

For the Record – Press Statements

Publication	Dudley News
Date of article	Wednesday 25 th June 2014
Reporter	Bev Holder
Headline	Hospital faces £6.7m deficit
First paragraph/s of article	<p>HOSPITAL bosses say they are facing a £6.7m deficit despite introducing a raft of measures to try and cut costs to plug an ever decreasing budget.</p> <p>Dudley North MP Ian Austin was horrified to hear the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust had slipped £1.38m into the red in quarter three of the last financial year – and now trust bosses have admitted their plan for 2014/15 shows a shortfall of £6.7m.</p>
Press enquiry	The Dudley News has asked for a comment regarding the press release MP Ian Austin issued about the government losing control of NHS finances. The Dudley Group showed a £1.38million deficit in quarter 3 of 2013/14. Bev Holder asked for a Trust response.
Trust response	
<p>COMMENT FROM PAULA CLARK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST</p> <p>The Dudley Group showed a £1.38 million deficit in quarter 3 of 2013/14 but the Trust ended the financial year with a small operating surplus of £350,000.</p> <p>However, in common with all trusts in England, we are under extreme financial pressures against the backdrop of a budget freeze for the past four years and a requirement to make four percent efficiency savings, year on year, which equates to £10-£12 million. The money we get paid for treatments and procedures is also reducing.</p> <p>We have also experienced an increased demand on our services, higher pension costs and we are losing a total of £6 million, across 2014/15 and 2015/16, to the Better Care Fund which aims to reduce the number of patients using our emergency</p>	

services.

There is a national shortage of qualified nurses in England and, like many other trusts, we have also invested heavily in recruiting more nurses from overseas. To ensure we maintain safe levels of nursing care, we sometimes need to employ agency staff at premium rates.

To reduce our deficit and balance our books, we have a turnaround plan to offer patients better and more efficient care, which will in turn reduce the our costs. For example we have introduced a text messaging service to those who attend outpatients to reduce the number of patients who fail to turn up for their appointments.

We are also introducing a triage system to ensure outpatients go to the most appropriate place for their treatment, and aiming to reduce the number of unnecessary follow up appointments. We have plans in place to reduce the number of unnecessary admissions to hospital and to ensure inpatients leave hospital as soon as they are medically fit to make way for other patients who need a hospital bed.

Our plans for 2014/15 show a deficit of £6.7 million. However, we hope the measures we have put in place will help bring the books back into balance by 2015/16.

*****ENDS*****