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UNISON Sussex Partnership Branch
General Office
Mill View Hospital
Nevill Avenue
Hove
BN3 7HZ

PRESS RELEASE FROM UNISON SUSSEX PARTNERSHIP BRANCH

UNISON CONGRATULATES SUSSEX PARTNERSHIP BUT WARNS OF STRUGGLES AHEAD

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has been congratulated by its largest union for achieving an overall rating of 'good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and 'outstanding' in the caring domain.

Nick McMaster, Branch Secretary of UNISON Sussex Partnership Branch said "I would like to congratulate trust senior management and frontline staff, many of whom are our members, for gaining this rating. This is a long overdue recognition of the hard work and dedication of the workforce in providing the best possible experience and outcomes for our service users, in what is very trying times for public sector organisations"

However the branch, which has over 2000 members, warns that this improved rating should not divert from serious issues facing Sussex Partnership. Adds Nick: "There are a number of concerns we have shared with the trust, which they themselves recognise. Recruitment and retention of staff is reaching crisis point with more staff leaving than joining, bed shortages for an increasingly acute patient population, and the pressures on community teams with extreme workloads are just three of the big issues our members report to us.

"And whilst the trust can have a positive impact on these, the public needs to know that this situation is the result of continued underfunding of the NHS in general and mental health services in particular. We recognise that the trust has engaged the unions in some of these work streams, but without extra resources it is really hard to see how much positive change can be implemented. If we want to see our CQC ratings continue in the right direction, we call on the government and our commissioners to match public expectation and the trust's ambition for outstanding services."

To press their case the branch has called on all those who support public services to attend the national NHS Day of Protest in London on Saturday 3rd February which will be calling on the government to properly fund the NHS.

ENDS

For further information contact:

Nick McMaster, Branch Communications Officer: 07712 435 122