a question about this trip at the September meeting. Quite rightly the member in question raised whether information gained from Orlando Health could

not be obtained closer to home, or even by Skype, especially given the hospital's financial situation.

The objection fell on stony ground and was rejected by the Trust Board

This huge health and care company appears to be owned by one Howard Jaffe who is involved with health and care centres all across the state. Quite an entrepreneur looking at his record.

Allegedly the trip is to find out about, 'quality improvement'. Another reason might be how to link up with private profit making health companies

A brief survey of the web reveals that Orlando Health have a very poor rating for care and the company has been the subject of numerous law suits.

Their website reveals some astonishing prices for healthcare that patients get here for free under the NHS.

Here are a few examples:

Chest X-ray £400

Heart surgery £18,000

Ear wax removal £400

Mouth biopsy £3,600

Scan for breast cancer £4,500

If you can't afford that, how about some, bath therapy at £110 or get your nosebleed controlled for a mere £350.

The US health system is insurance based, far more expensive than ours and with worse health outcomes.

There are more bankruptcies in America due to health care costs than any other single issue.

And of course over 40 million Americans are not covered for health care-they can't afford it..

Just why these 'ten key leaders' at St George's should be flying off to Florida while the rest of the hospital staff are clamouring to find extra beds for the usual winter crisis is beyond me.

Finance - more borrowing to meet targets

Every year St George's, like every other NHS hospital, fails to meet its financial targets.

Only half way through the financial year the hospital is already 35 million overdrawn on its budget.

Incredibly, this was described by the Trust Board

at its last meeting as, 'according to plan'.

In other words at the end of the financial year the hospital aims to be overdrawn by about twice that amount.

Even to reach the target of almost £35 million overdrawn by month six the Trust Board had to borrow

over £11.5 million to fund the debt.

This loan is subject to a not very generous interest rate of 3.5% . That is almost half a million a year to service this one debt. The equivalent to employing twenty more hospital nurses.

Ambulance Service under severe pressure

Not only have turnaround times at A& E soared but so too has the turnaround time for ambulances arriving at the hospital.

From being above the London average the hospital has now dropped to just below.

The target of 100% handover in 15 minutes or less has not been achieved for years

Because of the cuts in the health service the handover rate at St George's has gone from 42% in less than 15 minutes a year ago to 32% now. The London average is

45%. The hospital is well below that. And getting worse.

Almost 10% of ambulance arrivals at the hospital have to wait over 30 minutes before the patients can be delivered

Maternity -worse figures for the year

The hospital's aim of having all pregnant women booked into maternity services by twelve weeks and six days

before they are due to give birth has not been achieved.

The figure of 81.5% reported to the Board was the lowest for the year.

The reason for this missed target the Board was told was a lack of beds.

No surprise there.

Risks to St George's Hospital

Every NHS hospital has what is called a Risk Assessment Register.

The register outlines the risks faced by the hospital overall including patient care, future strategy, finance, staff, property, technology.

The risks are labelled according to their severity.

St George's has at the moment, nine partial assurance risks. Which means that the risks involved

are being dealt with but there is a need for improvement.

There are also seven risks that are far more serious and are not being handled effectively. These risks require significant improvement

Here are the outstanding serious risks the hospital faces:

- Staff cannot provide outstanding care because IT needs to become more reliable, easier to use and more integrated.
- Failure to make progress in delivering clinical services strategy.
- Inability to achieve financial balance within three years.
- Unable to obtain sufficient capital funds to source investment in hospital infrastructure
- Insufficient funding to improve hospital estate to the degree necessary to implement clinical services
- Without estate improvement cannot provide a safe environment for patients and staff.
- May not be able to recruit, train and sustain an engaged and effective workforce

Trust Chair -not a bad little earner

The Chair of St George's hospital Gillian Norton who also chairs nearby Epsom and St Helier hospital is not elected by the staff and patients of the hospitals, but has been appointed by NHS England.

The terms and conditions for the post say that 14 hours a month is the length of time the chair is expected to devote to the role.

After a salary increase was recently granted by NHS England Gillian Norton will receive between £55,000 and

£63,000 a year. This for a job that involves just over three hours a week.

Presumably she will get much the same for her Epsom and St Helier post.

Not a bad little earner some might say.