

PATIENT first

NHS
Maidstone and
Tunbridge Wells
NHS Trust

#Patientfirst

Spring / Summer 2021

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells
NHS Trust

Kent Onco
Centre

P6

"Check your bits and bobbins"

MP Tracey Crouch calls on people to check
for lumps following her cancer battle



MTW Exceptional people,
outstanding care

Welcome to Patient First!

March 2021 marked the first anniversary since the Covid-19 pandemic hit the UK.

It's been a difficult time for everyone including the NHS which has faced the most challenging time in its history. Thanks to the exceptional people who work for MTW pulling together, we continued to run essential services such as treating cancer patients and carrying out emergency surgery, while still providing outstanding care.

To help keep everyone safe from the virus, we adapted some of our services and the way we worked such as taking the temperature of patients and visitors on arrival, introducing social distancing measures, installing hand sanitiser stations, changing our visitor policy to reduce footfall on our sites, and providing people with a surgical face mask to wear at all times - unless they are exempt or there is a clinical reason for them not to wear a mask.

Thanks to the vaccine programme rolling out across the UK it looks like we're a step closer to life returning to some kind of normality.

In this edition of Patient First we speak to MP Tracey Crouch about how she took on cancer thanks to the treatment she received at the Kent Oncology Centre at Maidstone Hospital (P6 and P7), and we introduce to you the new cleaning robots which will soon be working in the corridors of our hospitals (P11).

We hope you enjoy reading the stories.

Stay safe and remember, keep following the government guidance

The Patient First team

PS: Due to the pandemic this magazine is only available online. Visit www.mtw.nhs.uk/patientfirst

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For general enquiries or advice, please contact the Trust's switchboard:

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 01892 823535 - Tunbridge Wells Hospital

 Or visit www.mtw.nhs.uk



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Doctor turns NHS workers' Covid-19 stories into book in aid of charity

Diary entries and poems by NHS staff about their experiences of working on the frontline during the pandemic have been turned into a book by one of our doctors to help raise money for charity.

Dr Ishani Rao, who is in her first year of training to become a GP, was due to run a clinic in the jungle in Mexico at the start of 2020. But when her travel plans were disrupted by Covid-19 she returned to MTW to work in the Emergency Department (ED).

It was whilst she was working on the frontline at Maidstone Hospital and Tunbridge Wells Hospital at the very start of the pandemic that Dr Rao and her friend Dr George Whittaker, a Junior Clinical Fellow at the Royal Brompton Hospital, came up with the idea of sharing the experiences of NHS workers in a book called 'National Health Stories – Tales from the Frontline'.

"There were so many learning experiences and new events happening due to Covid and everybody had a different perspective on it or was being impacted differently by the virus, that we thought it would be fascinating to put it down on paper," said Dr Rao.

"We started collecting the stories in April 2020 following an appeal on Facebook and around 50 healthcare workers, such as nurses, doctors, paramedics, and receptionists working in a variety of NHS hospitals across the UK, submitted accounts, poems and diary entries providing us with around 120 pages of content."



Dr Rao's and Dr Whittaker's own accounts also appear in the self-published book which is available to buy on Amazon. Half of the money raised though sales is going to the Covid-19 Appeal which was launched by NHS Charities Together last March. The other half covers future printing and publication costs for more editions to be produced. To date more than 200 copies of the book have been sold.

Dr Rao added: "I found some of the stories so funny and some so heart-warming that I cried when I first held a copy!

"On a personal level, I have found the whole Covid experience very difficult. Professionally I have been lucky to work with such a fantastic team during such a strange and unpredictable time and to have a job that I love!

"I will never forget the year 2020, and in a way I am glad that I couldn't go to Mexico because otherwise the book may not have happened."



Chairman reappointed

The Chair of the Trust Board, David Highton, has been reappointed to the role for a further two years by NHS England / NHS Improvement (NHSE / I) using powers delegated by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

David was appointed in May 2017, and his original term of office was scheduled to end in May 2021. That term has now been extended to May 2023 following a recommendation from NHSE / I's south east regional team.

National recognition for the radiology team

The radiology team at Maidstone Hospital have been highlighted by NHS England (NHS E) for achieving the best utilisation of the Reset and Recovery Mobile Scanners in the country.

A mobile scanner was based at the hospital from November last year to January 2021 to help increase radiology capacity during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. During that time radiology staff were able to see an additional 30 patients a day.

The booking team worked tirelessly, calling every patient the day before their appointment to ensure that each slot was filled, including cancellations. Radiographers worked around the clock to ensure the maximum number of patients could be booked in and scans completed while the mobile scanner was in place. The mobile scanner didn't have the facilities in place to link to the network so the Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) team worked extra hours to manually upload images to the system to ensure there were no delays to patient care.



The processes put in place by the radiology team are now being used as an example of best practice and NHS E is sharing this information nationwide.

We've gone electric

If you own an electric car you'll be pleased to know that MTW has installed electric vehicle charging points in its car parks at both Maidstone Hospital and Tunbridge Wells Hospital.

At our Maidstone site you'll find the charging point in car park B opposite Busy Bees nursery. At Tunbridge Wells it's located in car park B, at Level -1 upper on the far left against the rear wall.

The spaces, which are in pairs, are served by a single unit with two charging sockets. Drivers will need to use their own charging lead to connect their vehicle to the unit. The sockets are Type B.

After following the systems instructions and using a payment card, either contactless or chip and pin, charging will start. There is a maximum intended duration of four hours charge time per vehicle to encourage fair usage. Vehicles left connected for longer than the selected period will not be charged electrically but may receive a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).

The current charges, which are paid up front, are:

- 1-4 hours - £5
- 4- 8 hours - £15
- 8 -12 hours - £30

Please note, the chargers are intended to provide enough charge to get you home rather than a 'stay until fully charged' visit. It is the responsibility of the user to ensure they do not overstay the allotted time. Vehicles parked in the designated spaces that are clearly not electric vehicles or plug in hybrids, or not connected to the charging unit, risk being issued with a PCN.



iPad donation helps stroke patients stay in touch with their loved ones

Four iPads have been gifted to the Acute Stoke Unit at Maidstone Hospital so patients can keep in contact with their loved ones during the pandemic.

The generous donation was made by the relative of a former patient who was being cared for on the ward.



Scores on the doors

Our amazing catering team at Café @ Plus One at Maidstone Hospital have been awarded the highest food hygiene rating that can be achieved.

A sticker showing the Level 5 rating takes pride of place on the doors of the café for all to see.

Achieving Level 5 gives people peace of mind that the place they are eating in is serving food that is safe to eat, the premises are well maintained and the highest standards of cleanliness are in place.



New support group for former Covid-19 patients

A new Facebook group has been launched to support west Kent residents who received treatment for Covid-19 at Maidstone Hospital and Tunbridge Wells Hospital.

Launched by MTW in partnership with Healthwatch Kent, the MTW Covid-19 Experience Group is believed to be the first of its kind to be set up by an acute Trust in Kent.

The Facebook group is a safe and secure place where former MTW patients can chat with people about their hospital experience. The Trust's clinical teams also work with Healthwatch Kent, which is facilitating the group, to provide members with information and support for their rehabilitation.

A flier promoting the group will be handed to patients upon discharge.

Joining the group is quick and easy. Former patients simply need to log into, or create an account on Facebook, search for 'MTW Covid-19 Experience Group' and click join before answering three questions – which hospital they were treated in, when they were treated and the area they live in.

Nikki Lewis, MTW's Interim Patient Experience Lead, said: "Creating a peer support group for those recovering from Covid-19 who are no longer under the care of MTW, means they can connect with likeminded people in one place and talk freely about their experience overall.

"Although each patient's experience of Covid-19 is different the members of the group have all been hospitalised and gone through an extremely difficult and worrying time in their lives.

"Sharing their experiences via the group will not only help them but also help MTW and Healthwatch Kent to understand any issues and make improvements to its services and the care it provides to others who may be admitted to Maidstone Hospital or Tunbridge Wells Hospital with Covid-19 in the future."



Case Study

Chatham and Aylesford MP Tracey Crouch is used to making the news headlines. But last year the media's attention was on her for a very different reason after she announced she was taking on the biggest fight of her life – beating breast cancer.

Tracey spoke to Patient First about the amazing care she received from MTW and calls on people to regularly check their 'bits and bobbins' for lumps so they can be diagnosed and treated quickly.

Sunday 14 June 2020 is a day Tracey Crouch will never forget – but sadly not for the right reasons.

After hopping in the bath to help sooth her aching muscles following a 50k bike ride, which she had completed earlier in the day, the mum of one discovered a lump at the top of her right breast.

The next day she booked herself in for a mammogram to be carried out at a private hospital later that week. After spending the day in Parliament she headed straight to her appointment where she also underwent an ultrasound and biopsy.

"The consultant was pretty certain straight away that it was cancer, so when the diagnosis came through a few days later I already knew," she said.

"I was very upset to start off with. I'm young, fit and I have a five-year-old son so you go to a dark place quite quickly – but as I got more information about the type of cancer I had and the outcomes I became very pragmatic about it."

Less than three weeks after being diagnosed with an invasive ductal carcinoma, Tracey was admitted to Maidstone Hospital to undergo a lumpectomy – a form of surgery which involves removing the tumour from the breast. Unfortunately, as the cancer was found in the sentinel node, a second operation was carried out two weeks later to get further clear margins from around the cancer and to see if it had spread any further through the lymph nodes.

The 45-year-old, who lives with her partner in Aylesford, said: "When I had the second operation it was my birthday so the theatre team sang 'happy birthday' to me as I went to sleep and I woke up to a cake from my consultant!

"I had my cancer tested to see what the risk of recurrence was and unfortunately because it was high risk it meant I needed chemotherapy. My first session was just a few days before my son started primary

school. I felt well enough to be able to walk him to school but I'm pleased we took pictures as looking back now I don't really remember it very well.

"In total I had eight sessions of chemotherapy followed by five sessions of radiotherapy. I was tired during chemo for the immediate few days after but I was soon back on track again. I also lost my hair but I didn't mind that so much. In fact I felt empowered!

"My treatment finished on Tuesday 16 February – two days before my son's fifth birthday so it really was a week for celebration."

All of Tracey's treatment took place at the Kent Oncology Centre, based at Maidstone Hospital, during the Coronavirus pandemic. Measures put in place by staff ensured patients could continue to receive their cancer treatment in a safe environment.

Tracey said: "I didn't mind the restrictions being in place. Of course there are slightly different things such as telephone consultations but the primary treatment – chemotherapy and radiotherapy – are still happening and I felt safe.

"On top of that I received amazing care from MTW. The staff were brilliant, answering any questions I had and everyone was so kind and caring. The chemo nurses' chirpiness and compassion changed the experience for





the better and the support they give you is just wonderful. No-one wants to be on this journey but if you are then at least you know that you are being cared for by the best."

Her chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatment may have ended but Tracey will be on hormone suppressant tablets for the next 10 years.

She added: "While I'm pleased all the treatment is over, what I haven't been able to do yet is banish the fear of it coming back so I am going to take up the offer of counselling to help me with that.

"One thing I know for sure is that I intend to stop putting things off and get on with living!

"To anyone reading my story, please remember to check your bits and bobbins on a regular basis and seek medical help if you spot anything irregular. The NHS is still open for business so please don't delay speaking to your GP as an early diagnosis can lead to a better outcome."

Did you know...

From January 2018 to January 2021 MTW NHS Trust diagnosed and treated 1,456 patients for breast cancer.



See your doctor if you have any of these symptoms:

- A lump in the breast
- A change in the size or shape of the breast, such as swelling in all or part of the breast
- Dimpling of the skin or thickening in the breast tissue
- A nipple that's turned in (inverted)
- A rash (like eczema) on the nipple
- Discharge or bleeding from the nipple
- Swelling or a lump in the armpit

Fundraising

In February we mourned the passing of Captain Sir Tom Moore who was such an inspiration and incredible ambassador for NHS Charities Together. His legacy will help to support our own Trust's patients, carers and staff as well as many more NHS charities up and down the country.

In this edition of Patient First we're delighted to showcase some of our superstar fundraisers who have been getting fit at the same time as fundraising.

Once again, thank you for your support.

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outstanding care



Tough challenges for young stars

Two active fundraisers combined home schooling during lockdown with tough fundraising challenges.

Poppy-Rose Huntley (14), from East Farleigh, ran a marathon in three months to raise over £400 for our Neonatal Unit at Tunbridge Wells Hospital 'to help raise awareness for the brilliant work the nurses, doctors and professionals do'.

Poppy-Rose was born six weeks prematurely, weighing just 4lbs 14oz, and faced many challenges but is now a happy and healthy teenager.

Max Plumb, from Tunbridge Wells, raised £1,480 by cycling over 400km on a static bike at home - that's the equivalent of more than nine marathons!

Max said: "The NHS is always there when we really need them and I think the people that work there are amazing. I chose to support the NHS because everyone works so hard to keep us all safe."

Thank you Max and Poppy-Rose!



NHS Big Tea

The NHS turns 73 on Monday 5 July which also marks the 'NHS Big Tea' - a nationwide fundraising event for NHS charities like ours.

To celebrate the outpouring of love and support for the NHS we are asking our supporters to dust off their teapots and host an event!



Tosh's 167 miles at Ascot

Clinical Pharmacist Tosh Solanki is walking 167 miles around Ascot Racecourse in Berkshire which covers 179 acres.

The racecourse has been used for filming, most notably three times in a James Bond production.

Tosh is completing his challenge every weekend until July on top of his busy role and commute from Berkshire to Maidstone!

To sponsor Tosh visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/Toshwalks167miles



Trust staff pace themselves for charity

Some of our staff have taken on our 2021 'Go The Distance' fundraising challenge.

Katie Podolsky, from our microbiology team, ran 10km and Roz Yates, Oncology Matron, took on a cycling challenge as part of her second 'Go The Distance' challenge!

Programme Manager Ruby Dey, and Lisa Bonifacio, Transformation Project Coordinator, transformed themselves into fundraising whirlwinds and raised over £300 by running 26 miles.

To find out how you can take on your own challenge visit mtwcharity.org.uk



Calling all bakers!

Baking is a favourite pastime for many of us so our sweet challenge 'Bake to Donate' will not only help you release your inner creativity but also help to raise valuable funds for our charity.

All you need to do is:

- Bake a sweet treat and take a photo
- Share your photo on social media
- Nominate five other bakers to take on the challenge

Donate £5 via www.justgiving.com/fundraising/mtwbakeoff

Companies back MTW

Thanks to companies including Persimmon Homes, Croudace Homes, and Whitehead Monckton Charitable Foundation, a total of £10,000 has been donated towards Maidstone Hospital's project to upgrade the staff shower and changing room facilities.

Thanks also to The Mall Maidstone for hosting our first ever contactless donation point for shoppers to 'tap and donate'.

To make a donation online visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/teamMTW



Support us your way

- Select our charity when shopping via 'AmazonSmile'
- Try a sponsored fitness or healthy living challenge
- Take on a winter 'Go The Distance' challenge
- Nominate us to be your group or company's charity of the year

Don't forget to follow us on social media @mtwcharity



MTW receives funding to help develop new ultrasound system to find cancer

Funding worth £1million has been awarded to MTW's Breast Care Unit and Imperial College London to work together to develop a new ultrasound system designed to find cancer in lymph nodes without the need for surgery.

The grant was awarded by the National Institute for Health Research's Invention for Innovation (i4i) Programme to Dr Karina Cox, Consultant Breast and Oncoplastic Surgeon and Lead Clinician for Research and Development, and Professor Mengxing Tang of Imperial College London, after they pioneered the use of injecting patients with tiny, gas filled 'microbubbles' so clinicians can 'see' inside lymph nodes and find and size cancerous deposits via an ultrasound scan.



If cancer is in the lymph nodes this can affect the types of treatment offered. Currently, the best way to find cancerous lymph nodes is to surgically remove them. As a result this pioneering technique could save thousands of people each year from undergoing surgery, which can be unnecessary and cause life-long complications for some patients.

The money will be used to develop both the hardware and the software for the ultrasound system which offers the promise of finding all cancerous lymph nodes as opposed to 50% being found using current ultrasound scans.

Research started in October 2020 and is being carried out in partnership with biomedical engineers at Imperial College London, breast cancer specialists in Kent and London, the London In Vitro Diagnostics Co-operative and test accuracy experts at Warwick University. The new ultrasound test builds on technological research undertaken over the past five years at Imperial College London and clinical studies pioneered at Maidstone.

Dr Cox said: "The creation of a contrast ultrasound test to replace armpit surgery could improve the quality of life for patients and reduce NHS costs. If successful, this research will lay the foundation for a larger clinical study to prove the new ultrasound test finds sentinel node metastases as accurately as surgery."

If the research and development is successful the technology could be in use within five to 10 years.



League of Friends donation to Acute Stroke Unit

Ten observation machines have been donated by Maidstone Hospital League of Friends to the Acute Stroke Unit.

The machines are used by staff to record patients' blood pressure, capillary oxygen levels, heart rate and

temperature, the results of which help highlight if there is a need for staff to carry out further clinical assessments or simply reassure patients that they are clinically improving.

Having more of these machines on the ward means the unit can keep one in each bay and the side rooms, saving staff time locating the machines and minimising cross infection rates.

Cleaning up with technology

One of our young patients Jimmy Edwards, aged nine, got the chance to meet Ella the cleaning robot when she visited Hedgehog Ward at Tunbridge Wells Hospital.

Ella was brought in as part of a demonstration by Killis ahead of the Trust leasing two of the robots which are set to start working at MTW's hospital sites this spring.

Sarah Gray, Assistant General Manager for Facilities, said: "The robots will help free up our domestic cleaners, who currently spend a lot of time mopping the large floor space on a regular basis - especially during the winter months - so they can carry out vital touch point cleaning around the two sites which is essential during the pandemic.

"As the robots interact with anyone they come in to contact with, the plan is to redeploy them during the summer months to our children's wards so children and young people can enjoy them."



Former patient donates bladder scanner to Maidstone Hospital

New medical equipment is now benefitting patients at the Kent Oncology Centre based at Maidstone Hospital thanks to a generous donation by a former cancer patient.

Stephen Stamp, who was diagnosed with prostate cancer in early 2020 and credits the treatment he received at the centre with saving his life, generously donated nearly £7,000 to the Cancer Services Fund, via Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Charitable Fund, to purchase a new bladder scanner for the radiotherapy department.

It will be used by the team to provide safe and reliable scans for patients undergoing treatment at the Trust. The scanner is a key diagnostic device that enables staff to determine if a patient is able to pass urine.

Mr Stamp, from Gravesend, said: "I was very lucky to receive an excellent level of care at Maidstone Hospital and thankfully made a complete recovery following my diagnosis.

"I wanted to give something back to the Trust to thank the staff for my care. I also wanted to provide a donation in memory of my late father, John Stamp, who sadly passed away in 1997 after suffering with prostate cancer. My father encouraged me to undergo prostate cancer screening which meant that my cancer was thankfully detected early.

"I hope that this new scanner will ensure quick and efficient diagnosis for future patients and help them on their road to recovery."

Katie Goodwin, Divisional Director of Operations for Cancer Services, said: "We are extremely grateful for this kind donation from Mr Stamp.

"The new scanner will make a huge difference to our patients and our staff. Patients can require multiple scans whilst they are getting ready for radiotherapy and having a new scanner in the department will significantly improve efficiency from both a staff and patient experience perspective."



Meet the team

Supporting someone at the end of their life is never easy, and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has sadly made things even harder for many people.

Here at MTW we have a team of palliative care nurse specialists who support clinical teams to provide complex symptom management for adult patients with life-limiting illnesses and those at the end of their lives. The team also helps family members as they come to terms with the loss of their loved one.

We spoke to Neve Mann, End of Life Care (EoLC) Clinical Nurse Specialist, about her role.

Neve, who started her nursing career 30 years ago, was inspired to take her chosen career path after she went on a work placement on an oncology ward and saw at first hand the sensitive nursing care and support provided to patients nearing the end of their lives.

The ethos of the palliative care nursing team is to support living well for individuals admitted to hospital with a life-limiting illness – helping the patient, and everyone affected by their diagnosis, to have the best quality of life. For example, a patient who was recently under the care of the team to manage her complex cancer symptoms, wanted to return home to her family to enjoy her birthday. Thanks to the support provided by our dedicated palliative care nurses the patient was discharged from hospital and able to spend time with her husband and children.

As well as providing care and support to patients, the team helps families navigate through one of the most difficult times that anyone can face.

"The team also work closely with community colleagues to ensure that patients and families have appropriate on-going support once they are discharged from hospital, through local hospices and community nursing and medical colleagues," commented Neve.

"Supporting patients and families at this crucial and difficult time is both a privilege and honour. It is a challenging role but also extremely rewarding. We take a holistic approach, ensuring that the patient can live as well as possible and ensuring a dignified death, while also supporting relatives throughout this process.



"It's also fulfilling to work closely with clinicians across the Trust to improve palliative and end of life care for our patients."

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has also presented many challenges.

Neve said: "The team have adapted their care during the ongoing pandemic, including producing Covid-19 symptom control guidance; medication advice; drafting documentation for staff about how to have difficult conversations; and the production of simplified information and care plans for end of life care specifically for Covid-19 patients.

"Individualised Care Plans are in place to help staff understand the needs and wishes of each patient and all ward staff are required to complete mandatory End of Life Care (EoLC) training which covers these considerations.

"In addition we have encouraged staff to facilitate virtual contact with relatives through the use of iPads and distributed paired knitted hearts donated by the community to our EoLC patients and their relatives to strengthen the connection between families during these difficult times."

For more information about our palliative care team visit:



www.mtw.nhs.uk



Developing home grown talent



MTW has been awarded accreditation by the National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS) as a training provider for a Scientist Training Programme (STP) in Cardiac Science.

A national shortage of cardiac physiologists makes recruitment in this field extremely challenging, so the cardiac team decided to address the issue through some home grown talent by completing the accreditation process so it can offer the training programme which is equivalent to a Master Degree.

It includes on the job training as well as study and coursework through Manchester Metropolitan University with the course and trainee salary funded by Health Education England (HEE).

The cardiology department already has two trainees lined up who will be undertaking the programme this year - Elliot Conboy (pictured left) and Georgie Paul (pictured right) — further strengthening our team of experts in the field of coronary artery disease.



Help us shape our Outpatients' services

Would you like to help improve our Outpatients' services?

We're looking for volunteers, aged 18 plus and from all walks of life, to join the Outpatients' Patients' Voice group.

Members currently meet virtually, via Microsoft Teams, once a month and provide input on all areas including:

- Environment – such as the refurbishment of clinic areas, including improving aesthetics such as painting, signage and patient information displays
- Virtual consultation appointments which allow our patients to have a video call with their clinician from the comfort of their own home
- Clinic start and finish times to help reduce clinic delays
- Patient flow systems so patients are directed to the right department
- Telephone systems so calls can be answered as quickly as possible
- Patient experience surveys to capture patient feedback and improve services further

Once national lockdown restrictions ease, or are lifted, members of the group will also be invited to be involved in walk arounds at our hospital sites and

trialling new systems that have been implemented by the Trust. Members can also choose which elements they would like to be part of to ensure we capitalise on their strengths and interests.



John Stockham is a member of the Outpatients' Patients' Voice Group.

He said: "Over the last five or six years I have benefited from superb treatment from the NHS, which still continues. Although a hackneyed cliché, I wanted to give something back so I became volunteer in the Emergency Department at Maidstone Hospital.

"When Covid-19 struck, my volunteering had to be suspended, so I thought my various experiences as a hospital patient, as well as chairing my Medical Practice Patient Participation Group, would serve me well in the role.

"I am already enjoying participating in several project areas, with a view to making a positive and welcome difference to the patients' experience of attending hospitals in west Kent."

For more information about joining the group:

✉ mtw-tr.outpatientsmanagement@nhs.net



New superhero joins the domestic team

Meet MTW's new superhero – THOR.

Five THOR UVC decontamination robots have been bought by the Trust to work alongside the domestic team to quickly decontaminate a room or ward and fight off any viruses and germs, such as *Clostridium difficile* (C. diff) and Covid-19, that may still be in the environment.

MTW and East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation are believed to be the only two acute Trusts in the south east using this type of technology.

Current methods mean it takes approximately five hours to deep clean and disinfect a room and ensure it is safe for patient use again. The time is made up of 45 minutes for the domestic team to deep clean the area plus a further four hours to decontaminate the room / ward using Hydrogen Peroxide Vapour (HPV) technology - more commonly known as fogging.

Using the THOR UVC decontamination robots reduces the cleaning and disinfection time by more than half as the new UVC system uses Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) technology to scan the room and calculate the exact time required to decontaminate it, ranging from 60 to 90 minutes depending on the size.

The robot then uses shortwave ultraviolet light, which prevent microorganisms from infecting and reproducing, to destroy pathogens such as C. diff, carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE), vancomycin-resistant Enterococcus (VRE), Candida Auris, Ebola, coronavirus, and norovirus. However, the Trust will still retain some fogging as it is useful for large areas.

Three of the robots are based at Maidstone Hospital and two at the Tunbridge Wells site. As they're on wheels they can be quickly and easily moved to wherever they are needed. The other advantage of using THOR is that it can be used safely in areas where there is delicate machinery such as MRI scanners.



New mobile breast screening unit

Up to an extra 200 patients living in the West Kent community can now be screened for breast cancer thanks to MTW taking delivery of a new mobile breast screening unit.

The unit, which is part of an NHS England capital replacement programme and replaces an older unit, provides a clean, safe and welcoming environment for patients attending breast screening appointments.

A one-way system has been put in place, helping to keep patients safe and making for a more efficient system within the unit which has enabled the breast care team to reduce times between appointments.

It also has a lift providing easy access for all of our patients, plus full remote connectivity ensuring immediate image transfers and instant updates to live worklists.

The unit was located at the rear of Maidstone Hospital behind the Peggy Wood Breast Care Centre until the end of March when it was then transferred to support patients living in the Tunbridge Wells area.



Improving mental health following childbirth

A new service to help improve people's mental health following childbirth has been launched by MTW's maternity services team.

Birth Thoughts is a weekly clinic which provides those who have given birth at MTW, and who live in the west Kent area, with the opportunity to talk about their birth experience and explore their thoughts and feelings with a midwife during the postnatal period.

Appointments take place virtually and last approximately one hour. People can refer themselves to the service by completing a self-referral form via the Trust's website or they can be signposted to it by a community midwife or health visitor.

The midwifery-led clinic supported by experienced midwives, was set up in response to NHS England's Better Births report's 5-year plan which aims to provide better postnatal mental health care.

Karen Lesson, Lead Professional Midwifery Advocate, said:

"Everyone who goes through childbirth will have a different experience. For some it can be hugely rewarding, for others it may have been traumatic or very different to the birth they had originally planned for.

"For some women, additional support – sometimes simply someone to talk to – could prevent the onset of depression and other mental health conditions. Talking enables people to reflect and bring some clarity to their experiences and possibly help to answer any questions they may have about their care.

"Although midwives are not trained counsellors or therapists they can talk and listen and help people to understand their birth experience."



Phase 2 of Continuity of Carer model rolled out

The second phase of the Trust's Continuity of Carer (CofC) service for those who are expecting a baby has been rolled out.

It means those aged 20 and under who register their pregnancy with MTW will now be cared for by the same team of eight midwives who will be responsible for co-ordinating their care and ensuring all their needs and those of their baby are met throughout all three stages of pregnancy and birth – antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal.

After completing the self-referral form online to have their baby with MTW they will automatically be directed to the Phoenix team.

Half of the team covers the Maidstone, Malling and Leeds area whilst the other half covers Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, Sevenoaks and Edenbridge. Each midwife also specialises in certain areas such as breastfeeding, mental health, smoking, safeguarding, the Growth Assessment Protocol (GAP) used to measure fetal growth, as well as vaccinations.



CofC was introduced after the 2016 Better Births report by the National Maternity Review set out a vision for England's maternity services to be personalised by 2021.

Phase one of CofC was first launched by the Trust at Crowborough Birth Centre in January 2020.

The benefits of offering the CofC model include:

- Less likely to have a premature birth or be induced
- Less likely to have an epidural or use any pain relief
- Reduced chance of caesarean birth
- A shorter duration of labour

You can follow the team on Instagram - [mtw_phoenixmidwifery](#)

Calling all new dads and dads-to-be

We're looking for volunteers to take a look at a new app we're going to be launching later this year and provide us with some feedback.

DadPad is an easy-to-use resource for new dads and dads-to-be, packed with relevant information, as well as details on local support groups and service providers.

It aims to provide new fathers with information on how to develop the mindset, confidence and practical skills needed to meet their baby's physical and emotional needs. In addition, the app also provides dads with guidance on how to support and seek help for their partners and themselves as they adjust to their new roles, and cope with the physical and emotional strains that this can place on individuals and relationships.



If you'd like to take part in testing the app:  mtw-tr.digitalmidwives@nhs.net



Infant Feeding Team receives Stage 2 accreditation from Unicef

The infant feeding team have achieved Stage 2 Accreditation from Unicef UK's Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI).

Baby Friendly accreditation is based on a set of interlinking evidence-based standards for maternity, health visiting, neonatal and children's centres services. The standards aim to improve care and help ensure health professionals are enabled to support those who have given birth with feeding, helping them to build a close and loving relationship with their baby.

After starting its Baby Friendly journey in 2014 and achieving Stage 1 the following year, the team set its sights on achieving Stage 2. In order to achieve this recognition the infant feeding team had to undergo a rigorous assessment process which measures the level of knowledge and skills of the Trust's staff members who provide breastfeeding support and care for people prenatal (before birth) and postpartum (after birth) as well as their babies, to ensure they deliver the very highest standards of care at all times.

The assessment involved 35 maternity staff, chosen at random by Unicef, being interviewed virtually about their infant feeding and parent-baby relationship building knowledge.

In addition, a team of dedicated infant feeding champions also helped the infant feeding team with its audits and practical skills reviews in the lead up to the assessment.

Thanks to everyone's efforts the staff achieved 100% in most areas and above 80% in all other areas thus passing all five of the standards required in order to achieve Stage 2 accreditation.

Infant Feeding Lead Sally Sidhu said: "This is not only great news for MTW but also those who have their baby with the Trust as it shows we are actively committed to ensuring that those who have just had a baby receive the best possible support and experience with breastfeeding and that the care delivered to them and their baby is of a high standard."

But the infant feeding team's Baby Friendly journey doesn't end there. They're now working towards the BFI Stage 3 assessment which is set to take place this December. After that they're aiming for Gold - the highest BFI award that can be achieved!



Know your HIV status with a home testing kit

Sexually active people living in Kent who feel they may be at risk of having contracted HIV are reminded they can still get tested during the pandemic using a home testing kit.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, sexual health services are not currently offering walk-in clinics. But the sexual health team at MTW, which is commissioned by Kent County Council (KCC) to run sexual health services in the west and north Kent area, are keen to raise awareness that people aged 16 plus can still get tested for HIV using a home testing kit which they can order on the website www.kent.gov.uk/HIVtest

Dr Lesley Navaratne, Clinical Director and Lead for HIV services at MTW, said:

"The test involves collecting a small sample of blood from your finger-tip in the privacy of your own home and sending it back in the post free of charge.

"The most recent data from 2017/19, shows that 53% of people diagnosed with HIV in Kent did so at a late stage, but advances in the treatment and management of HIV mean that many people are now able to live a normal life for many years with this condition."

Testing for HIV can be done as early as four weeks after an episode of unprotected sex, or sooner if you have any symptoms of fever, rash and sore throat which can be a sign of early (primary) HIV transmission.

Lesley added: "If you have a reactive home test result it is important to have a second test to confirm the result as soon as possible. A team of trained staff will support and advise you on what to do next. If a confirmation test is positive you will be offered all the help you need including access to free HIV treatment to help you lower the levels of the virus in your blood which will be good for you as well as reducing the risk of passing the virus on to others. If you test negative, then it can put your mind at ease."



PALS - still here for you

Despite the pandemic, our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is still available for patients and their relatives if they want confidential advice, support and information on services provided by the Trust.

PALS provide a point of contact for patients and service users who may be seeking information, advice or support with Trust services.

Our PALS team can:

- Help answer any questions you may have about MTW Trust services
- Provide information on Trust services
- Record and pass on your comments and compliments
- Help resolve any concerns you have about the services provided at our hospitals
- Signpost you to our formal complaints process
- Arrange access to leaflets in other formats (e.g. Braille, large print, easy read, other languages)

Although face-to-face appointments are not currently available, people are still welcome to contact the team using the following phone numbers - 01892 632953 or 01622 224960.

If there is no-one available to answer your call, please leave a voicemail message and someone will contact you as soon as possible. Alternatively, you can email the team at mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net



Our volunteers

We have more than 300 wonderful volunteers who give their time to our patients, visitors and staff. Some volunteers are clearly visible and others blend into the background unseen, but all bring with them a wealth of life experience, care, dedication love and a warm smile!

In this edition of Patient First, we're shining a spotlight on two volunteers - Gordon Grimshaw and his wife Jean who are both 67-years-old.

Where do you volunteer?

We both volunteer at Maidstone Hospital.

Tell us more about your volunteer role...

We both work as part of The Volunteer Hub Team. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic there are currently visitor restrictions at the hospital. Our job is to welcome people who bring essential items in to the hospital for patients staying on the wards and to help ensure the items are delivered safely and securely to their loved ones as they are unable to do so personally.

On top of that we also provide patients with directions if they are having difficulty locating the department they need to attend for their appointment and, when necessary, take patients either by wheelchair or help escort them to their appointments.

How often do you volunteer?

At the moment we both volunteer two mornings a week - Monday and Wednesday.

How long have you been volunteering for the Trust?

Gordon – I've been volunteering at Maidstone Hospital for 16 months.

Jean - I've been volunteering since January this year.



What did you do before / what's your background?

Gordon - I was self-employed and managed the family's construction business until I retired in August 2017.

Jean - I worked in administration for a number of years for the NHS in Lancashire. I then became the company secretary of the family business until I retired at the same time as Gordon.

Why did you want to volunteer at MTW?

After we retired we relocated from Lancashire to Kent in 2017. The family have gratefully used the NHS on many occasions over the years. As a result we made the decision to volunteer as a 'Thank You' to the NHS for all they have done for us and many others.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering?

Providing help and support to the people who use Maidstone Hospital.

What advice would you give to anyone considering volunteer work?

Don't hesitate. It's extremely rewarding and fulfilling.

To find out how you can become a volunteer at Maidstone Hospital and

Tunbridge Wells Hospital:



01622 224719



mtw-tr.volunteers@nhs.net

Help us, help you

Get the right NHS treatment. If you're not sure what's best, phone before you go.

Self Care

NHS: Medical advice 24/7

Call 111 if you have an urgent medical problem and you are not sure what to do, or visit www.nhs.uk/111

Emotional support

Mental Health Matters confidential helpline
0800 107 0160

Stop Smoking Service

For free NHS support contact
0300 123 1220
www.oneyoukent.org.uk

GP And Dentist Out Of Hours

Call 111 if you need a GP or Dentist during the evening or at the weekend.

Pharmacy

Late night and Sunday Pharmacies

Maidstone

Link Pharmacy, 88a King Street, ME14 18H
01622 752990

Mon - Fri 6am - 11pm and Sat 6am - 9pm

Morrisons Pharmacy, Sutton Road, ME15 9NN
01622 661750

Mon - Fri 8.30am - 8pm, Sat 8.30am - 7pm
and Sun 10am - 4pm

Tesco Pharmacy, Lunsford Park, ME20 6RJ
01622 701449

Mon - Sat 8am - 8pm
and Sun 10am - 4pm

Medipharma, 13A Tonbridge Road, ME16 8RL
01622 750785

Mon - Fri 7am - 11pm, Sat 8am - 9pm
and Sun 10am - 5pm

Sevenoaks

LloydsPharmacy, Otford Road, TN14 5EG
01732 457017

Mon - Fri 6.30am - 10.30pm, Sat 6.30am - 9.30pm
and Sun 10am - 4pm

Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells

Boots, Calverley Road, TW1 2TE
01892 526486

Mon - Sat 8am - 7pm and Sun 10.30am - 4.30pm

East Street Pharmacy, 47 East Street, TN9 1LA
01732 770055

Mon - Sat 7am - 10pm and Sun 10am - 8pm

LloydsPharmacy, Linden Park Road, TN2 5QL
01892 517736

Mon - Fri 7am - 11pm, Sat 7am - 10pm and
Sun 10am - 4pm

Minor Injuries Units

Edenbridge Hospital, Mill Hill, TN8 5DA

01732 862137

Mon - Sun 8.30am - 6.30pm (closed Christmas Day)

X-ray available Wed and Fri 9.15am - 5pm

Sevenoaks Hospital, Hospital Road, TN13 3PG

01732 470200

Mon - Sun 8am - 8pm

X-ray available Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm (closed Bank Holidays)

Crowborough War Memorial Hospital

Southview Road, TN6 1HB

01892 603602

Mon - Sun 8am - 8pm (closed Christmas Day)

Visit www.nhs.uk for GP Practices offering a minor injuries service.

Emergency Care Centres And A&E

For critical or life-threatening emergencies call 999, or go to your nearest Accident and Emergency (A & E) which is open 24-hours a day.

Maidstone Hospital, Hermitage Lane, ME16 9QQ

01622 729000

Tunbridge Wells Hospital, Tonbridge Road, TN2 4QJ

01892 823535

Get The Right Care For Your Symptoms



Grazed knee
Sore throat
Coughs

Self Care



Headaches
Upset stomachs
Aches & pains

Pharmacy



Call 111 for
fast advice
& support

NHS 111



For symptoms that
don't seem to be
going away

GP Surgery



Urgent but not life
threatening
Sprains, Fractures
Minor burns

Urgent/Walk-in
Center

999

Unconsciousness
Severe breathing difficulty
Heavy bleeding

A&E
or 999

**"We knew everything
about each other.
Apart from this."**

Let's give the people we love,
the certainty they need.
Talk to your loved ones about
organ donation.

Leave them certain

Visit organdonation.nhs.uk

