

# inthe news

The **AWARD WINNING** newsletter for Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals

July/August 2008 - Issue 38

## Open Day celebrates 60 years of the NHS

Staff, governors, patients and local residents joined together to celebrate 60 years of the NHS on Saturday 5 July at Basildon University Hospital.

The event was opened by Alan Whittle, Chief Executive, along with Max, the rotund 8ft mascot of a our locally - developed campaign, with Essex visual technology company Vis - IT, to combat infections in hospital.

Trust Governors were on hand to welcome visitors. Barbara Hallows, appointed governor for Brentwood, who trained as a nurse during the 1950s was among several former healthcare professionals who were able to share a little NHS history with guests.

Tours of the hospital were one of the most popular attractions, with people keen for a behind-the-scenes peak of operating theatres and The Essex Cardiothoracic Centre.



The Trust's longest-serving member of staff, John Surrey, planted a tree in the hospital grounds to mark the occasion. Left to right: Janis Gibson, Non-Executive Director; John Baron MP; Alan Whittle, Chief Executive; Michael Large, Chairman; John Surrey, Consultant Clinical Scientist; Dr Stephen Morgan, Medical Director.



A 1938 ambulance, the only one in Britain, was parked alongside a contemporary model, nearly 70 years younger, and visitors were able to step inside and compare the facilities.

Entertainment included music from Basildon Hospital Radio, and a dancing display from a local twirling group. A birthday cake with 60 candles demonstrated that the hospital smoke alarms were working, before being shared out among staff and visitors.

*More NHS 60 events on pages 2 and 3*

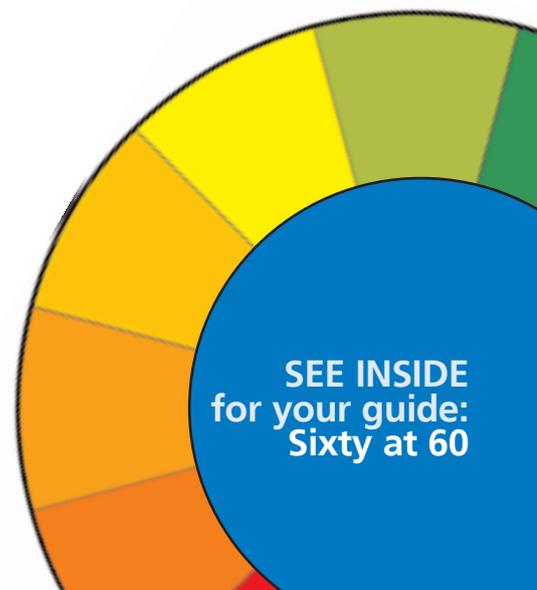


Sally, Mary and Helen outside the Abbey.

### Westminster Abbey Hosts NHS 60 Service

A service to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the NHS was held at Westminster Abbey on 2 July.

Sally Shean, Mary Conway and Helen Mattock, who were nominated by colleagues to represent the Trust, took their place alongside notable guests such as His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales and Prime Minister Gordon Brown.



SEE INSIDE  
for your guide:  
Sixty at 60

# Celebrating NHS 60

## Three caring generations

As we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the NHS, *In The News* meets some members of Trust staff for whom healthcare is a real family affair.

It came as no surprise to her mother that one of Laura Chaplin's favourite games as a two-year-old was playing nurse. Laura, a Clinical Support Worker in the Joint Replacement Unit, is the third generation of her family to follow a career in healthcare. She is also the third generation to choose to work in hospitals now managed by the Trust.

Laura is the daughter of Karen Stephenson, Outpatients Department Sister in The Essex Cardiothoracic Centre. Karen's mother, Jane Jordan, was a nurse at Orsett Hospital before retiring in 1994.

### First generation



Jane Jordan qualified as a nurse in 1976.

Jane Jordan, was born in Scotland. Her own mother was a big influence on her, having a great interest in medicine. Karen

explains: "My Scottish grandmother brought up four children and didn't have the opportunity to be a nurse, but she would have loved it and been brilliant. She was so proud of the fact that Mum and I went into nursing."

Jane began working as an orderly at Orsett Hospital in 1969, when Karen and her brother were settled in school. She began her nurse training while she was working, and qualified seven years later.

Jane has fond memories of her career, colleagues and patients. She says: "I loved every bit of nursing. It may not have been well-paid but I felt the patients appreciated what we did, and we nurses were very close"

She believes that talking to patients is one of the most important parts of the job. "It is so important to reassure people and make them feel cared for. Even if you are busy doing things, you can still take time for a kind word."

### Second generation

Karen Stephenson was never in doubt that she would follow in her mother's footsteps and began to train as a nurse at the age of 18. "Mum loved her nursing, and her only regret was that she didn't start earlier, so that influenced me to get on with it," she said.

Karen began her training in 1977 and, like her mother, immediately took to her chosen career.

She spent the next 20 years at Orsett Hospital, working on the Coronary Care Ward for two years, then becoming a Night Sister on the Surgical floor. In 1997, Karen moved to Basildon Hospital, where she started a pre-admission clinic, became Ward Manager on Kingswood, and then worked as a clinical nurse specialist in uro-oncology. Karen then left the NHS to work in private healthcare, but found it was not sufficiently fulfilling. She says: "It seemed so different, and although that may have been nice for a breather, I did not feel challenged or busy enough."

She returned in 2007 to join the new Essex Cardiothoracic Centre. Karen's advice to younger nurses is to have a clear idea of how they want their career to progress, and to be prepared for hard work. "Also remember that we all sometimes feel like moaning about work, but the patients



Jane, Karen and Laura.

don't choose to be in hospital, and we should always be professional and positive."

### Third generation

Although as a child Laura Chaplin loved her nurse's uniform, her earliest ambition was to be a veterinary nurse. She began practising her caring skills on her dog and guinea pig, and after leaving school, completed a course in animal care. But she decided she would prefer to work with people.

Like Karen, Laura was inspired by her mother's enthusiasm and dedication to her work. She says: "Mum was a big influence on me. I always thought if I was unwell and she was my nurse, I would be more than happy. We always talked about nursing, and we watched all the medical programmes together."

Laura commenced her CSW training in May, after attending a recruitment day at the Trust. She was invited to several interviews, and says she chose the Joint Replacement Unit because it has a good reputation and she really liked the Ward Sisters. She says: "I am really enjoying the work. I haven't quite decided what direction I want to



Laura Chaplin wearing the new Trust uniform!

take yet, but I might train to be a paramedic, one day in the future."

## Children's Hearing Centre named after our longest serving doctor



Left to Right: Dawn Wall, Head of Audiology; Alan Whittle, Chief Executive; Paul Su and his wife Evelyn and Elle-Louise Taylor who presented Mrs Su with flowers.

The Trust honoured its longest-serving consultant, **Doctor Paul Su**, by naming the Children's Hearing Centre after him.

Dr. Paul Su began working at Basildon Hospital when it opened in 1973 and has championed better care for children, from birth to 18 years of age, who live with hearing difficulties and implants.

The naming ceremony also marked the centre's second birthday and was part of the Trust-wide celebrations for the 60th anniversary of the NHS.

## MPs wish us well

We are appreciative of the support that local MPs have given to our NHS 60 celebrations.

John Baron MP was able to join us on our Open Day, and we welcomed the active role he played in our cake cutting and tree planting ceremonies.

Angela Smith MP was unfortunately not able to join us as she was out of the country, but sent a letter congratulating Trust staff, and praising Trust achievements over the past ten years.

## Switchboard raffle raises money for children's wards

A raffle organised by Switchboard Staff at the Open Day raised a fabulous £170 for the children's wards.

On behalf of Switchboard Staff, Pip Bendon said: "We all feel that the children are our future, and we must look after them in any way we can. We are sure that the children's wards can put this money to excellent use for young patients."

## Trust celebrates its international flavour



Trust colleagues celebrate international day.

As part of our NHS 60th anniversary celebrations, Trust staff held an International Day, sharing food and traditions from around the world.

The NHS has a hugely diverse workforce, and our Trust is no exception. The event gave staff the opportunity to find out more about the different countries their colleagues are from, collect recipes and sample food from America and the Caribbean, Asia, Europe, Australia and Africa. There was a dazzling array of national costumes and a belly-dancing display.

Nigel Taylor, Director of Personnel and Organisational Development, said: "Holding an International Day is a great way to come together and find out more about the different parts of the world that our colleagues are from. Music and food are areas of each others' traditions that we can all participate in and enjoy."

## Good sports at the Trust



Beijing 2008 has a tough act to follow. Nearly 200 sporting heroes from the Trust took part in a series of events to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the NHS.

Ten pin bowling, golf, cricket, football and kurling were included on the fixture list. Alison Payne, Orthopaedic Physiotherapy Practitioner, was nominated Sports Personality of the Year (by her female team mates!) for making the longest golfing drive, beating 24 men and four women.

The bowling contest was attended by over 100 members of staff. Antony Farnum, Biomedical Scientist, distinguished himself with the highest score. The bowling fixture was organised by Helen Mattock, Capital Accountant and Judy Payne, Deputy Chief Accountant. Helen said: "We want to kick start more of a social network at the Trust and have more events like this; they are great fun and good for staff morale."

Prizes were presented by Nigel Taylor, Director of Personnel.

If you would like to make a suggestion for a social activity with Trust colleagues, or find out what's going on, email: [staffcouncil@btuh.nhs.uk](mailto:staffcouncil@btuh.nhs.uk)

## Giraffe Appeal well on its way to target



Georgia and Stephanie Hance with staff on NICU.

**Just six months after its launch, the Trust's Giraffe Appeal for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) is within sight of its target.**

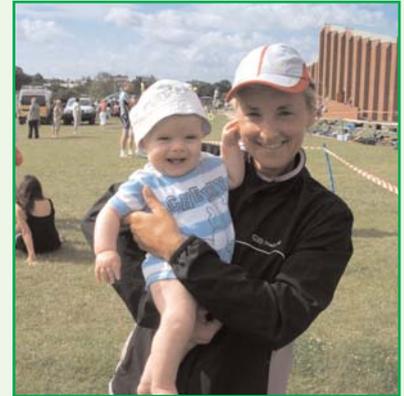
Thanks to the generosity of local businesses, organisations and individuals, the appeal has raised

£45,000 for the purchase of two highly-advanced incubators, called Giraffe Omnibeds, which help care for premature babies.

Sarah Noon, Assistant Director for Service Improvement,

held a talent night and raised £877 for the appeal. Accounts Clerk, Denise McSweeney, held a collection in memory of her mum, Elsie Carvell, and raised over £400 pounds from mourners who donated instead of buying flowers.

Six-year-old twins, Georgia and Stephanie Hance, made a splash by holding a swimathon and raising a terrific £484 by swimming for one and a half hours.



Joanne Graley still smiling after her triathlon.

## What will follow the Giraffes?

**With the Giraffe Appeal expected to reach its target in the next couple of months, we want to be ready to get a new appeal up and running in time to take advantage of Christmas festivities and the season of goodwill.**

So now is the time to start thinking about what our next fundraising appeal should be. And we're throwing it open to staff to put forward your ideas. The success of the Giraffe appeal shows just what can be achieved - £45,000 in around six months - so think big and think creatively!

The Giraffe campaign, of course, had instant appeal, with tiny babies at its heart and the Giraffe name lending itself to cuddly toys. How are we going to follow it? What ideas do you have that will galvanise our local community into action? What can you come up with that will unite staff across the Trust?

Need a new piece of kit? Want something built? Need something refurbished and redecorated? Got funds for a piece of equipment - but wish you could afford to add all the extra "bells and whistles"?

It doesn't matter where you work, or what level you are at, you can put in a bid (providing it has your manager's backing). You can get together with other staff, from your own department or across directorates, or indeed, from partner organisations, such as social or primary or mental health care. All we ask is that your idea fits with the Trust's strategic direction, has credence from a patient perspective, stands up to an economic assessment and improves clinical standards and outcomes.

You can find out more from Alison Wigmore, Chief Accountant on ext 3218 or from the Fundraising Office on ext 4198. If you decide to put your idea forward, you'll need to fill in an application form that will ask for details of your project, including the cost of equipment and/or building work and any additional staff needed to get it up and running. You will also need to say whether there are any ongoing running costs that are not currently budgeted for.

**The deadline for submitting your bid is Monday 15 September.**

Projects will be evaluated on how well they meet the Trust's four priorities of patient experience, patient safety, efficiency and effectiveness and the look and feel of the hospitals. Shortlisted entries will be asked to make a brief presentation to the Fundraising Strategy Group on Wednesday 8 October.

The group's chair is Chief Accountant, Alison Wigmore, who explains: "Now that our fundraising is firmly established, we need to ensure everyone has the chance to put their idea forward for the next appeal. We've put in place a fair and transparent process so that whatever is chosen should have widespread appeal and the necessary internal support to make it happen. I'm really looking forward to seeing what staff come up with and wish everyone good luck with their entry."

Marathon runner Tony Cooper presented the appeal with a cheque for £2,200 and Joanne Graley raised £620 by completing the Grays Wilkins triathlon.

The WRVS has pledged £10,000 for the appeal and donations from Basildon's Eastgate shopping centre now total £9,000 from the sale of cuddly giraffes.

Later this month, the Billericay Twins Club is holding a sponsored pram push and toddler walk to raise money for the Giraffe Appeal.

If you have an idea to help the Giraffe Appeal reach its target, or have already raised money for the appeal, the Trust would love to hear from you. Please contact Ian Child on 0845 155 3111 ext 4198.



*Peter Sheldrake, Non-Executive Director and John Robb, Public Governor raised £435 by spending a morning selling toy giraffes.*

## Investing Millions in new and better equipment

Unlike many hospitals with a long history of fundraising committees and appeals, our focus on fundraising is relatively recent. It has evolved not just because it brings in welcome income but, just as importantly, because it better connects us with our local communities. Many people - Governors and Members, patients and public, staff and suppliers, young and old - want to be directly involved with supporting their local hospitals. Fundraising unites them in a common cause and provides a tangible target for their efforts. Maximising and channelling donations through a specific appeal means there is more left of the Trust's annual income to spend on medical equipment and other developments.

Since becoming a Foundation Trust four years ago, we have invested more than £16 million in buying new medical equipment, such as two state-of-the-art CT scanners, modern beds and mattresses, new renal equipment and specialist kit for The Essex Cardiothoracic Centre (CTC). This compares to an annual spend of around £500,000 before we had the financial freedoms that Foundation Trust status has given us. These include being able to reinvest any year-end surpluses and to borrow.

### Bidding For New Equipment

There are four routes to accessing funds from the Trust's capital investment budget. The Clinical Equipment Strategy Group (CESG), chaired by Chris Welch, is probably the best known of these. There is a planned replacement programme for each directorate's equipment, with expected date and cost. A CESG sub-group - a group of clinicians supported by Gary Cordery, Medical Equipment Management Services (MEMS) - carefully reviews this programme annually and recommends to the Board of Clinical Directors what the priorities should be for funding. A "league table" is then drawn up and the money allocated to directorates to procure the equipment.

### Invest To Save

There are two relatively new schemes that you can apply to for new and additional equipment. "Invest To Save" aims to do what it says on the tin: invest capital now in schemes that will generate

future revenue savings. A good example of this is the £340,000 we invested last year in buying more than 100 new beds to bring our bed stock up to full capacity. This is saving us more than £80,000 in hire charges every year. If you want to explore the "Invest To Save" route, you need to validate the claims you make - for example include research findings if quoting reductions in Length of Stay - and be prepared to sign up to a post-project evaluation to demonstrate savings. "This is one of the quickest and easiest ways to gain investment for your project", said Adam Sewell-Jones, Director of Finance and Continuous Improvement. "If you can demonstrate pay-back in a reasonable time-frame, then the Capital Investment Group want to know about it."

### Innovation Fund

Adam has also made provision for another allocation within the capital investment programme specifically to fund new equipment that develops services innovatively. You can find out more about both these schemes by contacting Clare Woolf, Assistant Director, Major Projects and Initiatives in the Finance Department on ext 8850.

Last, but by no means least, the annual planning cycle should consider the need for additional equipment when proposing any service development or expansion, so that it can be built into the planning process.

## New face behind Fundraising

As Lorraine Baker has left the Trust, a new Fundraising Manager has been appointed on an interim basis. She is Kirsty O'Callaghan, latterly Associate Director of Public Engagement at Northampton PCT, but formerly at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow where, as Head of Communications, she led on PPI and fundraising. Kirsty takes up post on Monday 28 July, will be based in the Finance office on level K of the Tower Block and can be contacted on ext 4198.

## Pharmacist on the frontline

**Sarah Zeraschi, Senior Pharmacist for Surgery, Microbiology and Infection Control, is on the frontline of the Trust's battle against bugs. She works closely with the Infection Control team and has recently designed a new pocket guide on prescribing antibiotics.**

"I always enjoyed science at school and was interested in medical things. I grew up near Plymouth, and we had a really good community pharmacy where I did some work experience.

I knew immediately I would like the work because it was connected with science and with caring for patients. I also liked the fact the pharmacist was obviously successful and had a nice car!

I attended the School of Pharmacy in London and, because I was clear that I wanted to work in the more acute side of medicine, I worked in two hospitals in East London, then for five years at University College Hospital, before coming to the Trust in 2004.

When I first qualified, I did not work specifically with antibiotics. You work through different areas under the guidance of a more senior pharmacist. I was always aware of the problems of resistance and that it is important to use antibiotics only when absolutely necessary.

There has been a huge reduction in infection rates since we introduced changes in the prescription of antibiotics last year. I have just reviewed the guidelines again with Dr Sage, Dr Cherian and Dr Werry, Microbiology Consultants, and we are further restricting certain antibiotics that can affect rates of *C difficile*. My new pocket guide for doctors on the prescription of antibiotics has just been printed.

There are local patterns of resistance and sensitivity to antibiotics. Pharmacists and microbiologists advise doctors on local policies. Doctors have become much more aware of the potential problems of over-prescribing antibiotics, especially since we have

introduced changes at the Trust. Some patients are aware of the issues too, but when people are unwell they are usually prepared to take what medicines they are given without question. That's why it's so important to be careful.

We don't stay in the pharmacy department waiting for prescriptions to arrive. Every day, each in-patient is reviewed by a pharmacist. In the morning, we go on our rounds to talk to them, find out why they have been admitted, look at their results and confirm their medication history. We check that any medication prescribed for them is appropriate and a suitable dose for them.

Going onto the wards also means we are able to speak directly to nurses and doctors. Our role is to complement what doctors do and give advice on drug choice and dose for individual patients. The doctors are good to work with. One recently said to me that we are like a walking British National Formulary.

I keep up with the latest developments in pharmacy by reading journals at home. I also belong to a number of professional bodies, which is useful for having email chats to share information and solve problems. I am very happy in my job; this is a good Trust and I really like the contact with patients. I just wish there were more hours in the day!"



*Sarah Zeraschi at work in the Pharmacy.*

## Support for cardiac arrhythmia patients

A support seminar for people affected by heart rhythm disorders was held last month in the Education Centre at Basildon University Hospital. Dr Stuart Harris, Consultant Cardiologist and Cardiac Electrophysiologist (EP) at The CTC, was the key speaker at the event, which was attended by 70 patients and relatives, along with a range of health professionals.

Arrhythmia is a variation in the heartbeat that can stop the heart from pumping sufficient blood around the body. In some cases, it can cause sudden and completely unexpected death.

The seminar was organised by the charity SADS UK, which works to prevent premature loss of life by raising awareness of heart conditions that can cause Sudden Arrhythmic Death (SAD). The charity also donates heart monitors to surgeries and hospitals, and defibrillators to places like schools and shopping centres.

## Queen Honours Trust Chairman

Michael Large, the Trust Chairman, was awarded the OBE in the Queen's 2008 Birthday Honours List for services to business and the community in the East of England.

Alan Whittle, Chief Executive, said: "The tremendous work that Michael does as Chairman of the Trust is evidence of his commitment to the community. We are delighted that his great sense of public spirit has been honoured in this way."

## Pupils enjoy a trip to hospital

A group of students from a local school enjoyed an exclusive viewing of Basildon University Hospital. The pupils, aged 13 and 14, were given demonstrations and behind-the-scenes tours in the X-ray department, the Plaster Room, Accident and Emergency, an ambulance and the Children's Department.

The visit, organised by Debbie Crisp, Patient and Public Involvement Manager, and Nic Maxwell, Deputy Headteacher at Cedar Hall School, was for pupils taking a first aid course as part of their life skills programme. The school, in Thundersley, Essex, caters for children aged 5 to 16 who have learning difficulties.

The pupils showed an enthusiastic interest in the hospital, asking staff well-informed questions on a range of subjects. Following a demonstration of X-ray techniques and equipment, two pupils had their arms plastered (although they were slightly disappointed not to be allowed to return to school with the casts still on!).

In A&E, the group was shown cardiac and blood pressure monitors before climbing into the

back of an East of England ambulance to see some of the emergency equipment and learn about the life-saving work and advanced driving skills.

The tour finished with a visit to the hospital school room. Nic Maxwell said: "We really appreciate that hospital staff took the time to show the pupils round. The tour not only goes hand-in-hand with the first aid course, it can help to allay fears that children may have about going into hospital, and also help boost their self-confidence, general knowledge and career plans."



Cedar Hall pupils learn about plastering technique.

## Record support helps children to keep up with schoolwork



Brian Jiggins and Veronica Buttigieg with young patients.

Children who need to stay in Basildon University Hospital will find it much easier to keep up with their schoolwork thanks to everybody who has sent in 'Tesco Computers for Schools' vouchers.

And special recognition must go to super-collector Brian Jiggins, who this year managed to gather 70,000 vouchers for the appeal - breaking his own record.

Veronica Buttigieg, school teacher at the hospital, said: "We would like to thank everybody who once again kindly gave their vouchers to the hospital. It is a brilliant boost to our resources."

## Trust recognised for quality of undergraduate teaching

The quality of medical education provided within the Trust has been formally recognised, with 'Main Provider Trust Status' awarded by The Royal Free & University College London Medical School.

Consultant Nephrologist and Associate Medical Director for Underground Teaching, Dr Aroon Lal; said: "I'm delighted with this award. This gives our Trust the same status as the central Teaching Hospitals such as University College Hospital, the Royal Free Hospital and the Whittington Hospital.

"This follows several years of hard work and reflects not just the number of undergraduate medical students we receive (the most of any District General Hospital associated with the school), but also the excellent standard of education, innovation and contribution the Trust provides to the undergraduate curriculum. We are, in effect, the first 'Clinical Teaching Hospital' in Essex."

## Working together to boost local recruitment

A partnership agreement to promote training and employment opportunities in healthcare was signed by the Trust and Thurrock and Basildon College.

The two organisations have pledged to continue

their collaboration to support learning and skills development in the college and to encourage more local people to take up careers with the Trust.

Alan Whittle, Chief Executive, said: "We have a very productive partnership with the college and I look forward to it continuing to help boost local recruitment in healthcare."



Left to right: Michael Large; Keith Baggs; Diana Hale, Vice Chair of Thurrock and Basildon College; Janice Logie, LSC Partnership Area Director; Julie Spearman, Vice Principal of Thurrock and Basildon College; Alan Whittle; Keith Mogford, Governor at the College and Denise Fielding, Principal of Thurrock and Basildon College.

## A fantastic first year for The CTC



Left to right: Inderpaul Birdi, Consultant Surgeon; Tina Faulkner, CTC General Manager; Sergej Petrosjan, Consultant Anaesthetist; Michael Large, Chairman.

**The Essex Cardiothoracic Centre (CTC) opened to patients on 1 July 2007 and has plenty to celebrate on its first birthday.**

The £60 million centre is one of the most modern of its kind in the country. Offering specialist treatment for people with heart and lung diseases, it means that Essex patients no longer have to travel out of the county to London or further away for treatment.

More than 600 cardiac operations and 200 thoracic cases have been undertaken at The CTC, along with nearly 2,000 interventional cardiology procedures. A third of the operations and half the procedures were urgent or emergency.

Already, figures show that patient outcomes are extremely favourable compared to other heart and lung centres in Britain.

The CTC has attracted a team of highly skilled surgeons, cardiologists and anaesthetists, supported by a range of other excellent healthcare professionals.

The centre is building a reputation as a leader in the field of minimally-invasive cardiac surgery, with highly-specialised procedures such as keyhole valve replacement and repair, rotablation to clear severely blocked arteries and Patent Foramen Ovale (PFO) closures to repair holes in the heart. These techniques, which are not widely used in Britain, help to speed recovery and reduce the risk of infection.

The centre boasts the latest equipment and technology, with state-of-the-art operating theatres and cardiac catheter laboratories. Specialist cardiac CT scanning is now available in The CTC, offering more accurate diagnosis and more detail prior to surgery.

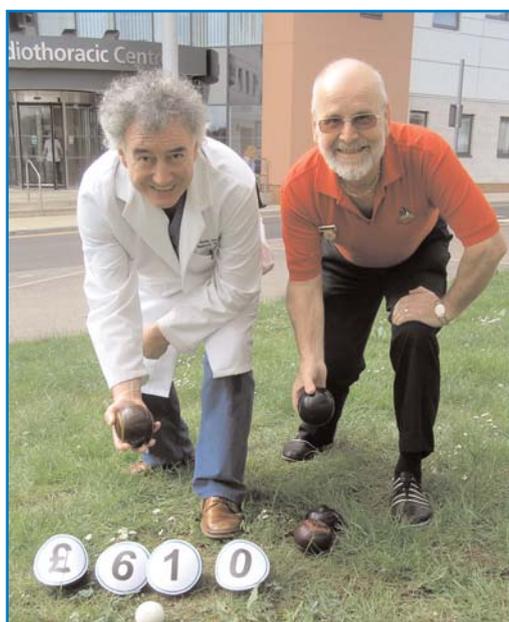
### What patients have said about The CTC:

"The CTC was so impressive and so clean. I thought how lucky I was to be there. My doctor explained everything very clearly and all the staff were wonderful." Mr A G, Bradwell-on-Sea

"The Centre was beautiful and the staff were wonderful. I'm so grateful to everyone there." Mrs P O, Harwich

"Everyone in The CTC was marvellous, from the reception staff, to the nurses to the doctors. It gave me so much confidence, the way they approached everyone." Mrs M B, Ilford

## CTC bowled over by donation



Andrew Ritchie and Martin Bennet.

**A grateful patient, who underwent major heart surgery at The Essex Cardiothoracic Centre (CTC), recently returned to hospital to present staff with a charitable donation.**

Mr Martin Bennet, 62, had a triple by-pass operation in January this year, performed by Mr Andrew Ritchie, Consultant Surgeon and Clinical Director of The CTC.

Mr Bennet, from Colchester, is a Carpet Bowls enthusiast who plays for the Highwoods Club. During his absence, the club committee decided to organise a charity tournament to raise money for the hospital

that had restored their team-mate back to health.

Mr Bennet praised the treatment he received at The CTC, saying: "It was absolutely brilliant, with state of the art facilities and fantastic service and care."

Before surgery, Mr Bennet had been experiencing chest pains and breathlessness. An angiogram showed that three of his arteries were severely blocked. He said: "It had got to the stage where I couldn't walk a few yards to the post box without needing to sit down. Now I can walk for miles, in fact I could probably deliver letters faster than the Post Office!"

Sixteen teams took part in a carpet bowls competition, raising £610.

## Advanced hole-in-heart surgery at the Essex Cardiothoracic Centre

A highly specialised procedure to repair holes in the heart has been carried out at The Essex Cardiothoracic Centre (CTC) for the first time. The operation, known as Patent Foramen Ovale (PFO) closure, was performed by consultant cardiologist Dr Gerald Clesham on Mr George Ball from Chelmsford.

Mr Ball, a 37-year-old accountant and father of three young children was taken ill at home while looking after his three-year-old son. A fitness enthusiast, who eats a healthy diet and does not smoke, he was shocked to be told, after tests at Broomfield Hospital in Chelmsford, that he had suffered a stroke.

He was referred to The CTC where an ultrasound scan identified a hole in his heart. Mr Ball said: "It was certainly a surprise because I have always been very active and never had any health problems. But Dr Clesham explained immediately

that he could carry out a non-invasive procedure to mend the hole."

He added: "Of course I did what everyone does, and alarmed my wife and myself by looking it up on the Internet, but Dr Clesham was very reassuring. The CTC is brand new, very clean, and communication was excellent."

After the procedure, Mr Ball returned to work, part-time, within a week, and is now running twice a week and going to the gym regularly.

The success of the PFO closure will add to The CTC's growing reputation as one of Britain's leading centres for minimally invasive heart and lung surgery. The procedure has been in medical use for some years but is not widely performed in the UK.

Dr Clesham said: "It is not uncommon for people to have a small hole between the two upper chambers of the heart.

"Most people who have this hole will not be affected by it and will not know that they have it. However, these holes are thought to be important in the small number of young patients who suffer from strokes. The aim of closing the PFO is to try and prevent stroke in the future."

To identify patients with a PFO, doctors rely on a special type of imaging technique, in which a contrast agent is injected into one atrium, to see if it leaks through to the other side of the heart. The closure procedure involves the positioning of a nickel and titanium mesh which forms two disks on either side of the PFO, closing the hole in the heart.

It is anticipated that about 30 PFO closures will be performed each year at The Essex Cardiothoracic Centre, by Dr Clesham and cardiology consultant Dr Azhar Khokhar, who specialises in the detailed imaging needed to treat these heart defects.

## Celebrating a smokefree year

**Sue John is looking forward to enjoying some extra spending money on holiday this year, having stayed smokefree for nearly a year.**



Sue, a discharge facilitator on Bulphan Ward, kicked the habit after she joined a smoking cessation support group last summer, as the Trust was preparing to introduce new smokefree rules.

Sue said: "I wanted to stop anyway and, when the no-smoking rule was coming in, I thought I'd look ridiculous going to the perimeter of the grounds to smoke."

Sue had smoked between 15 and 20 cigarettes every day for 30 years. She stopped when she was pregnant, but took up the habit again after giving birth. "I had triplets, and they were wonderful, but hard work, so I really felt I needed my cigarettes," she said. "When they got older - they are 25 now - they constantly nagged me to give up."

Sue attended the support group regularly and also took the medication Zyban, which she found very

helpful. She stopped smoking after eight weeks, and has never lapsed. She added: "My husband has given up too, and between us we are saving about £70 a week, which is a lot of holidays!"

Smoking is not allowed in any of the Trust's buildings or grounds. If you would like support to give up smoking, you can:

- contact your GP
- find your local stop smoking service by calling the NHS Stop Smoking Helpline on 0800 0224 332
- visit [www.nhs.uk/gosmokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/gosmokefree).

Staff can also contact Occupational Health on ext 3591.



Staff members stamping out a cigarette at the relaunch event of the Trust's no smoking policy. Thanks to Debbie Moxley who donned the outfit!

## Donation will improve treatment for incontinence patients

Incontinence sufferers will benefit from an enhanced service at the Trust, following a successful application for funding made by Urology Consultant, Mr Anil Vohra.

Pharmaceutical company, Astellas Pharma, has given the Trust an unconditional donation of £10,000 to support treatment for patients with over-active bladders. The money will partly fund a new post for a specialist nurse, who will be trained to give nerve stimulation treatment to patients.

Mr Vohra said: "We find that nerve stimulation treatment helps about 70 per cent of patients with over-active bladders where medical therapy is not successful. We have the equipment, but there is a waiting list of 40 patients and I do not have time to treat them soon enough. This donation will pay towards a new specialist nurse and will mean that the Trust can develop a better service for the hospital and the community."

The cheque was presented by Mr Rod Rymer, Healthcare Development Manager at Astellas Pharma. He said: "We chose to make this donation to the Trust because Mr Vohra is obviously very keen to provide the best possible services for patients. He put forward a proposal that we decided was worthy of support."



Left to right: Leigh McNeillie, Regional Business Manager Astellas; Rod Rymer, Healthcare Development Manager, Astellas; Mr Anil Vohra, Urology Consultant; Islam Haider, Executive Medical Representative, Astellas.

## Nominate a colleague for a Matrons' Award

The Matrons' Strategy has a strong focus on improving patient experience and implementing changes that will enhance care. The Matrons appreciate that they could not be successful in their role without the support of others within the Trust, and so the Matrons' Award was established to recognise this.

The next Matrons' Awards will be presented in September, so nominations are needed now.

Why nominate someone for the Matrons' Award?

- To make staff feel valued.
- To gain recognition for the effort staff are making to enhance the Matrons' Strategy especially in the areas of leadership, environment and visibility.
- To recognise the good work that is carried out on a daily basis.

Anybody can nominate a colleague, from any area of the Trust. Nomination forms are available from any Matron, and need to be returned by Friday 29 August.

The nominations will be reviewed by a panel of two Matrons, two Trust Governors and one Executive Director. With prizes kindly sponsored by local Estate Agent Hunt Roche, all winners receive a bottle of champagne and a certificate. The overall winner will also receive £150 in vouchers.

## Staff mark the retirement of Pam and Rose

Colleagues and friends joined to bid a fond farewell to Pam Wood and Rosemary Scott, Booking Co-ordinators in the Elective Admissions Department, who both retired last month.

Together, Pam and Rose clocked-up almost 50 years of service; Pam started working for the Trust in 1978, and Rose in 1989.

Gill Driver, Orthopaedic Admissions Co-ordinator Team Leader, said: "The leaving party was lovely, and everybody enjoyed themselves. It won't be the same without Pam and Rose. They will be missed very much, and we all wish them both luck for the future."



Left to right: Caroline Lomath, Jenny Palmer, Sheila Dornan, Sharon Lovell, Yvonne Wilde, Rosemary Scott, Beverley Goodspeed, Wendy Jupp, Pam Wood, Gill Driver, Miriam Bloxham.

## Changes to Poisons Information Service

Staff needing advice on treating poisoned patients should now contact the National Poisons Information Service (NPIS) on 0844 892 0111, or use the online TOXBASE service at [www.toxbase.org](http://www.toxbase.org).

The telephone support service provided by the human poisoning information service at Guy's and St Thomas' will close from Friday 25 July, although their department will continue to store and dispatch antidotes and antivenoms in emergency situations, and contribute to training and research in toxicology.

## Mary Wardekker remembered fondly



Friends and colleagues at the Trust honoured the memory of former staff nurse, Mary Wardekker, who sadly passed away seven months after her retirement.

The Admissions Team and Pre-Assessment Unit raised £170 with an all-day tea-party, selling home-made cakes and biscuits.

The proceeds were donated to St Luke's Hospice, where Mary died.

Gill Driver, Orthopaedic Admissions Coordinator Team Leader, said: "We wanted to do something in memory of Mary. She was such a lovely person who had a natural way with everybody - patients and colleagues."

A memorial service held for Mary on June 16, was attended by colleagues and family members, including her husband, son and daughter. Trust Chaplain, William Ruddle, officiated. Maggie Rogers, Director of

Nursing, and Marilyn Lewis, Gynaecology Nurse Practitioner, paid tribute to Mary, and Kim Whittaker, Elsdon Ward Manager, read a poem she had written.

Songs from one of Mary's favourite musicals, The Sound of Music, were played, and staff contributed their best memories of her into a basket which was given to the family.

Marilyn Lewis said: "It really was a lovely occasion. Obviously it was sad, but it was light too, with so many nice memories of Mary."



Back left to right: Sally White, Pam Wood, Chris Butt, Gill Driver, Miriam Bloxham, Yvonne Wilde. Front left to right: Sam Shelts, Sheila Dornan, Rosemarie Scott, Mary Brewster.

## Torch relay raises awareness of Elder Abuse



Carrying the torch for action on Elder Abuse.

Older people are often vulnerable to abuse, as their age and physical limitations can mean that they increasingly rely on others for support.

The Basildon University Hospital Safeguarding Adults Group

organised a torch relay across Thurrock and Basildon on Friday 13 June to highlight the issue with professionals and the public.

The multi-agency group was set up two years ago to raise awareness of elder abuse, change practice, and support and educate staff and the public. The group's membership includes health and social care organisations, as well as the police.

Karen Scott, a nurse specialist for older people, explains: "Abuse of elderly people is not just about them being physically or verbally assaulted, although that happens.

It extends to things you cannot always see, like attitude; not treating someone with dignity or not giving them a choice."

Some members of the Safeguarding Adults Group were sponsored for the relay, with money raised helping the group to continue raising awareness, and support vulnerable adults.

The torch was received by Daniel Blake, Policy Manager at the charity Action on Elder Abuse. He said: "It is an honour to be here to accept the flame. As a society, we are waking up to the fact that older people do experience abuse. I am seeing genuine multi-agency working here in Essex."

## Air Ambulance receives donation

Up to 200 local health professionals, many from our Trust, were members of the South Essex Occupational Health Group, from the 1960s until the late 1990s, when the group disbanded.

The group met monthly to discuss occupational health and other clinical issues, as well as hosting study days.

Stan Wynne, Deputy Chair of the Trust Board of Governors and once a member of the group, said: "As a group we generated our own funds, and when we disbanded we always said that any spare funds should go to the local air ambulance. We are very pleased to now present them with a cheque for £3160. They provide an extremely valuable service to the people living in this area."



Stan Wynne, Public Governor and Alan Whittle, Chief Executive present a cheque to Jean Twin, Deputy General Manager of operations at Essex Air Ambulance.

# NHS review: More funding for the best Trusts

Hospitals that provide the best quality care and treatment will be eligible for financial bonuses, under proposals in the government's review of the NHS, published on 1 July.

The Health Minister and cancer surgeon, Lord Darzi, has said that patients' opinions of the results of their treatment, and whether they were cared for with dignity and compassion, will have a direct impact on the income of NHS organisations.

The NHS Next Stage Review document, *High Quality Care for All*, sets out the Government's plans for healthcare in England over the next ten years.

The review was accompanied by a draft Constitution for the NHS, setting out the rights and responsibilities of both patients and staff.

The main points of the new NHS plan:

- Trusts will be paid according to the outcome of treatments, using indicators ranging from surgeons' death rates to surveys on how well patients feel after treatment.
- Patients' views about the compassion of staff and quality of service will be regarded as just as important as clinical outcomes. Hospitals that perform well in these areas will receive extra funding.
- Trusts will be required by law to publish 'quality accounts' as well as financial accounts, so that patients can choose the hospital that demonstrates the best care.
- The draft Constitution sets out patients' rights to dignity, privacy and confidentiality, and also their responsibilities, such as keeping hospital appointments.
- People with long-term conditions, such as diabetes, will be given personalised care plans.
- Primary Care Trusts will not be able to refuse patients potentially life-saving treatments on the grounds of cost.

● Health authorities and councils will commission services to improve the health of the local population. These will include measures to tackle obesity, smoking, drug and alcohol abuse and improving mental health.

Alan Whittle, Chief Executive, said: "This review is of huge significance to every single member of staff.

"Whatever our position, our common aim is to provide the best possible quality of care for patients. Now, more than ever, our future will depend on us being able to demonstrate that we do that. People who choose to be treated at the Trust must find exemplary clinical standards, and just as importantly, feel that we have treated them with dignity, compassion and respect.

"I am confident that we will all do our utmost to maintain and improve our high standards and that the Trust will continue to thrive as a provider of services, and as a good employer."

## What patients say about the Trust

With a direct link between patient satisfaction and the amount of funding that NHS trusts receive, healthcare professionals and managers will be monitoring and responding to feedback more carefully than ever.

There have been 20 comments about the Trust posted so far this year on the website NHS Choices, which was set up by the Government to help patients make informed choices about their healthcare.

The majority of reports from patients and visitors have been positive during 2008.

There was plenty of praise for staff, with comments such as 'attentive', 'polite', 'efficient', 'helpful', 'supportive', and 'caring.'

However, a few people felt they had not been treated with respect and compassion and that some staff were rude to them.

Several people said they felt that their treatment was explained to them very well. There were frequent complaints about the food, although one patient added: "You're in hospital not a five star restaurant and it was healthy and good for you."

Staff should encourage patients with any concerns or queries to speak with the ward manager or contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0845 155 3111 ext 8536, or email [pals@btuh.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@btuh.nhs.uk).

When patients have received good care and treatment, encourage them to recommend us to others, by posting a comment on NHS Choices, at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

### in the news

## Thanks to your contributions, *In the News* won an Excellence Award for the Best Internal Publication at the Communic8 Awards 2008.

The British Association of Communicators in Business (CiB) is the UK's leading professional body for in-house, freelance and agency staff involved in internal and corporate communications.

We did well to achieve this award, as there was stiff competition from many private and public sector organisations.

Designed to keep you in touch with what's happening at Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, We need your help to continue providing the latest staff news. If you have an idea or article for a future issue, please get in touch with Pat Trinnaman (ext 3063) or Luenne Featherstone (ext 3057) - we'd love to hear from you.