



Trust News

Summer 2010

Recruit a Member Make a Difference

Editor's Blog,

Many of you will know that we are through to the next round of our Foundation Trust application, meaning we are still on track to be in front of Monitor (the Independent Regulator) by the end of this year and a Foundation Trust early next year, which is excellent news. For all those of you willing to join our Council of Governors, the time is getting close! Our performance continues to go from strength to strength. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) recently announced that it will not be publishing performance scores for Trusts for 2009/10, which they normally do about now. However, the Trust has calculated that if ratings were to be published on the old basis, it would have achieved a 'good/good' with both 'goods' close to 'excellent'- our best performance so far!

The government has made some proposed changes to the NHS. Patients will get more information and choice about their care and in future (and I like this phrase) 'there will be no decisions about me without me'. Doctors are empowered to deliver results - putting them in charge of what services best meet the needs of local people and finally, removing unnecessary bureaucracy, to make the NHS more efficient. Whatever the outcome, your local hospitals are focused on providing top quality safe care for patients and we look forward to building on our already strong relationships with our members and our local GPs.

On a final note, could I please ask you to do your bit to reduce our costs and the amount of paper we use by providing us with your email address. We won't block up your inbox, but we will send you regular bulletins and invitations to events so that you be the first to know the news. Please email foundation.trust@whht.nhs.uk or telephone 01923 436280 with your email details.

Yours sincerely Ed

Dear Trust Member

**You are invited to attend the Trust's Annual General Meeting.
Thursday, 23 September 2010, 7pm-9pm
Beechen Grove Baptist Church, Clarendon Road, Watford, WD17 1JJ
(Refreshments from 6.30pm)**

The meeting is an opportunity to review the Trust's performance over the last twelve months and to hear plans for the future. You will also be able to pick up a copy of the Annual Report and the Quality Accounts for 2009/10.

**Special Guest Speaker:
Dr Michael van Der Watt – Advances in Cardiac Care**

RSVP to Kelly.Hickman@whht.nhs.uk. 01923 436280

No decisions about me without me

The NHS White Paper, *Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS*, sets out the Government's long-term vision for the future of the NHS.

Four core areas of White Paper:

Putting Patients and Public First
Improving Healthcare Outcomes
Autonomy, Accountability and Democratic Legitimacy
Cutting Bureaucracy and Improving Efficiency

Improving the quality of care remains the main purpose of the NHS. Patients will get services that are more responsive and designed around them, rather than having to fit around existing services. The principle will be "no decisions about me without me".

Under the new plans, patients will be able to choose which GP practice they register with, regardless of where they live. More comprehensive and transparent information, such as patients' own ratings, will help them make choices together with healthcare professionals.

Groups of GPs will be given freedom and responsibility for commissioning care for their local communities. There will be greater competition in the NHS and greater cooperation. Services will be more joined up, supported by a new role for Local Authorities to support integration across health and social care.

As a result of the changes, the NHS will be streamlined with fewer layers of bureaucracy. Strategic Health Authorities and Primary Care Trusts will be phased out. Management costs will be reduced so that as much resource as possible supports frontline services.

Pledge to reduce carbon footprint

As one of the largest organisations in west Hertfordshire, the Trust strongly believes it has a social responsibility to minimise its impact on the environment, both now and into the future. As part of the NHS pledge to reduce its carbon footprint by 26% by 2020, the Trust has taken an active approach towards a more sustainable future by establishing an internal Energy Group to look at ways for the Trust to become greener, as well as saving valuable money.

One of the Energy Group's main objectives is to reduce CO₂ emissions over the next five years. This will be achieved by the introduction of a radical new energy facilities project, which addresses power, heating, hot water and steam supplies, as well as making improvements in insulation and metering.

Increasing recycling and better waste management are also key factors in the Trust's sustainability plans and a variety of measures have recently been introduced, including a mixed dry recycling service for all paper, cardboard, plastic bottles and glass better segregation of clinical waste from general waste and the launch of a battery recycling service.

Other measures to be introduced in the future include exploring green travel opportunities such as the use of hybrid vehicles to reduce pollution.

This is just the start of the Trust's environmental journey. Over the coming months and years the Trust will be introducing other exciting sustainability initiatives and asking staff to help turn its pledge to reduce its carbon footprint into real action.

Infection Control

Over the last couple of years the Trust has seen a significant improvement in the incidences of infection in its three hospitals.

Frances Stratford, Assistant Director for Infection Control said: "I am absolutely delighted with the improvement shown by the Trust. Our figures have improved dramatically from being one of the worst performing Trusts in the country a couple of years ago to being one of the best. As a Trust we take infection control very seriously and everyone has worked extremely hard and will continue to reinforce the message that good hygiene is good practice and is the responsibility of everyone."



A spotlight on the Pre-Operative Assessment Clinic, St Albans

Staff at St Albans, Pre-Operative Assessment Clinic are extremely proud of the service they provide. The clinic assesses whether a patient is healthy enough for surgery and what complications, if any, could arise during an operation. An in-depth medical and anaesthetic history is taken from each patient, with their BMI, height, age, drinking, smoking and recreational drug habits all recorded along with answers to questions surrounding exercise and diet. The aim is to get to know the patient as comprehensively as possible and in doing so, avoid surprises in the operating theatre.

Most of the thirty to forty patients assessed each day are able to continue straight through to surgery, but if the nurses see a significant problem, then the operation is rescheduled or cancelled. This is obviously frustrating for the patient but significant efforts are made to ensure that the patient remains fully informed. Appointments tend to range from thirty minutes to three quarters of an hour for each patient depending on the complexity of the surgery.

A friendly approach from staff has proved successful and it only takes a brief flick through the patient comment book to realize how successful the unit has become since its move two years ago. It's professional and approachable staff make the Pre-Op Assessment Clinic a calming environment for patients to prepare for surgery.



Trust welcomes new Director of Nursing



The Trust is delighted to welcome Natalie Forrest as its new Director of Nursing.

Natalie has been a nurse for over twenty years and brings with her a wealth of experience in nursing. Natalie's clinical background is as an intensive care nurse working in numerous units across London including St George's NHS Healthcare Trust and Guys & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust. Prior to taking up the post of Director of Nursing & Midwifery at Newham University Hospital in January 2008, Natalie was the Deputy Director and led on some significant quality improvement initiatives.

Natalie said: "I am very excited about being appointed to this new role. Although I have only been working in the Trust for a short time, I have been particularly impressed by the enthusiasm and dedication to patient care I have seen demonstrated by the staff. Over the past few years, the Trust's commitment to improving the patient experience has been recognised by the Care Quality Commission and I am looking forward to leading, and developing the nursing workforce further, as well as introducing new ideas that will continue to improve the quality of care for the people of west Hertfordshire".

Life saving nurse wins award

Doctors and nurses save lives on a regular basis, but it's not often that the life they save is that of a colleague. Earlier this year Staff Nurse Alice Fitzgerald who has worked for 17 years in the Outpatient Department at Hemel Hempstead Hospital did just that, using a combination of instinct and experience she successfully diagnosed a colleague's ectopic pregnancy, then reacted swiftly to organise the treatment that ultimately saved her co-worker's life.

In recognition of her excellent work, Alice was awarded the title of Employee of the Month by the Trust in July.

If you would like to nominate a member of Trust staff who you feel deserves recognition for the service they provide, please contact 01923 436280.

Revolutionary Pacemaker

Cardiology experts at Watford General Hospital have recently implanted a revolutionary pacemaker, developed by medical technology company Medtronic that is compatible with Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scanners and allows patients to have a MRI scan without the pacemaker being affected by the scanner. This was only the third time this device has been used anywhere in the world, outside of clinical trials.

Pacemaker implantation is a routine procedure in the NHS but for patients with a pacemaker, the device prevents them having another increasingly common diagnostic test, an MRI scan. This is because the leads transmitting the impulses from the pacemaker through the veins to the heart contain a coil made of metal, which can heat up and be damaged by the strong magnetic field used in an MRI scan.

Commenting on this new advanced pacemaker, Consultant Cardiologist Dr Masood Khan, who implanted this device, said: "This is very good news for patients. Pacemaker implantation is a routine procedure for us but for patients with a pacemaker, the device prevents them from having another increasingly common diagnostic test, an MRI scan."

He added: "We implant nearly 400 pacemakers each year, and most probably half of those may need an MRI scan during their lifetime. This is why this new pacemaker is so revolutionary and a real breakthrough in pacemaker technology. I know it will be a real benefit for cardiac patients who may have to have an MRI scan in the future."

MRI is one of the most accurate diagnostic imaging tools that is available and is used to produce detailed scans inside the body. For cardiac patients there is the option of cardiac MRIs, which can be used to measure blood flow in blood vessels and assess heart function. There are approximately 250,000 people in the UK who currently have a pacemaker.



Hospital scanner has seen 10,000th patient



A £500,000 machine shaped like a doughnut is helping to provide a revolutionary hospital service for patients from across south-west Hertfordshire.

The CT scanner, which takes detailed X-rays of people as they pass through a ring in the centre of the machine, has now seen inside more than 10,000 people since it was first unveiled as part of Watford General Hospital's Acute Admissions Unit last March.

It is in use 24 hours a day, operated by a team of 20 radiographers who take an average of 30 scans every day.

There is also a second CT scanner at Watford General, found in the Outpatient Department, while a third is available for outpatients at Hemel Hempstead Hospital.

It produces high resolution images using X-rays. It's brilliant for visualizing strokes. You couldn't have an Accident and Emergency Department without one.

If there is a major accident, a patient would be in the Trust in a few minutes, where they are scanned top to toe and a diagnosis is made within a few minutes.

Previously scans took two days to come back now its back within two hours. It's an excellent service for west Hertfordshire.

Membership Benefits

For more information on membership offers log onto:

www.nhdiscounts.com

www.redguava.co.uk

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As a Trust Member you are eligible to stand as a Governor.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN STANDING AS A GOVERNOR AND WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT WHAT IT INVOLVES COME AND SPEAK TO THE ELECTORAL REFORM SERVICE ABOUT THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A GOVERNOR BY VISITING THE STALL AT THE

Trust's Annual General Meeting

*Thursday 23 September 7 – 9pm
Beechen Grove Baptist Church, Clarendon Road,
Watford, Herts, WD17 1JJ*

Public Members wins prize draw!

Two lucky Foundation Trust Members each won a month's free membership to a local health club in August by suggesting ways to improve the standard of care in our hospitals.

Although the Trust's National Inpatient Survey results have improved significantly over the last few years, the Trust knows it can do more and asked Foundation Trust Members, patients, visitors and staff for their ideas and suggestions on how the Trust could deliver a gold standard of care to its patients.

On 23 August 2010 the Trust was proud to announce its five new Gold Standards of service that every patient should receive in our hospitals. These are:



Please tell us if we're getting these right by telephoning 01923 436820 or emailing info@whht.nhs.uk.

Helping patients to be more active in their own recovery

West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust has introduced a new programme that is aimed at improving patients' general health and wellbeing to accelerate recovery after surgery. This new programme is called the Enhanced Recovery (ER) Programme.

What is the Enhanced Recovery Programme?

Enhanced Recovery is a new approach to elective surgery in the UK. The aim of the programme is to encourage patients to be more active in their own recovery, which helps them to be better prepared to manage when they are back at home.

How does it work?

The ER programme involves a coordinated team of doctors, anaesthetists, nursing staff, dieticians, physiotherapists and occupational therapists. Good pre-operative planning, such as advice on what food to eat and how to mobilise joints, gives patients the maximum opportunity to get their bodies as fit as possible for surgery and anaesthetic. For example, patients who are about to undergo hip or knee surgery are invited to attend 'hip and knee school sessions' before their operation. These sessions provide information about their stay in hospital, the operation itself and post-operative recovery, which patients find informative and reassuring. The ER treatment programme also focuses on ensuring patients receive appropriate pain relief during and after surgery, as well as the management of fluids and diet. All this has been proven to help patients to get on their feet quickly post-operatively.

What are the results of this new treatment programme?

One of the major advantages of this new programme is that in most cases patients are able to be discharged from hospital a day earlier than was previously possible. This is obviously much better for the patient and allows the Trust to offer treatment to more patients.

What do patients think of the ER programme?

Since the programme began in 2009, feedback from patients who have been admitted as part of the Enhanced Recovery Programme has been extremely positive. Many patients have commented that due to the programme they feel fully informed, supported and cared for which has really helped them get back to normal activities much quicker following their operation.

Contacting our Hospitals

Hemel Hempstead Hospital: 01442 213141
St Albans City Hospital: 01727 866122
Watford General Hospital: 01923 244366

Contact Us

It's easy to get in touch with us:

Telephone: 01923 436280
Email: foundation.trust@whht.nhs.uk
Website: <http://www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk/ft>

Write to us: Freepost RSAY-HRJK-URJS
Foundation Trust Office
Watford General Hospital
60 Vicarage Road
Watford
WD18 0HB

Coffee Time Quiz Solution

	Quiz	Answer
1.	7 D in a W	7 Days in a Week
2.	The 7 D S	The 7 Deadly Sins
3.	5 O R	Five Olympic Rings
4.	S W and the 7 Ds	Snow White and the 7 Dwarfs
5.	57 H V	57 Heinz Variety
6.	101 D	101 Dalmations
7.	The M in H H	The Marlow's in Hemel Hempstead
8.	366 D in a L Y	366 Days in a Leap year
9.	100 P in a P	100 Pence in a Pound
10.	H P and the G of F	Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire
11.	S A C	St Albans Cathedral
12.	12 S of the Z	12 Signs of the Zodiac
13.	52 C in a P	52 Cards in a Pack
14.	W F C in V R	Watford Football Club in Vicarage Road