



Towards a better future

**From Michael Large,
Chairman**

"It is understandable that staff and patients are concerned at recent reports about Basildon University Hospital."

"Everyone has the right to expect that if they or their loved ones need to go to hospital, they will receive the best possible treatment and care, in clean and hygienic surroundings.

"It is our responsibility to make sure that is the case, and to prove to our patients and their relatives that they are safe in our care.

"The fact that the mortality ratio for last year (2008-09) was higher than the national average was of course our

main concern. However, this situation has already changed.

"Just two days after the mortality figures were released by the data company, Dr Foster, the Trust received a written notice from Dr Foster stating that figures collected for the last six months (April to September) show that our rate has been within their expected performance. They add that this is 'very encouraging.'

"We will not be complacent about the improvement, and will continue our efforts to reduce the mortality rate even further.

"We very much regret that unacceptable cleaning standards were found during a spot check. There is no excuse for poor cleaning and we have agreed with our cleaning contractor a plan which is now being carried out.

"It is important to point out that our rates of infection are extremely low. Since April 2009, we have had only one case of MRSA that was acquired in this hospital.

"We are determined to put right our mistakes and restore confidence in our hospital. I firmly believe that the Chief Executive and the Board of Directors are capable and fit to achieve this, and that the extra support of advisors will ensure this is done fast and effectively.

"Our top priority will always be the safety and well-being of our patients. We know that there is much that is good about our hospital, and we are grateful to all the patients and members of the public who have praised our dedicated staff and the care they have received at Basildon University Hospital. These kind gestures make us even more determined to double our efforts to earn the confidence and support of the whole community."

**From Alan Whittle,
Chief Executive**



"As you are all aware the last couple of weeks has been a challenging time for everyone at the Trust. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has now undertaken its follow up visit to the hospital. Initial verbal feedback has been positive, and we will update you when we get the written report.
continued over...

**Sing Choir
of angels**

**An invitation to ALL hospital staff and friends
to join our annual STAFF CHOIR to
'raise the roof' at the Carol service.**

The Carol Service will be on
Monday 21 December 3.30pm
The choir will gather at 3.10pm

We have two rehearsals in 'The Sanctuary'
Thursday 10 December
Thursday 17 December
All rehearsals will take place at 3.00pm

For further information contact Tim Blake or
Vic Davidson (Team Chaplains) on ext 3503

“For the same visiting team from the CQC to make such positive comments about the improvements they have seen in a very short period is something you should all take credit for.

“The challenge now is to sustain the high performance that has been achieved recently, and this will only be possible if the same attention to detail and energetic approach to resolving problems is followed by everyone.

“We need to remain vigilant with a constant focus on raising standards and improving patient safety.

“The Task Force has set up a programme management office and is working with us to support the delivery of our Quality Improvement Plan. The Task Force is made up of an external medical expert, an external nursing expert and a team from PricewaterhouseCoopers. We welcome the support that this team will give us to more speedily deliver our plans to improve patient safety and

the patient experience and we look forward to working closely with this team over the coming months.

“Many of you will have seen the media coverage that we have received recently, much of which has been inaccurate or exaggerated. We have dealt with the national and local media openly and honestly providing factual responses to the issues that they have raised. We have to rebuild the reputation of the organisation with our community and the local media.

“Undoubtedly, many of you will have spoken with patients and members of the public who have views on the issues under scrutiny. Every member of staff is an ambassador for the Trust both at work and at home. We understand that people may have concerns and we look to you as our most valuable asset to reassure both patients and the public.

“Well done to everyone for their continued support and hard work.”

○ New champion for learning disabilities

A nurse specialist with 15 years experience of working with patients with learning disabilities will shortly be taking up a new post at the Trust.

Shoenagh Mackay starts on Monday 4 January, as Clinical Nurse Specialist for Learning Disabilities. Her role will be to offer support to vulnerable patients and also to support and advise the staff who care for them.

Shoenagh is keen to meet her new colleagues at the Trust as soon as possible and let everyone know she is here to give support to staff and patients.

She says: “I really want to be high profile so people know where to find me. If anyone needs advice or help on anything to do with learning disabilities, I want to help.

“I also want to encourage staff to talk to me if they have any ideas about caring for vulnerable patients so we can try and put them into practice. For example, if a person with learning disabilities has to come into

hospital for planned surgery, I can help them prepare by visiting the ward beforehand, and perhaps taking photos and making a picture diary.”

She emphasises that her role is not to care for patients, but to support staff to do the caring. She will be advising on staff training and hopes to hold open day sessions and add learning disabilities awareness to staff induction courses.

“I can’t wait to start at the Trust,” she added. “I am absolutely passionate about making sure that people with learning disabilities get the best possible care.”

Shoenagh Mackay can be contacted on ext. 3089 from Monday 4 January.

New patient information leaflets for patients with learning disabilities and their carers are available on *The Hub*. Go to Document Centre, then click on Learning Disabilities. They are also on the Trust website, www.basildonandthurrock.nhs.uk under Your visit to hospital.



○ Kind words from patients

In the wake of negative news coverage about the Trust, many of our patients have offered their support to staff and praised the care they have received.

These kind gestures go a long way to boost morale, and can also help us restore confidence in our hospital from the whole community.

We can all be guilty of being quicker to complain than to compliment, so it would be helpful to ask patients who say positive things if they would like to post their comment on NHS Choices to share their views with others.

NHS Choices -
Go to www.nhs.uk click on hospitals and make a comment about Basildon University Hospital



New children's A&E area

Children who need emergency treatment at Basildon University Hospital are now being seen in their own separate area of the A&E Department.

The new facility for young people aged 16 and under opened last month to give sick or injured children, and their parents or carers, a better environment for treatment. All nurses on duty in the area are trained in paediatrics, and there are toys provided in the waiting area.

When children arrive at A&E, they are signed in at reception and then immediately shown to the new paediatric area for triage, and any necessary treatment.

Ashleigh Evans was the first patient to be treated in the new children's A&E area. The two-year-old dislocated her elbow and arrived at Basildon University Hospital screaming in pain. Her mother Emma said: "When we arrived at A&E we were called through straight away, and a nurse put Ashleigh's elbow back in place."

"We had never had to bring her to A&E before, but it is a very good thing there is a separate children's area because Ashleigh has suspected autism, and doesn't like people she doesn't know, especially men. When we arrived at the main reception she was hiding her face, but when we went through to the children's section, the nurse held her hand and talked to her while she treated her."

The children's area will remain in place until the £17 million refurbishment of the emergency department is

completed, which will include a children's A&E department. The purpose-built children's A&E will have a play area featuring zones targeted at children of different age groups with varying needs. It will also include baby-changing, with an area for nursing mothers and its own plaster room. There will be a dedicated team of staff from a play-leader through to a dedicated Paediatric Consultant.

Ms Aliya Ahmed, A&E Consultant and Paediatric Lead, said that the new children's area was welcomed by patients and staff. "We have been busy, but in a good way. It has taken pressure from other areas, so that the department runs more smoothly, and is a much better place to treat children."



L to R: Sarah Barton, Lead Paediatric Nurse, Ashleigh Evans, Ms Aliya Ahmed, A&E Consultant and Emma Evans



Patient At Risk Service goes 24/7

The Patient At Risk Service (PARS) treats acutely ill patients on the ward before they become very sick – and the service has just gone 24/7.

Otherwise referred to as the mobile critical care team, PARS is made up of 10 experienced nurses with many years of critical care experience between them. If ward staff are concerned about the deteriorating health of a patient, they can call PARS, who will respond as part of the Trust's integrated approach to preventative care.

The team also provide care for patients either before or after they are transferred to the Intensive Therapy Unit (ITU) or High Dependency Unit (HDU). This helps bridge the transition from critical care to a ward environment, and makes sure patients are followed up when they return to the ward. It also allows the team to provide critical care expertise to any patient within the hospital. The PARS team supports patients with a tracheostomy, and the staff caring for them, until it is removed or the patient goes home.

Joanne Peacock, Advanced Nurse Practitioner for PARS, said: "The team was originally started by Amanda Fife and has been running since 2001. Over the years, the service has expanded, and recent increases in staffing mean we can cover 24 hours, seven days a week.

"We are delighted to have the service 24/7 allowing us to provide seamless care to the sicker patients in the trust. It also enables us to support staff around the clock with caring for the critically ill."



The PARS Team



Using the four themes better

By now everyone in the Trust should have had their first *Being Better By Far* session.

There has been feedback from some departments that there is a concern about finding time to complete the sessions. But as we have already said, *Being Better By Far* IS the day job. By setting time aside and getting the whole team together, it is a structured way of ensuring everyone is focused on the four themes:

- Better Patient Safety
- Better Patient Experience
- Better Look and Feel
- Better Efficiency and Effectiveness

Being Better By Far helps because it focuses the team's attention on working better together. One

example brought up at the Champions Group was about staff on a ward who held a ten-minute meeting to complete a 'Start, Stop, Improve' sheet. The quick meeting was immensely helpful and time-saving.

In light of the recent developments within the Trust, *Being Better By Far* has never been more important. We need to remain vigilant with a constant focus on raising standards and improving patient safety. Making sure our Trust demonstrates high standards is the responsibility of everyone, not just clinical staff. We know that you all take great pride in your work and we really need the continued efforts of every single member of staff to make sure we deliver reliable, safe and effective care.

Porters are Being Better By Far

A group of porters are already taking steps to excel at *Being Better By Far* – by cleaning wheelchairs and improving infection control.

Porters have been split into groups of ten for the *Being Better By Far* sessions, as there are so many staff in the department. During the first session, one group suggested the six wheelchairs used by the portering department could be cleaned after each use. Using a 'Start, Stop, Improve' plan, they outlined how they would go about it and fed their plan back through their line manager.

The scheme has proved such a success that since the second *Being Better By Far* session, the group decided to extend the idea to all the wheelchairs the portering team use, regardless of which department they belong to.

Michael Noakes, Head of Portering, said: "They realised it would be a good way of improving infection control within the Trust. It is a simple thing to do that makes a big difference. We have gloves and wipes now, so every time a wheelchair is used by a porter, it is cleaned.

"It only takes a few minutes. I think it's a brilliant idea and really shows how great ideas can come about when you take the time to discuss it with your colleagues."



L to R: Carol Watts, Roy Seymour, Michael Noakes, Steve Hartman and Stacey Watts.

Better Connections at Open Space Event

Trust consultants and GPs were given the chance to discuss issues and strengthen their working relationships at the second annual GP Open Space event.

Emma Timpson, Deputy Director of Planning and Service Development, Brendan Mahoney, IT Development Manager and Tim Smith, Pathology IT Manager, all gave presentations at the event on Wednesday 4 November at Ye Olde Plough House in Bulphan.

The Trust's new Directory of Services "Your Guide to Our Services" was available for the GPs on the day, along with the new GP Newsletter.

Breakaway sessions were held during the event, including discussions on admission avoidance, Choose and Book and ways to improve discharge/referral letters.

GP feedback inspired the content of this day and will continue

to influence the content of future Open Space events. We want to be better partners with our local GPs, improving relationships, listening and engaging more and improving our services through better communication, feedback and joint working.



○ Not on my ward

From the ward to the board, protecting our patients' rights to privacy, dignity and respect must be a top priority for everyone at the Trust. These rights are confirmed in the new NHS Constitution, and it is your responsibility to uphold them.

To help maintain these standards, we are working to provide appropriate same-sex accommodation for all patients, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Already, nearly one in three of our inpatient beds are in single rooms.

NHS South West Essex is supporting us with this work and has provided £200,000 for improvements to the Medical Admissions Unit (MAU) and Surgical Admissions Unit (SAU).

Posters, personalised for each ward, are being produced to highlight the campaign to promote same-sex accommodation.

Same-sex accommodation

Same-sex accommodation means:

- Whole wards occupied by men or women only, or
- Single rooms, or
- Mixed wards, but men and women in separate bays or rooms.

In addition, men and women should not have to share washing or toilet facilities, or pass through areas used by the opposite sex to reach their own facilities.

At Basildon University Hospital, nearly a third of our inpatient beds are in single rooms. Other accommodation is in same-sex, four-bed bays, usually within a mixed ward. Each bay has access to washing and toilet facilities, and patients do not have to pass through areas used by the opposite sex to reach them.

Making improvements

Some emergency and day care areas needed updating to maintain privacy and dignity for our patients.

- In MAU and SAU, four side rooms have been converted into shower rooms and toilets to

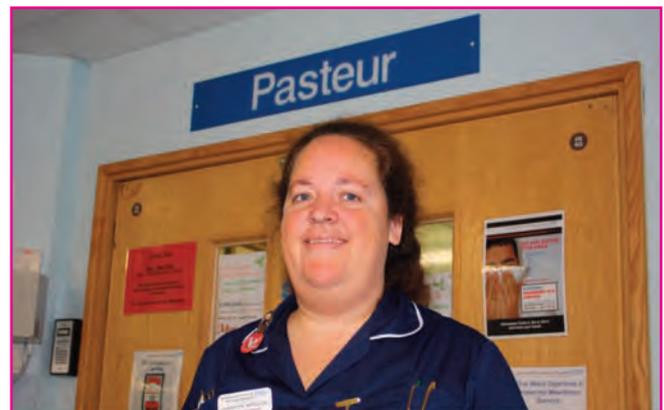
provide patients with same-sex facilities.

- The design of the £17m refurbishment of A & E and the Fracture Clinic aims to improve privacy and dignity for patients.
- The Day Surgery Unit is being redeveloped, to provide same-sex washing and toilet facilities.
- All development plans for the hospital will be designed to deliver same-sex accommodation for patients, including more single rooms.

Exceptional circumstances

Occasionally, providing fast, effective care for a patient may take priority over providing same-sex accommodation. In exceptional circumstances, where high numbers of patients need urgent or highly-specialised care, it may be unavoidable to mix patients.

When this happens, staff will discuss with patients where to place them in the best interests of everyone affected, and must try to move patients into same-sex accommodation as quickly as possible.



Mixed sex accommodation?
'Not on my ward'
Your privacy, our responsibility

○ The new NHS Constitution proposals - go ahead have your say



Trust staff are asked to give their views on new proposals that may be included in the NHS constitution.

The constitution establishes the principles and values of the health service in England and sets out the rights and responsibilities of patients and staff.

Now the Government has launched a further consultation on new patient rights. If agreed, this would give patients the legal right to the 18-week referral to treatment limit, and a two-week waiting time for urgent cancer referrals. It also proposes that everyone aged 40-74 should have the right to an annual health check.

You can find out more, and have your say on these proposals, via a new website set up by East of England Strategic Health Authority.

www.eoe.nhs.uk/nhs_constitution

○ Prestigious accreditation for the Infant Feeding team

The Infant Feeding team has successfully completed the first stage of the UNICEF UK's Baby Friendly Initiative. We are taking part in the national programme to adopt best practice standards so parents can make informed decisions about whether to bottle or breastfeed. If successful, Basildon Maternity Unit will be one of a few hospitals in the country to have the accreditation.

By implementing these standards, we can apply to be assessed and accredited as 'Baby Friendly'. Patients can then be confident that we are giving them the right support,

information and encouragement when it comes to feeding their baby. There are three stages of assessment to receive full accreditation and the Trust has just achieved stage one. This means we have set up Baby Friendly Standards, including:

- The development of a staff education programme.
- Effective education materials for pregnant women and new mothers.
- Robust methods for recording information and an effective auditing practice.

Geraldine Purver, Infant Feeding Co-ordinator, said: "We are delighted to have completed the first stage of this thorough assessment process for this prestigious award. It is vital that our staff are fully trained and knowledgeable about the latest health benefits now known to exist for both mother and child."

The team is working towards stage two, and hopes to achieve full accreditation in two years.



○ New Clinical Director for Women and Children's Services

Dr Nawfal Sharief has been appointed the new Clinical Director for Women and Children's Services.

His new role involves leading the service planning and future development within the directorate, and fostering multi-professional team working. He will work closely with the management team

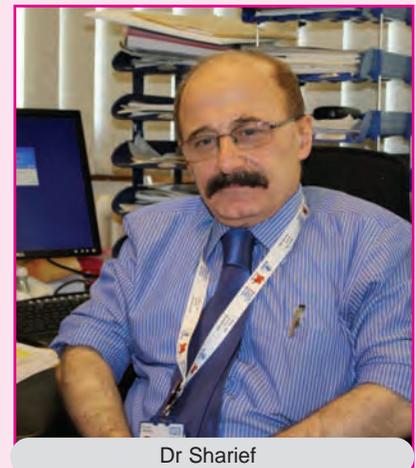
He said: "I plan to cultivate a culture of transparency and team work, fostering collaboration and empowering others to excel. I will aim to promote effective communication and face-to-face discussions."

Dr Sharief started with the Trust as Neonatal and Respiratory

Paediatrician in 1991, after finishing his higher training at Great Ormond Street Hospital. Since then he has been instrumental in developing services for children with respiratory problems and cystic fibrosis. As Unit Training Director, he has established a detailed system for the education and training for junior medical staff. Three years ago, he was elected to the role of chairman of the Consultant Staff Committee. He has been Deputy Regional Adviser for the Eastern Region for the last two years.

He added: "I am looking forward to building a dedicated and successful team that will ensure the delivery of a first class service to women and children as we move into the next

decade. There will be some challenges, but I enjoy a challenge! I am very pleased to be taking the next step in my career."



Dr Sharief

○ The WAGS from the Nags Head raise £3,000

The generous wives and girlfriends, or 'WAGS', from the Nags Head Pub in Ramsden Heath raised more than £3,000 for equipment for the Symptom Control Unit.

The WAGS and their families have had first-hand experience of our cancer services, receiving treatment for breast and other forms of cancer. The women wanted to show their support and appreciation for the care they received by fundraising specifically for cancer services.

Organiser, Maureen Sutton, said: "We chose Basildon Hospital as our charity this year because some of our ladies had received such excellent care and support."



The WAGS

○ Polishing up on hygiene

More than 85 members of staff attended a symposium to mark national Infection Control Week. The event was organised by the Trust's Infection, Prevention and Control Team to improve understanding of hospital acquired infections. The audience heard from experts on the clinical, legal and personal aspects of the subject.

In the opening talk, Alan Whittle, Chief Executive, said that regulation of the NHS is shifting from measurements of targets to the assessment of patient experience – how patients feel about their treatment, the hospital environment and all aspects of the care they receive is what counts.

He noted that infection is now a more frequently expressed concern among the public than waiting times and said it was vital that, from the Board to the ward, all staff must understand their responsibilities to promote and enhance patient safety.

Maggie Rogers, Director of Nursing, presented the findings of the national in-patient survey for 2009 with regard to hygiene at the Trust. The audience heard a personal account from Jacqueline Coleman, Trust

Governor and patient, of the devastating effects of meningococcal septicaemia. The day also marked the media relaunch of the MAX campaign, which supports and encourages effective hand hygiene. Staff were reminded that the success of the campaign relies on their commitment, and that it is important for patients to see, or be reassured, that they have cleaned their hands.

MAX badges are being issued to staff, once they have demonstrated good hand-washing technique and proved they understand its importance. It is hoped that the badges will make hygiene a talking point and encourage patients and colleagues to ask if hands are clean.

Meanwhile, more action has been taken by the Trust and cleaning contractor, Aramark, to improve cleaning standards, stringent cleaning methods have been reviewed and new equipment has been introduced.



○ Learning to make patients safer

Patient safety was top of the agenda for the 150 staff at last month's Clinical Governance Symposium.

They learnt about the progress of the Trust's Quality Improvement Plan, which aims to improve patient safety and the patient experience. Anne Barton, Project Manager, was joined in her presentation by a representative from Dr Foster, who gave a demonstration on the Dr Foster Clinical Governance system.

Dr Neil Chauhan spoke on the subject of Venous Thromboembolism (VTE, meaning blood clot in a vein). He told the audience that a recent audit had highlighted areas for improvement, and that the majority of recommendations have already been put in place, with the rest in progress. For example, teaching sessions for doctors have begun, to improve awareness and understanding of the risk assessment process.

A presentation on the importance of learning from incidents was given by Dr Eric Watts and Linda Smart, Head of Clinical Governance and Risk. Dr Dipak Mukherjee, Respiratory Consultant, spoke about oxygen safety in hospital, and actions taken by the Trust to improve the administration and management of oxygen.

Feedback from the audience included comments on the openness of the event, and the importance of continually reassessing patients to ensure their safety.

The event was organised by Tracy Turner, Head of Clinical Effectiveness, with a programme designed by Maggie Rogers, Director of Nursing and Dr Stephen Morgan, Medical Director.

The next Clinical Governance Symposium will take place on Wednesday 12 May, at 12.30pm.

○ A life-saver from the League of Friends

A new portable scanner, worth £31,000, has been presented to A&E by the League of Friends.

Lokesh Narayanaswamy, recently appointed as sub-director for A&E, thanked members of the League, and said: "The scanner is really useful for our day-to-day work. We already have five people trained to use it and we intend to train more. The machine takes just a couple of minutes to scan for internal bleeding, which helps us avoid losing valuable time and to save more lives."



League of Friends with staff unveiling the new 'portable scanner'

○ Dispelling the mythology of pathology

One of the most common misconceptions about pathology is that it is all about dead bodies, as portrayed in television programmes such as *Silent Witness* and *CSI*.

In fact, most pathologists do not carry out autopsies. Pathology means the study of disease, and over 70 per cent of diagnoses in the NHS involve pathology tests.

To improve understanding of the specialty, and the role it plays in modern health care, the pathology team at the Trust held events for the public and staff during National Pathology Week, November 2 – 8.

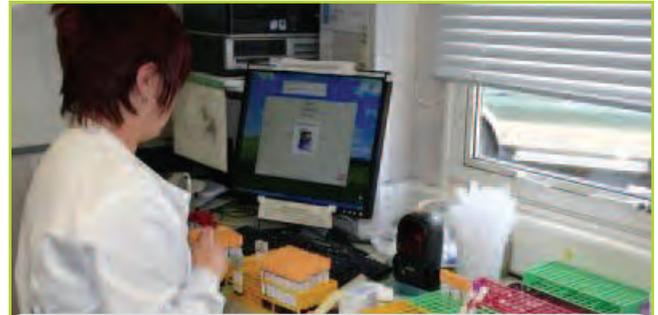
The theme of this year's event was heart disease and the role that pathology plays in its diagnosis, treatment and prevention.

The Pathology Department set up an information stand in the main hospital entrance providing information for hospital staff and members of the general public. A scientific evening in the Education Centre was also held. About 50 members of staff, from nursing, medical and scientific teams, as well as Trust governors and managers, heard from speakers including Dr Eric Watts,

Clinical Director and Consultant Haematologist and Mr Andrew Ritchie, Clinical Director and Cardiothoracic Surgeon.

Ann Marie Parasram, one of the Pathology team who organised the evening, said it was very well received by staff, with one person commenting: "It made us more aware of what is going on nationally and in the hospital to improve survival rates of heart attacks."

The Pathology team are planning another scientific evening on allergy in March. See future issues of *In the News* for more details.



A pathologist checking samples before coding

○ A Sample Story

Let's follow the path of a blood sample, taken from a patient who may suffer from heart disease; from taking the sample to testing, diagnosis and treatment.

One of the most common tests undertaken is for cholesterol, which is used to estimate the risk of developing heart disease and is a routine part of preventative health care. High blood cholesterol is associated with hardening of the arteries, heart disease and an increased risk of death from heart attacks.

Cholesterol may be measured with other blood fats as part of a lipid profile in order to provide a better estimate of the risk of heart disease; this includes measurement of total cholesterol, LDL-cholesterol or 'bad cholesterol', HDL-cholesterol or 'good cholesterol' and the triglycerides.

Tony Everitt, Consultant Biochemist, said: "In the modern NHS, preventative medicine is important and pathology plays a vital part in ensuring patients at risk from heart disease are detected and offered appropriate advice and treatment."

To measure cholesterol, a blood test is sent to the pathology laboratory where it is put into a centrifuge, which is a machine that spins the blood to separate the red cells from the serum. The blood sample is then transferred to one of two analysers, known as 'Bert' and 'Ernie', and loaded into a metal rack.

A single blood sample can be tested for up to 30 different tests, which take about 20 minutes to complete. Bert and Ernie can process approximately 5,000 tests per hour. The results are then sent electronically to a validation station where they are checked before they are reported. The GP examines the results of the cholesterol test against the patient's known risk factors, in order to assess the patient's risk of developing heart disease, and what type of treatment is required.

A patient with a raised cholesterol level may require treatment, initially in the form of changes to their lifestyle, such as giving up smoking or adopting a diet that's low in saturated fats. If diet cannot lower cholesterol enough, drugs such as statins are used. Statins reduce the amount of cholesterol made in each cell and force the body to gather excess cholesterol from the blood stream, thereby reducing the overall blood cholesterol levels.

Pathology Facts

- Our Pathology Department is open 24/7, employing around 17 doctors, 200 scientific staff and 60 support staff, who process more than 2,000 samples a day.
- 40 per cent of samples that are received for testing come from GPs, while the remainder are from hospital inpatients and outpatients, along with urgent samples arriving from the Accident and Emergency department.
- Two million test results a year are sent from Basildon University Hospital to GPs across the area.

○ Roding Ward staff get a special thank you from a patient

When Ron Marney and his wife Sue renewed their wedding vows, the kind-hearted couple used it as an opportunity to raise money for the staff on Roding Ward.

Ron was admitted as an emergency patient in August 2008 and spent several weeks on Roding Ward before having cardiac surgery, and staff built up a fantastic rapport with the couple.

Lorna Wright, Ward Manager, said: "In preparation for his surgery, we had to move Ron from Roding Ward to Chelmer Ward. To keep his mind active, I challenged Ron to create me a life-size model of himself just to help keep him busy.

"Over the next few days Ron created a small but "creatively" formed model of himself, using coffee cup lids and cardboard. He even created his own heart with its own bypass grafts. I still have the model in my office."

To show their appreciation for all the care and attention given to him during his stay on Roding, Ron and Sue

decided to raise money for the ward.

So far, the couple has raised more than £2,000 from donations from family and friends. As requested by Ron and Sue, the money will be used to improve the ward environment for staff and patients. Ward staff also asked for a table and some chairs for the staff room, a photocopier and small equipment.



Ron & Sue Marney with Roding Ward staff

○ Welcome to new chaplains

The Venerable Annette Cooper, Archdeacon of Colchester, was joined by Major Elwyn Harries, Salvation Army and Paul Goodliff, Head of Ministry, Baptist Union and members of over 50 different community groups, staff and patients for the formal commissioning of two newly-appointed chaplains, together with a reaffirmation of the Trust's chaplaincy team.

The hospital chaplains, with the support of all the local faith communities, care spiritually, pastorally and religiously for anyone of any faith, or none. They provide the main source of advice and guidance for Trust management and staff on different faiths and diverse spiritual needs.

"This inclusive service and act of worship provided the opportunity for the local faith and civic partners to join us in celebrating the development of the Trust's spiritual and pastoral care for the whole hospital community: the patients we serve, their relatives and friends and the staff we employ", said Reverend William Ruddle, Chaplaincy Team Leader.

A multi-faith prayer room called "The Sanctuary" is located on Level C, at Basildon University Hospital, and is open to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week. However, chaplaincy is predominantly focused on taking 'The Sanctuary' to the wards – where they offer support, guidance, prayer and comfort through the presence of the chaplains.



Our two new chaplains Vic Davidson and Phaedra Pamphilon-Green (centre)

○ Fire Marshall courses

Four fire marshall courses have been arranged for:

- Wednesday 20 January, 9am to 11am
- Thursday 15 July, 9am to 11am
- Wednesday 13 October, 9am to 11am
- Wednesday 14 April, 9am to 11am

For more information or to book a place on any course, call Emma McDonald in Staff Training & Development on ext 1106.

○ Still time to get the Swine Flu jab

Well done to all staff who have had their Swine Flu jab! We have immunised nearly 2,000 members of staff, including around 1,500 frontline staff.

The number of people being diagnosed with swine flu is increasing nationally. It is important that staff get the jab as healthcare workers will be absolutely critical as swine flu and other winter illnesses spread. We need you to protect yourself, your loved ones and your patients.

The swine flu vaccine does not protect you against seasonal flu and vice versa. You must have both

vaccinations to ensure you are fully protected. If you have not already been immunised against Swine Flu, Occupational Health is holding two more vaccination clinics in Block F.



- Thursday 17 December, 1pm to 4pm

Remember - "If you can't catch it, you can't pass it on". For more information, contact Occupational Health on ext 3591.

○ Rapid Improvements in Resus

The Resus Department made their working environment safer and easier to work in thanks to the Continuous Improvement Team and a Rapid Improvement Event.

Resus staff worked with other departments such as Estates, IT, Pharmacy and MEMS during the week-long event. The team carried out 6S audits, de-cluttered the area and used visual management to standardise equipment and bays to give more room to patients being treated in the area.

New trolleys were purchased to allow restocking and redesign. A designated paediatric trolley was completely overhauled and restocked to allow an additional paediatric bay to be set up quickly if necessary, thus increasing the potential capacity for children.

Trolleys were labelled using a new colour coding system that is being rolled out across the Trust. Examples of the colour coding system include using red labels for bloods, blue for respiratory items, etc.

Specific trolleys have been created for airway equipment and items to enable improved access to patients with respiratory conditions.

The area was thoroughly cleaned and a new designated workstation built, providing a PC terminal and point for clinicians and reception staff to book patients in and write up notes.

New, better sized drugs cupboards and a fridge have been ordered to enable staff to reach drugs more easily and store them safely.

The main benefits from the event include:

- Standardised working practices, with all trolleys and bays identical.
- A more clinical and professional working area, which gives a good and safe impression to patients and their relatives in often stressful circumstances.
- Time released back to care through shorter journey times to locate equipment and book patients in. This is a significant improvement, particularly in such a time-pressurised environment.

○ A meeting of PALS

An open day for staff and members of the public was hosted by PALS in their new office in the reception area of The Essex Cardiothoracic Centre, on Thursday 26 November.

PALS works to ensure that the NHS listens to patients, their relatives, carers and friends, and answers their questions and resolves their concerns as quickly as possible.

Wally Whitehill, PALS Officer, said that the Trust is keen to raise awareness of the service and its new location: "We want to encourage anyone who has concerns or queries regarding patient care and treatment to

contact PALS. Lots of people called in to see what we have to offer in the way of advice, information and support."

The new PALS office is conveniently located on the ground floor reception area of the CTC. There is wheelchair access, and a private meeting area where visitors can discuss issues with complete confidentiality. The open day marked the official opening of the new PALS office.

Rose Murphy, PALS Officer, added: "We can now offer patients and the public a more pleasant environment, with more privacy,

which helps us to give a better service."

If you need to contact PALS call 01268 394440, or email pals@btuh.nhs.uk.



The PALS Team

○ Putting the Fun into Fundraising

○ Bunnies hop, skip and jump

Despite the pouring rain and gale force conditions, over 40 bunnies took to the Athletics Track at Gloucester Park, Basildon for the first-ever Big Knickers Bunny Race.

Both male and female bunnies put on their floppy ears, and Bridget Jones-style jumbo pants to run, hop and skip during the 5k race to raise money for the 'Scope in Time' appeal.

The bunnies and their supporters were entertained by some of our hospital porters, who provided music and encouragement, as the bunnies raced on through the poor conditions.

Noele Hammett, Fundraising Co-ordinator, said: "Our bunnies didn't stop for the rain – they were fantastic! We would like to thank all the determined bunnies, who helped to raise over £2,500 for the appeal and the hospital porters who gave up their free time to act as cheerleaders."

○ Santa Fun Run

The Governors' first Santa Fun Run on Sunday 6 December brought festive cheer to the 'Scope in Time' appeal, raising around £1,500.



○ Drumming up support for stroke patients

A musician who suffered a stroke is dedicating his time and talent to raising awareness and funds to help others.

Mark White, 38, presented staff on Lister Ward with a cheque for £300 – the proceeds from a campaign called DrumBeatStroke that he has been running with his wife, Michelle. Mark plays the drums at local events, promoting the FAST campaign to help people recognise the signs of a stroke.

Following a major stroke in 2006, Mark was cared for by staff on Lister Ward. He has lost the use of his left hand, and has had to adapt his drumming style to compensate.

Presenting the cheque to Sara McGowan, Ward Manager, he said: "The doctors were surprised I survived my stroke, so I decided to do what I could to give something back for the care the NHS has given me. I plan to make these events a regular thing, to highlight the dangers of stroke to people in Essex."

Sara McGowan thanked Mark, saying: "There is always more equipment we can use and this money will really help care for patients."



Mark White presenting staff on Lister Ward with a cheque for £300

○ Biggest-ever coffee morning

A big thank you to everyone who went along to the Macmillan Coffee Morning held in the Education Centre, and especially to Basildon Bakeries and Starbucks, who provided the goodies.

Sharon Quinn, Macmillan Nurse in the Palliative Care Team, said: "Over 200 people came for coffee and helped to raise our biggest-ever total for the cause. Along with the proceeds from the quiz night, we were able to send over £3,200 to Macmillan Cancer Support."

○ Stay alert to stop fraud

There were 175,000 reported cases of fraud in the UK for the first half of 2009. Within the NHS, people can commit fraud in a number of ways, such as working while on sick leave, submitting inflated expenses, giving false qualifications or references to get a job and claiming hours on timesheets that were not worked. But the money stolen in fraud cases should be being spent on patient care and improving facilities.

Staff vigilance is vital to detecting fraud, with figures from the CIFAS, the UK's leading Fraud Prevention Service, showing that two in five frauds are identified through internal processes and procedures.

It is important for staff to remain vigilant and feel confident in reporting any concerns to Lisa George,

the NHS Local Counter Fraud Specialist (LCFS) for Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals. Trust staff should feel assured that any allegations received are dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

Lisa said: "We recover tens of millions of pounds of NHS money and prosecute many fraudsters with the help of the vast majority of honest people. Everyone who works in and uses the NHS can help by recognising and reporting fraud that does occur."

For more information or if you are wish to speak to Lisa about any concerns, please call 020 8869 7433 or 07825 827024, or email lisa.george@parkhill.org.uk Alternatively anyone can call the NHS Fraud and Corruption Reporting Line on 0800 028 4060.

○ Staff council awards for exceptional service

You need to get your nomination in for the 2009 Staff Council Recognition Awards before Wednesday 16 December.

The awards are held to encourage and acknowledge the hard work of individuals and teams who consistently provide exceptional service. It highlights the effort and contributions made by staff to improve patient care or service delivery.

Anyone can nominate themselves, their team, department or directorate and by applying for an award you are:

- Gaining recognition for the work you and your team do.
- It shows you are a leader of best practices and proves it to others.
- It gives you and your team the chance to show how good you are.
- It gives impetus to added value within your area.

After the closing date, a selection panel of Staff Council representatives and Staff Governors will consider the entries and make recommendations to the Staff Council.

All nominees will be invited to the Trust's Staff Honours Evening on Monday 25 January, where the awards will be presented. The winners will each receive a trophy, certificate and a personal (or team) prize of £250. A certificate will be awarded to the runners-up.

You can collect an application form in person from Level K, in the Tower Block or call Helen Mattock on ext 3202 or Judy Payne on ext 1052 or email StaffCouncil@btuh.nhs.uk.

Once the simple form is complete, send it to the email address or pop it into the internal post asap.



Last year's winners
the Diabetes Nursing Team

○ Revitalise yourself

If you'd like to improve your fitness, lose some weight, or reduce your stress levels, you might like to check out a free interactive website available to Trust staff. 'Revitalised' offers individually tailored support and advice to help you achieve a healthier lifestyle.

Features include personalised training plans, weight management programmes, ideas for stress management and links to health and fitness centres with discounts available to Trust staff.

The website will allow you to track your progress with tools such as monthly weigh-ins and food intake

records. It is completely confidential. Information on a range of topics is updated every month, and you can email experts for more detailed advice.

To register free, go to www.revitalised.co.uk/basildonandthurrock and use the organisational code BASILDON1.

Revitalise is being supplied free to the Trust on a six-month trial basis. Occupational Health would like to hear staff views on the website, to help assess whether it is helpful and useful. Please contact Sue Hillman, Head of Occupational Health on ext 3463.

Nicola Fenn got married! She is now Nicola Laver and you can still contact her on ext 3847 if you have an idea or article for a future issue. The next *In The News* will be out in February 2010. Merry Christmas and here's to a Being Better By Far New Year from the Communications Team!