

patient **first**

#patientfirst

Spring 2016

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**'I have found
my experience
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part through
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the NHS'**

Clinical Trials. Read Alison Hutchinson's story on *p8*

Radiotherapy department scoop two prestigious awards *p7*

Welcome to the Spring edition of Patient First!

In this magazine, we have another real-life case study – we talk to Alison Hutchinson about her rheumatoid arthritis diagnosis ten years' ago and how, since then, she has taken part in two clinical trials.

You can also read about 'the blood runners' – the vital volunteers who transport blood, samples and equipment to hospitals and hospices in Kent.

This edition also includes stories about a new state of the art piece of equipment, which will be used to help detect lung cancer, a pledge we have made to people with secondary breast cancer, our ongoing recruitment campaign and great news regarding infection control.

There's information from our Chief Executive, Glenn Douglas, about the transfer of maternity services from East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust to MTW, as well as all the latest news from our hospitals.

As always, you can test your general knowledge with our quiz, try the delicious recipe from our very own League of Friends' cook book, and find practical advice about local services available to you.

Don't forget, we would really like to hear from you – all your feedback and suggestions are gratefully received, so please contact us.

We hope you enjoy this edition of **Patient First** and we look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy spring!
See you in summer!

The Patient First team

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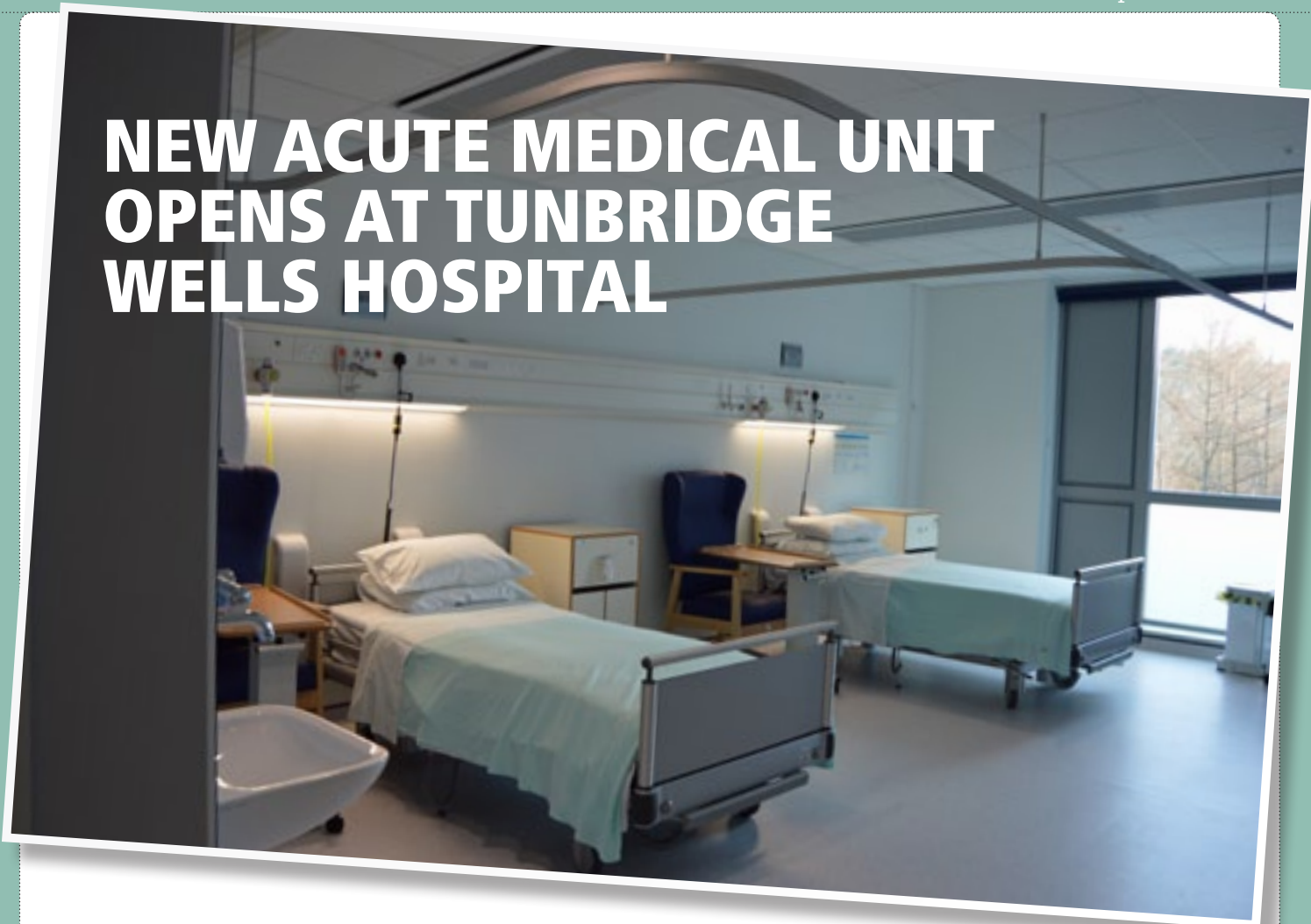
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NEW ACUTE MEDICAL UNIT OPENS AT TUNBRIDGE WELLS HOSPITAL



A new acute medical unit has opened at Tunbridge Wells Hospital to improve emergency patient flow through the Trust and enhance standards of care for patients.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust has invested £3.3 million in the facility, which forms part of the Trust's ongoing planned response to increases in demand for emergency care.

The 38-bed ward is made up of two single rooms and nine 4-bed bays, and will act as a central hub for handling A&E patients and receiving urgent GP medical referrals.

There are three main functions for the Acute Medical Unit (AMU):

- an ambulatory care area, allowing us to provide day care treatment
- a rapid assessment area, enabling GPs to admit directly to the unit, avoiding A&E
- a short stay area for emergency patients

Patients will stay for no longer than 48 hours, before being discharged or admitted to another ward within the hospital. By having these three areas contained in one ward, medical and nursing staff will be able to work more efficiently.

Trust Chief Operating Officer, Angela Gallagher, said: "The new AMU will allow us to deliver an even better standard of care to our patients, by assessing and treating patients in a timely way, facilitating their discharge and directing appropriate patients onto specialist wards.

"This unit, alongside other initiatives we have implemented, will also support the continued implementation of our plan to efficiently and effectively handle urgent emergency cases through our hospitals.

"Additionally, it will allow us to carefully manage an increase in planned activity and get back to our normal working patterns as quickly as possible."



Tunbridge Wells Hospital

NEWS FROM YOUR

State of the art GPS-like technology will help early detection of lung cancer

Ground-breaking new technology will soon start to treat lung cancer patients at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW), with the support of local cancer charity, the Peggy Wood Foundation.

Electromagnetic Navigation Bronchoscopy (ENB) uses GPS-like technology to create a three-dimensional virtual roadmap of the

lungs. This map then helps specialist doctors guide a set of catheters through the lungs' most complex airways. It is a minimally invasive procedure that allows the doctor to diagnose and prepare to treat cancerous lesions using a single procedure, as quickly as possible.

Standard bronchoscopy procedures, which are used to collect small tissue samples from the lungs (biopsies), to diagnose lung disease and lung cancer, can't reliably reach deep into the lungs, where nearly two thirds of all lung lesions are found. ENB solves this problem and is far less invasive than more complicated, surgical procedures. Most patients who have had ENB treatment can go home on the same day.

ENB also means that lung disease and lung cancer can be detected in its early stages, sometimes before other symptoms have become evident. This, in turn, means the potential for earlier treatment and a good outcome for the patient.

Dr Syed Arshad Husain, the Trust's lead on the new ENB service and Consultant Respiratory Physician, said:

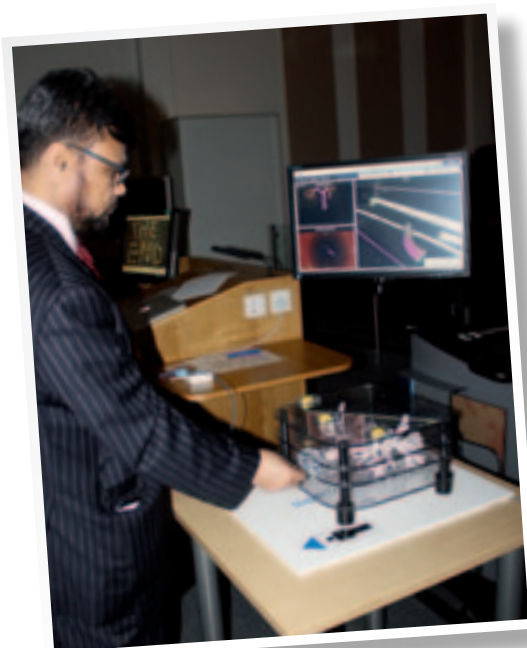
"Our Trust is totally committed to improving lung cancer outcomes through early detection by using the ENB technique.

"This new procedure is an extension of our well-established Endobronchial Ultrasound (EBUS) service and we are one of only two acute trusts to offer this fantastic new technology to our patients.

"Generally, lung cancers are often detected and diagnosed very late, resulting in poor prognosis when compared to other cancers. This new navigational system, however, aims to improve detection times and this will have a positive impact on survival rates and quality of life."

"By introducing this new service to Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust, we will also be able to help reduce the number of referrals for surgical biopsies at Guy's and St Thomas' Trust, and also bring the waiting time down for CT guided lung biopsies, which will be of huge benefit to our patients.

"We are very grateful to The Peggy Wood Foundation for their support in purchasing the ENB equipment we need to further enhance our EBUS service."

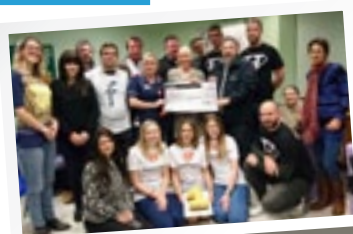


Trust patient and fundraiser passes away

31-year-old Hayley Martin from Maidstone sadly lost her battle with cancer and passed away in January.

Keli Tomlin, Charles Dickens Ward Manager, said, "I would like to offer sincere condolences to Hayley's family, both from myself and the Trust as a whole. She will be missed by the team on Charles Dickens Ward but her memory will live on in the form of Hayley's Room (a room on the ward which was refurbished and upgraded thanks to fundraising by Hayley) and Freddie's Friends, the support group which she helped to establish.

"It was Hayley's wish that a charity be created to provide Kent Oncology patients with access to funding to cover the cost of experiences and treats, or as she called it, 'making magical memories'. Alongside her family and friends, I have been involved in the creation of this charity, called Hayley's Heroes and I will be running the London Marathon this year in support of it."



HOSPITALS

Emergency nurse helps deliver vaccination programme in Calais

When Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) Emergency Nurse Practitioner, Sarah de Coverley, was approached by a former colleague who asked her if she wanted to join a charity trip to vaccinate Calais refugees against measles, she jumped at the chance.

On Friday 5 February, Sarah set off with her former colleague, Rosie Pawson, on the trip to France, armed with wellington boots and a mountain of clothing donations.

The trip was organised by charity, HANDS International (Health and Nutrition Development Society International), whose mission includes improving health, promoting education and alleviating poverty.

Sarah said: "I had no idea what to expect but I was really keen to see for myself the situation in the camp and to meet some of the people whose journeys had brought them to this place.

"The camp was probably what I had expected. It was extremely dirty and overcrowded with the majority of shelters being handmade temporary tents and structures. The camp had divided into small communities which meant the mood and atmosphere was better than I had expected, although

the despair and frustration was obvious."

HANDS International have built, and staffed, a vaccination clinic within the 'jungle' and their project while Sarah visited aimed to prevent a widespread outbreak of measles by giving the vaccination to as many people as possible.

Sarah continued: "The vaccination clinic was new, clean and dry. It had become a safe place for many of the temporary residents and in addition to the clinic function, it was being used as a social hub. Throughout the day, we delivered a large number of vaccinations to children and adults alike. The youngest child was only three years old and all our skills to provide distraction and comfort were needed just as much in this situation as they are in the bright warm surroundings of Tunbridge Wells Hospital."

On the day that Sarah visited the 'jungle', the HANDS International team consisted of a number of people from a wide variety of backgrounds, including paramedics, another UK nurse and a French doctor.

Sarah added: "In the afternoon, we went around the camp to try and recruit more people to the vaccination



programme. This particular project was due to end the same day and the team were then moving onto the camp in Dunkirk. While we walked around, I was struck by the friendliness and how safe I felt in this challenging environment.

"I am so glad that I was able to spend the day delivering some important healthcare in this rather troubled setting. HANDS are looking to establish a more permanent facility and I would definitely consider volunteering again. It was a really interesting and rewarding experience."

Freddie's Friends support group celebrates first anniversary

A cancer support group for young adults, created by patient fundraiser, Hayley Martin, and Ward Manager (Charles Dickens Unit), Keli Tomlin has recently celebrated its first anniversary.

Keli said, "So many people came along to help us celebrate, it was quite overwhelming.

"We were presented with some beautiful new signs for the Charles Dickens Unit which Hayley had designed last year and I'm looking forward to getting these put up soon."

The group were also given a cheque for some new artwork, which was

donated by a local boxing club following a charity event organised by Hayley.

Another cheque, for £3500, was also donated by a group of pubs in Sutton Valence who held a pram race on New Year's Day.

The group meet on the third Wednesday of every month, from 7.00-8.30pm, in Hayley's Room on the Charles Dickens Unit.

If you are interested in finding out more about the group, or if you would like to attend, then please email: freddiesfriendsgroup@gmail.com or alternatively, please call 07703972529.

BIDBOROUGH RESIDENT RAISES THOUSANDS OF POUNDS FOR THE TUNBRIDGE WELLS HOSPITAL LEAGUE OF FRIENDS

Di Barber from Bidborough held her 25th consecutive coffee morning at her home in November and raised a staggering £4,431!

The event, which has become legendary in the village, raises money for the Tunbridge Wells Hospital League of Friends.

Around 150 people attended the event, where for a small entry fee, they could enjoy as much tea, coffee and homemade treats as they liked. There was also a raffle which raised £700, plus a bring and buy sale and a cake, jam and chutney sale.

The Trust is incredibly grateful to Di for all her hard work and support, and offers sincere thanks to her and all those who attended the event.

Trust makes secondary breast cancer pledge

An event held in March at the Hop Farm in Paddock Wood marked the launch of an official pledge from Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) to make changes to improve the service and care for secondary breast cancer patients.

The UK's leading breast cancer charities – Breast Cancer Now and Breast Cancer Care – teamed up to help (MTW) identify important changes to improve services for local people diagnosed with incurable secondary breast cancer.

There are around 36,000 people living with secondary breast cancer in the UK – cancer that has spread beyond the breast or armpit to other parts of the body, such as the lungs or liver. Secondary breast cancer cannot be cured but it can be treated and controlled, sometimes for a number of years.

The Secondary Breast Cancer Pledge was designed with secondary breast cancer patients in mind. It gives them the opportunity to work with the two charities by providing their view on what matters most to them and their care.

Through questionnaires and workshops over the past year a range of patient-led service improvements at the hospital have been identified, these include:

- Working with a patient focus group to develop a directory of local services available for people living with secondary breast cancer
- Developing an introductory letter to give to patients explaining the role of the Macmillan Nurse Clinician and give this to patients at their first new patient consultation
- Working with community and other primary care organisations to deliver a family service that supports parent-child communication and other parenting needs relating to living with secondary breast cancer.

Delyth Morgan, Chief Executive at Breast Cancer Now and Samia al Qadhi, Chief Executive at Breast Cancer Care, said: "We are delighted that Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust has pledged to achieve top standards of care for people living with secondary breast cancer.



"Those living with the disease require specialist support to address their complex needs and the uncertainty they face about the future.

"It is wonderful that patients sit at the heart of this pioneering initiative and that we're helping to ensure they receive the best treatment and care."

Joanne Aston from Maidstone, who has secondary breast cancer, said: "This pledge, for me, feels like my opinions and views matter and that I am a person, not just a list of symptoms. There is a plan going forward, action is being taken and results are being seen already, which is fantastic. This will really make a difference to people with secondary breast cancer."

Claire Ryan, Macmillan Nurse Clinician for Metastatic Breast Cancer said: "The Breast Team at the Trust are proud of the care they provide for secondary breast cancer patients but recognise that there are always improvements that can be made. We are committed to ensuring that the service given to patients is the best it can be. It has been a very positive experience working in partnership with our patients in developing this pledge and we are looking forward to continuing to work together in the future to provide an excellent level of care."

Dr Russell Burcombe, Consultant Oncologist for MTW, said: "It is 12 years ago that I started at Maidstone Hospital as a consultant, and since then we have come a very long way in terms of how we listen and act upon the feedback that our patients give us.

"This pledge means that we are addressing the things that are most important to our patients which, in turn, means we will be able to provide an even better service, focused on the things that really matter."



ACUPUNCTURE CLINIC FOR BREAST CANCER PATIENTS OFFICIALLY OPEN

A new clinic providing ear acupuncture for people with breast cancer has been officially opened at Kent Oncology Centre.

The Susan Murray Ear Acupuncture Clinic has been set up thanks to the generous support from the Murray family from Headcorn.

Feature



RADIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT SCOOP TWO PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS

The **Radiotherapy Department** at **Kent Oncology Centre**, based at Maidstone and Kent and Canterbury Hospitals, has won two awards from the Society of Radiographers (SoR).

Christine Richards, Head of Radiotherapy Services at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW), was named as South East Radiographer of the Year, and the Radiotherapy Treatment department as a whole was named as South East Radiography Team of the Year.

The annual awards are an opportunity to recognise the hard work and dedication of radiographers across the country.

Christine's award noted her tireless fight to promote the therapeutic radiographer profession both at a local level and nationally, as well as her enthusiasm and innovative approach to her job.

The Radiotherapy department was recognised for its hard work to ensure all patients are provided with the best possible care.

One comment from a patient was included in the team's award citation. It read: "The reception staff were friendly, helpful and professional, well done."

Radiographers – professional, extremely helpful and liaised with doctors to present a seamless service that answered all problems that arose during treatment. Excellent."

The citation also included information around the dedicated brachytherapy team, who have pioneered radiographer-led tumour marker insertion – the first in the country to do so. The team is also the first in the world to have performed a 4D brachytherapy implant in combination with an IsoLoader.

MTW Chief Executive, Glenn Douglas, said: "This is excellent, and well-deserved, news for Christine and the whole Radiotherapy department at Kent Oncology Centre. This team work tirelessly to provide the best service possible for their patients, as well as being innovative, pioneering and an absolute asset to the Trust as a whole."

Susan Murray, a former patient at the Kent Oncology Centre, died in June 2015, and her husband, Bill, and her children, were keen to do something positive in her memory.

It was decided that, with the help of Claire Ryan (Macmillan Nurse Clinician) and Roz Yates (Acute Oncology Nurse), the Susan Murray Ear Acupuncture Clinic would be set up, primarily for people living with secondary breast cancer. The complementary therapy aims to promote relaxation, help encourage a sense of well-being and assist in the management of menopausal symptoms, a common and debilitating symptom of breast cancer treatment.

The clinic was officially opened by Bill Murray and saw its first patients in March this year.



Case study



TODAY'S TRIALS, TOMORROW'S TREATMENTS

Alison Hutchinson, from Sutton Valence, was diagnosed with the painful and debilitating condition, rheumatoid arthritis, at the age of 50. Now, ten years on, she speaks to us about how she has managed the condition and how taking part in two clinical trials has helped.

"When I was first diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis, I spoke to a friend who was a nurse and asked if she had any advice for me," Alison said.

"She told me to ask my consultant what he would say if it was his wife who had been diagnosed with the condition.

"I did just that and one of the things he suggested was looking into taking part in a clinical trial."

Alison asked for some information and shortly after, was told she was eligible for the trial - the WA17047 Roche Early Rituximab study.

Clinical trials, or studies, involve research using willing participants and aim to enhance medical knowledge. In a clinical trial, participants receive specific interventions according to the research plan or protocol

created by the people investigating. These interventions could be medical products, such as drugs or devices; procedures; or changes to participants' behaviour, such as diet. Clinical trials may compare a new medical approach to a standard one that is already available, to a placebo that contains no active ingredients, or to no intervention at all.

In Alison's case, a licensed drug that was already in use for the later stages of rheumatoid arthritis was being tested at an earlier stage of disease. Alison took part in the placebo aspect of the study, which meant that while she did not receive the drug, she was closely monitored so that her progress and condition could be compared against that of other individuals who were receiving the new medication as part of the trial.

Alison said, "The trial at Maidstone Hospital was actually a very good experience. I was monitored very carefully and very frequently, which was time consuming but also helpful and reassuring. It was also very interesting to be part of a clinical trial and to feel like I was contributing to the development of medicines, and potentially helping people in the future."

After the trial, Alison's rheumatoid arthritis went into remission for two years but unfortunately, relapsed in 2010, when she recommenced treatment on an established Rheumatoid Arthritis regime, which again put her in remission until 2015.

Alison found herself experiencing some extremely difficult symptoms, some flu-like, which included severe tiredness and stiffness to a point where she could hardly move.

"This isn't a disease that truly goes away," Alison explained, "and I would describe the symptoms as being akin to walking through mud, pulling a trailer of cement. So, when my condition relapsed, I asked again about clinical trials.

"I started taking part in my second clinical trial" in summer last year (2015) and I am still enrolled in it now. This one has no placebo so it involves taking one of two drugs which are part of the study. The aim of the study is to create an effective but cost-efficient drug which is more accessible to all those who have rheumatoid arthritis.

"At the moment, I am doing well. I try to remain as healthy and active as possible; I eat sensibly, watch my weight, and I walk the dog and practice yoga too. My overall aim is to get back to playing tennis – and I will get there, I'm determined. The condition has left me with some deformities in my hands and feet but otherwise, I am fit and healthy.

"I have noticed that my condition seems to improve when I am abroad somewhere warm – and I think a Mediterranean diet also helps because certain foods, as well as things like stress, can have a detrimental effect and trigger the arthritis.

"If other people with the condition are considering taking part in a clinical trial, I would urge them to find out as

much information as they can so they can make an informed choice about whether or not taking part in a clinical trial is for them. It is absolutely a personal choice and there is no pressure to be involved if you're not sure.

"For me, being involved in the trials have made me feel stronger and more positive. Everything is documented and monitored really closely and that makes you feel special and cared for, as a patient. The regular appointments also mean that you can ask all the questions you want to ask and that you get, in my opinion, excellent care. I have found my experience of clinical trials very positive and I feel lucky to have taken part through my care under the NHS.

"We are so lucky to have the NHS in this country and we really shouldn't take it for granted."

*Alison is currently taking part in a trial to look at the drug Infliximab-Pfizer and Infliximab in combination with Methotrexate in subjects with active rheumatoid arthritis.



CAN YOU HELP WITH BLOOD PRESSURE STUDY TRIAL?

Can you or someone you know assist with a clinical study which investigates when is the best time for people to take their blood pressure medication?

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust has teamed up with the British Heart Foundation and the Medicines Monitoring Unit at the University of Dundee to run a large study (the TIME study), monitoring and comparing evening dosing of antihypertensive therapy with conventional morning dosing. If you take antihypertensive (blood pressure) medication, you could help with this study.

Dr Amy Rogers, Clinical Research Fellow from the University of Dundee, said: "High blood pressure is the leading cause of heart attacks and

strokes worldwide. We have a number of effective drug treatments available

for the treatment of high blood pressure.

Some recent research has suggested that taking these medications at bedtime might be more beneficial in terms of heart attack and stroke prevention than taking them in the morning.

"The TIME study aims to answer the question: is evening administration of blood pressure medication better than morning administration at prevention heart attacks and strokes?"

Taking part is simple and only involves answering a few questions about yourself, confidentially. The study can be accessed by following the link www.TimeStudy.co.uk

Participants just need to follow the online steps and ensure they select Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust as the referral Trust.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CURRENT CLINICAL TRIALS

If anyone is interested in joining a trial or finding out more about trials relating to your condition, you can speak directly to your care team at the hospital, such as your consultant or nurse looking after you. Alternatively, you can contact the Trust Patient Research Ambassador on 07702 338929 or via Facebook by searching for 'MTW patient research ambassador'. The Trust Patient Research Ambassador is a hospital volunteer who works at the Trust on behalf of research patients

specifically to answer patients' questions and concerns about joining trials.

Find out more about the trials we currently have open by contacting the **Trust Research and Development Department on 01622 225706**. A team of dedicated research nurses can answer any questions you have relating to trials. We always want to hear from patients about the type of research you would like to be involved in and which diseases you would like to see researched locally.

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

Rheumatoid arthritis is a long-term condition that causes pain, swelling and stiffness in the joints.

The hands, feet and wrists are commonly affected, but it can also cause problems in other parts of the body.

There may be periods where symptoms become worse, known as a flare-up or flare. A flare can be difficult to predict, but with treatment it is possible to decrease the number of flares and minimise or prevent long-term damage to the joints.

Rheumatoid arthritis affects around 400,000 people in the UK. It can affect adults at any age, but most commonly starts between the ages of 40 and 50. About three times as many women as men are affected.

There is no cure for rheumatoid arthritis, but early diagnosis and appropriate treatment enables many people with rheumatoid arthritis to have periods of months or even years between flares and to be able to lead full lives.

The main treatment options include:

- **medication** that is taken in the long-term to relieve symptoms and slow the progress of the condition
- **supportive treatments**, such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy, to help keep you mobile and find ways around any problems you have with daily activities
- **surgery** to correct any joint problems that develop.

For more information, visit www.arthritisresearchuk.org

Feature



THE BLOOD RUNNERS

Have you seen us coming and going from the hospitals and wondered who we are and what we do?

We are SERV Kent, informally known as the 'blood runners', which is a charity that provides free transportation of blood, blood products, samples, equipment, medicines and other patient essential items to and from the hospitals of Kent, Demelza House, Ellenor Hospice, patient addresses and the Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance. These services are provided by a team of volunteers including riders, drivers and controllers 365 nights a year and all day at weekends and bank on holidays.

We are all volunteers and the majority of us use our own motorbikes and cars. We also have a fleet of marked vehicles for the more urgent requests we get. We do it because we all share a deep love for helping people, and the out of hours service we provide saves the NHS thousands of pounds a year (the NHS have their own distribution process during normal working hours).

The way we operate within Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells



hospitals is that whenever a patient needs blood, platelets or plasma, outside normal hours, our duty controller receives a call and then tasks one of our riders or drivers to the job.

This usually entails going to the Blood Bank at St George's Hospital in Tooting, London. The product will then be delivered to the pathology lab at the hospital. We also work between the hospitals as, very often, samples are collected from Maidstone and taken to Tunbridge Wells for testing.

Recently we have also been involved with moving samples from Tunbridge Wells to NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) in Filton, Bristol. This involves a relay between us and two other blood runner groups, in order to get the samples across the country.

We are always looking for volunteers, particularly controllers. If you think you would like to help your community in this way, please get in touch with us via www.servkent.co.uk



NHS Blood and Transplant always needs first time donors to replace those who are no longer able to donate, so that the right mix of blood is always available to meet patient needs. Blood donors in Kent are also reminded to keep their appointments during April to ensure healthy blood stocks are maintained.

Blood stocks are currently good, but it is vital that new donors continue to register and make their first appointments to give blood. O negative is rare, and is especially needed because it can be given to people of any blood group in an emergency. NHS Blood and Transplant are also particularly looking for new donors from black and Asian communities, as well as those who are A negative and B negative.

To donate blood for the first time you need to be aged between 17 and 66. To register and to book an appointment call the Donor Line on 0300 123 23 23 or visit www.blood.co.uk.



Blood and Transplant

TRUST AWARDED £16,000 FOR MATERNITY EQUIPMENT

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) has been awarded £16,000 as part of a drive to make the NHS one of the safest places in the world to have a baby.

This award will be spent on simulation equipment, including baby resuscitation manikins, birthing abdomen models and intubation trainers. This equipment will help midwives, doctors and ambulance staff learn about and practice a range of labour and birth scenarios, to ensure they are confident and skilled in dealing with all situations they might be faced with. It will also allow healthcare staff, in a hospital or community setting, to have confidence to support women in their choice of where to give birth to their baby – be it at home, in hospital, or in a birth centre. This will hopefully lead to an enhanced and positive experience for women under the Trust's maternity care.

The money is part of a fund of more than £2million which the Department of Health has awarded to trusts across the country, as part of the Government's commitment to halve the number of stillbirths, neo natal deaths, maternal deaths and brain injuries occurring during or soon after birth by 2030.

Jenny Cleary, Head of Midwifery, said: "We want to provide women with the best care possible, including a wide range of birth options, and support from knowledgeable, confident maternity staff. This money will help us enhance our staff's skills and confidence and will help women in our area to have the birth experience they really want."



Maidstone Hospital's unusual visitor

Mark Laing and his Harris Hawk, **Milo**, have become regular visitors to Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Hospitals to assist in scaring off the many pigeons in the area, in a humane and environmentally-friendly way.

Mark, from Absolute Pest Control, said: "Milo and I have been working with the Trust for around nine months. We generally visit up to a couple of times a week and have noticed a significant reduction in pigeon numbers, from a few hundred to now about a dozen."

"The use of birds of prey to deter problem birds is becoming much more popular with large organisations and people really enjoying seeing these incredible birds in action."

It is important that pigeons are moved on from the hospital sites as they can carry diseases which can be serious for those with weak immune systems and their droppings can cause thousands of pounds worth of damage to buildings and equipment, as the droppings are very acidic and can eat-away at certain materials. The birds often build nests in gutters and corners of roofs where drains are located, resulting in blockages which could lead to flooding and water damage.



Another reduction in cases of *Clostridium difficile* for Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust

The end of the financial year has seen another reduction in the number of patients developing the *Clostridium difficile* infection while staying in Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells hospitals.

Between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016, staff at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust reduced cases of the potentially serious infection by 36%, in comparison to the year before.

The Trust's two hospitals had 18 cases of *C. difficile* between them over the 12 month period, against a Department of Health limit of 27. During the same time period, the two hospitals saw over 400,000 people with around 90,000 requiring treatment that resulted in a stay in hospital.

Dr Sara Mumford, the Trust's Director of Infection Prevention and Control, said: "Infection control is at the heart of everything we do for our patients.

"We are extremely pleased with these figures which represent significant further improvement in the care we give to our patients. This is a real achievement as not only was our limit this year very challenging but it is also compared to a national overall increase in cases.

"I want to thank every member of staff as absolutely everyone has contributed in some way."

Dr Mumford said the reduction was down to prudent antibiotic prescribing by hospital doctors, proactive treatment of patients who carry the *C. difficile* bacteria and excellent infection control by staff.

She added: "As well as our clear focus on prescribing and treatment, I should mention that the Trust has consistently exceeded the set standards of cleanliness in our hospitals, which I have no doubt will have helped us achieve these positive results."

Between four and eight percent of people carry the *C. difficile* bacteria naturally and harmlessly in their gut flora. The balance between the gut's good and bad bacteria can be upset with prolonged use of powerful antibiotics. This is potentially serious for carriers of the *C. difficile* bacteria, which thrives in these conditions and causes the illness.

Additionally, over the last year, there has been just one hospital attributable MRSA bacteraemia and consistently high levels of screening throughout the Trust.

There has also been a 44% reduction in hospital attributable *E. coli* bacteraemia. This has again been achieved on a background of rising levels nationally and in our local community. Part of this improvement has been achieved through better urinary catheter care and our achievement of the Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infection CQUIN (Commissioning for Quality and Innovation framework).

EMERGENCY ESSENTIALS PACKS

Members of the Maidstone Lions Club visited Maidstone A&E in February to present 100 'emergency essentials packs'.

The packs, which contain items such as a toothbrush, flannel, soap, comb and shampoo, will be given to those who are admitted unexpectedly and have no essential items with them, and no means to purchase any.

Money for projects such as this is raised through a car parking service for Maidstone Utd FC supporters, regular fetes and collection tins at supermarkets. All the money raised of the money raised at these events goes to local good causes.

Club Vice-President, Malcolm Luxton, added: "The contents for the pack was agreed between the club and staff from the hospital and we hope that they will be of use to those patients who arrive in A&E with no essentials, and no money to purchase anything.

"The Club has agreed to supply more of the essentials packs, should they be required."

Clinical Director for Acute and Emergency Medicine, Akbar Soorma, said: "I would like to offer my personal thanks to the Maidstone Lions for their generosity. We are very grateful for all they do and it is very much appreciated by both patients and staff.

"These packs will make a huge difference to those patients who need them and will make their stay in hospital a more pleasant one."



Spring recipe

Welsh Rhubarb cake

Try this mouth-watering recipe from our very own **Maidstone Hospital League of Friends Cook Book...**

Ingredients:

Cake:

85g / 3oz butter
85g / 3oz caster sugar
2 eggs
85g / 3oz self raising flour
455g / 1lb rhubarb
1 tbsp demerara sugar

Topping:

60g / 2¼oz butter
85g / 3oz plain flour
30g / 1oz caster sugar

Method:

- 1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/gas mark 5 and grease and line a 20cm (8") round cake tin.
- 2 Cream the butter and sugar, beat in the eggs, then fold in the flour and a pinch of salt. If needed, add a little milk to get a good consistency.
- 3 Slice the rhubarb into 2½ cm (1") pieces and toss with the demerara sugar.
- 4 To make the topping, rub the butter into the flour and stir in the sugar.
- 5 Pour the cake mix into the tin and arrange the rhubarb on top.
- 6 Sprinkle the topping over and bake for 40-45 minutes.
- 7 Serve with double cream.



FIRST MTW BABY AT CROWBOROUGH

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) welcomed baby Luna to the world on 1 April, making her the first baby to be born at Crowborough Birthing Centre following the transfer of services to MTW on the same day.



She was born at 10.02am on Friday 1 April, weighing 7lbs 5oz.

Mum, Josie, said: "I am eternally grateful and thankful for the love and care given by the staff at Crowborough". Dad, Darren, added: "Crowborough has an amazing energy which made us feel relaxed and able to enjoy the birth experience."

Congratulations to them both from all at Crowborough and MTW.

patientfirst SPRING QUIZ

Geography:

1. Which airport has the luggage code LCY?
2. What is the most northern capital city in Europe?

History:

3. Who did Queen Elizabeth I succeed to the throne of England?
4. To which Royal house did Henry VIII belong?

Art and Literature:

5. Canaletto was famous for painting his native city – which city was this?
6. Who wrote the play *The Importance of Being Earnest* in 1895?

Food:

7. The biscuit known as shortbread is a speciality from which country?
8. What is the culinary name for a bunch of herbs used in –flavourings?

Entertainment:

9. What was the first full length animated feature film?
10. Name three of the five Tracy Brothers in Thunderbirds?

Sport:

11. In Judo, the Black belt is the highest, what colour is the second highest?
12. To the nearest decade, when was the first Wimbledon Tournament held?

(Answers on p14)

Executive Team Update

Glenn Douglas, Chief Executive



In early February, the go-ahead was given to the transfer of the management of maternity services in the High Weald area, from East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, to Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW).

The transfer officially took place on 1 April and will mean a more seamless maternity service for women in the High Weald area.

As part of this, we also recently agreed a £100,000 investment for Crowborough Birthing Centre to buy new equipment and enhance the environment and experience for women who give birth there.

This great news follows on from some positive results from the national maternity survey, which were released at the end of last year. The results showed that women are increasingly likely to have a good overall experience of maternity services provided by MTW.

Women have a high regard for their midwives and the clinical teams caring for them, with 82% reporting that they definitely have confidence and trust in local maternity services – up 12% since

the last time the survey was carried out in 2013.

Equally high numbers of women reported having a range of birth choices, of feeling appropriately advised, having enough time to ask questions or discuss their pregnancy, receiving the help they needed and being treated with respect and dignity.

The staff and facilities at Tunbridge Wells Hospital and in Maidstone Birth Centre are also helping partners be involved as much as they want to. 98% of women said their partners or someone close to them were able to be involved in their care during labour and birth, as much as they wanted to be, and 90% were able to stay with them as long as they wanted. All women have their own single rooms at Tunbridge Wells Hospital and the Birth Centre has homely double bedrooms.

Once in labour, women reported being offered a wide range of pain relief options ranging from alternative therapies such as hypnobirthing to an epidural. More women are also using water as a form of pain relief in birthing

pools (up 10%).

The Trust was rated among the best trusts in the country in 10 areas of the maternity survey – twice as many as in 2013. It has no areas rated within the bottom 20% of worst performing trusts.

The positive feedback mirrors monthly surveys undertaken by our own Trust. Between January and November last year, over 95% of women who took part in our maternity Friends and Family test said they were either likely or extremely likely to recommend our maternity services to their friends.

I think we have an excellent opportunity here to further enhance the services we offer and I have no doubt that we can look forward to providing women in the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells areas, and now in the High Weald area too, with the widest possible range of maternity services and choices.

Glenn

WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK IN A CHALLENGING AND FORWARD-THINKING ENVIRONMENT?

Are you a registered nurse, newly qualified or due to qualify soon?

We have Staff Nurse vacancies across both hospital sites waiting for you... As a Trust we are passionate about providing high standards of patient care and are looking for someone with the same values.

If you have an interest in working in our Trust as a Staff Nurse please call Charlie Lee-Frost our Nurse Recruitment Lead on 07834 171754 or email Charlene.lee-frost@nhs.net for an informal discussion.

To complete an application form for Maidstone Hospital simply sign up to www.jobs.nhs.uk and enter '359-nurse-mst' into the job reference box - you will be directed to the appropriate page.

To complete an application form for the Tunbridge Wells Hospital, enter '359-nurse-tw'. If your application is successful you will then be invited to attend an interview to discuss the options available to you.

The Trust is also holding an Adult Staff Nurse and Midwife Open Day on Saturday 21 May, from 10.00am to 2.00pm at the Tunbridge Wells Hospital. For more information about this event, please contact Charlie on the details above.



SPRING QUIZ
Answers from p13

GEOGRAPHY: 1. London City 2. Reykjavik, Iceland
HISTORY: 3. Mary I 4. Tudor
ART AND LITERATURE: 5. Venice 6. Oscar Wilde

FOOD: 7. Scotland 8. Bouquet Garni
ENTERTAINMENT: 9. Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs 10. Scott, Virgil, Alan, Gordon or John
SPORT: 11. Brown 12. 1870s (1877)

Choose **well...**

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

Self-care

NHS 111

Medical advice 24/7

www.nhs.uk/111

Call 111

Emotional support

Mental Health Matters helpline

Confidential emotional support

0800 107 0160

Stop Smoking Service

For free NHS support to stop smoking contact the Stop Smoking Service on 0300 123 1968.

GP and dentist out of hours

Call 111

Pharmacy

Late night and Sunday pharmacies

Maidstone

Link Pharmacy, 88a King Street, Maidstone – 01622 752990 (opening hours: Mon – Fri 6am – 11pm and Saturday 6am – 9pm)

Morrisons Pharmacy, Sutton Road – 01622 661750

Sainsbury's Pharmacy, Quarry Wood, Aylesford – 01622 790223

Tesco Pharmacy, Lunsford Park, Larkfield – 01622 701449

Sevenoaks

Sainsbury's, Otford Road – 01732 469198

Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells

Boots, Calverley Road – 01892 526486

Sainsbury's, Linden Park Road – 01892 532569

East Street Pharmacy, 47 East Street, Tonbridge

(opening times, Monday to Saturday 7am to 10pm and Sunday 10am to 8pm) – 01732 770055

Minor injuries units

Edenbridge Hospital

Mill Hill, Edenbridge, TN8 5DA

Tel: 01732 863164

Open 8.30am to 8pm, 365 days a year

X-ray available from Monday to Friday 9am to 2.30pm

Sevenoaks Hospital

Hospital Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 3PG

Tel: 01732 470200

Open 8am to 8pm, 365 days a year

X-ray available from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Crowborough War Memorial Hospital

Southview Road, Crowborough, TN6 1HB

Tel: 01892 603602

Open 8am to 8pm, 365 days a year

Some GP practices also offer a minor injury service. To find out who, visit www.nhs.uk

Emergency Care Centres and Accident and Emergency

For critical or life threatening emergencies, call 999 or go to your nearest Accident and Emergency, open 24 hours a day.

Maidstone Hospital, Hermitage Lane, Maidstone, Kent ME16 9QQ

Tel: 01622 729000

Tunbridge Wells Hospital, Tunbridge Road, Pembury, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4QJ

Tel: 01892 823535

FIND HEALTH HELP WITH NHS WEB APP

The NHS in Kent has a free web app to help you find the right treatment, especially when you are not sure what to do or who to contact.

Whether you have a baby with a high temperature, a child who is being sick, a teenager who is feeling low or you have sprained your ankle, and for many other health problems, the Health Help Now web app can guide you to the service that will help you best.

Health Help Now lists common symptoms and helps you find the best place for treatment for them in Kent. It shows the nearest services,

whether they are open or closed, and provides a map of their location and directions.

Health Help Now also offers reliable health advice and links to other useful websites. Available at www.healthhelpnow-nhs.net, it works on smartphones, tablets, and computers.

Why not save it to your device now so you have it to hand when you need it?

If you don't have internet access, or if you need medical help fast but it isn't a 999 emergency, dial 111.





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and your loved ones is just
a click away

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Your NHS, online.