

Belfast Trust Financial Management Framework

High Level Overview

Budget Management Arrangements

The Trust operates a devolved budgetary control framework. Directors are ultimately accountable to the Chief Executive for managing their budgets and ensuring their staff perform their budgetary control responsibilities and complete required financial training.

Directors are supported by finance through a business partnering arrangement. Each directorate has a dedicated directorate accountant who reports to the Co-director of Finance. The directorate accountant and his/her team support the directorate's senior team and provide advice and support to budget holders to manage their budgets, identify and address cost pressures, and develop business cases for example.

Directorate accountants prepare a suite of summary reports on a monthly basis to assist the senior directorate team. This includes a summary of the monthly financial performance, an overview of any areas of concern or key spend trends and an analysis of workforce budget and spend. Directors are required to discuss these reports at senior team meetings, sign off reports and oversee action plans to address budget variances.

The directorate account also oversees the development of a quarterly financial performance dashboard which feeds into directorate QMS reports and QMS presentations to ET and TB.

Reporting

Every year, the finance team produces a detailed financial plan, building incrementally on the previous year's plans to reflect new income and investments, pressures and savings. This plan is shared with Trust Board and SPPG, and Trust and directorate budgets are developed to reflect the plan.

Each directorate receives detailed monthly pay and goods and services finance reports, showing performance against budget at cost centre (ward/department),

divisional and directorate level. These are summarised by directorate accountant teams via a monthly suite of reports as discussed above.

Financial monitoring reports are submitted to SPPG, along with a high level summary narrative, on a monthly basis.

The Director of Finance provides a financial update to Trust Board on a monthly basis, and on a regular basis to ET and the Trust's Senior Leadership Group (SLG).

MORE

The Trust has an established Maximising Outcomes, Resources and Efficiency (MORE) Group, which meets on bi-monthly basis, is chaired by the Chief Executive and involves all directors and a number of their senior management leads. This group focuses on Trust-wide financial challenges and opportunities, with a focus on actions to address financial pressures and the identification and implementation of efficiency and productivity measures.

Training

High level financial awareness training is provided as part of the Trust's corporate induction which all new staff must complete. This includes an overview of the Trust's statutory financial duties and good financial management guidance and advice in relation to budgeting, procurement, pay and travel claims, service developments and cost pressures and fraud awareness for example.

Budget holders are required to complete additional specific elearning finance training in a number of financial modules including budgetary control.

Regular training is provided to budget holders by finance business partners as and when required.

Internal Audit

The Trust's budgetary control framework is regularly audited by Internal Audit whose assessment forms part of the annual external audit assessment. It should be noted that all audits in budgetary control have received satisfactory assurance.