


# patient **first**

#patientfirst

winter 2014

A photograph of a middle-aged man with grey hair and a woman with dark hair, both smiling warmly at the camera. The man is wearing a blue and white checkered shirt, and the woman is wearing a pink knitted sweater over a white and black patterned scarf. They are standing in front of a dark, possibly wooden, background.

**'Everyone at Maidstone Hospital, from the nurses to the physiotherapists to the support workers, has been amazing and I can't thank them enough'**

Read stroke patient, Hannah Green's story on **p8**

Arctic challenge for Clinical Trials Officer, Vicki... **p3**

New role provides support for metastatic breast cancer patients... **p7**

# Welcome to the Winter edition of Patient First!

In this magazine, we have more real-life case studies – Hannah Green and her husband, Andrew, tell us about their experience when Hannah suffered a stroke at the age of just 45, and Margaret Dance tells us how using a diabetes pump has transformed her life.

This edition also includes stories about our new Macmillan Nurse Clinician, who will be supporting patients with secondary breast cancer, two new consultants we have welcomed to the Trust, the results of our yearly staff awards which you voted for, and a very unusual charity challenge being taken on by a member of our staff... in the Arctic!

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 winter, and a wonderful Christmas and New Year – we'll see you in spring!

*The Patient First team*

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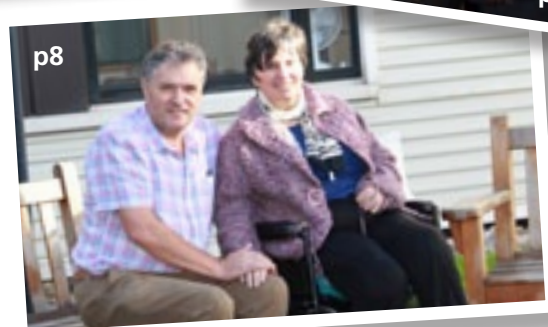
For any general enquiries or advice, please contact our Trust switchboard or visit our website.

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# VICKI INGLESON CHARITY CHALLENGE

*Vicki (left) with her Mum Avril following her charity head shave*



## Clinical Trials Officer, Vicki, takes on unusual Arctic challenge to raise money for cancer charity

A member of staff at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust is taking on a rather unusual challenge in early 2015, to raise money for the Lymphoma Association.

Vicki Ingleson, who is a Clinical Trials Officer, based at Kent Oncology Centre in Maidstone Hospital, will be dog sledding in the Arctic from 30 January to 3 February to raise money for the national charity.

She said: "Within my role as a Clinical Trials Officer, I work with lymphoma patients, and when I received the Lymphoma Association's Autumn magazine, I saw an advert for this challenge. It really appealed to me as it is such an unusual challenge and although you can choose any charity you want to, I thought it would be great to raise money for a charity with a link to my own profession."

During her challenge, Vicki will run her own team of dogs (Alaskan/Siberian Huskies) and face unpredictable weather conditions. She will spend each night in a wilderness base camp with only basic facilities, often without electricity or running water.

Vicki said: "I won't receive any specific training until I get there, so in the run up to the challenge, I am just doing

everything I can to build strength and stamina and to get as physically fit as possible. I am quite nervous as I have never done anything like this but I am extremely excited too – it's going to be an amazing experience."

The challenge will take place in Swedish Lapland in the Arctic where typical temperatures will be -25° during the day and -40° at night.

Vicki has funded the trip herself so any money she raises will go directly to the Lymphoma Association, a charity which provides specialist information and support to lymphoma patients, their relatives, friends and carers.

You can sponsor Vicki by visiting her Just Giving page: <http://www.justgiving.com/owner-email/pleasesponsor/Victoria-Ingleson>

Alternatively, donations can be made by texting VILA99 followed by the preferred donation amount, eg £5, to 70070.

To help raise funds, Vicki's Mum, Avril Ingleson, 56, who lives in Wakefield, Yorkshire, shaved her head on 15 November, and received over £700 in sponsorship to kick off the fundraising.

# NEWS FROM YOUR

## Second hand bikes raise first class funds

Maidstone Hospital League of Friends has been given a cheque for £900 from Bluey's Bikes, who repair and service second hand bikes, then sell them on to raise money for the charity.

In two years, Bluey's Bikes has raised £5000 through this initiative which is wonderful news for the Maidstone Hospital League of Friends and for the Trust too.

If you have an old or broken bike that you would like to donate, please phone 07711 760677.



## Southborough School of Dance donate money to Hedgehog Ward

Southborough School of Dance has donated more than £500 to Hedgehog Children's Ward at Tunbridge Wells Hospital.

Students from the dance school raised the money from ticket sales for their annual concert, which was held in the summer.

Over 100 dancers, aged from 3 to 18 years-old, performed a range of dances in the Russian style of ballet, tap and modern, at two concerts.



The money will be used to buy equipment and materials to help make our younger patients' hospital experience more enjoyable.

## New art exhibition revealed at The Tunbridge Wells Hospital

A mosaic art exhibition, created by Oakley School, has opened at The Tunbridge Wells Hospital.

The Oakley School Mosaics were created by pupils from the school, alongside Town & Country Foundation's artist in residence, Jane Churchill.

The school was keen to install some permanent artwork in the woodland area on site and approached Jane with the idea of 'leaf trees'. Four of the seven mosaics were created in June 2013 and the final three were completed in September 2013, when those involved in the project were joined by sixth formers from St Gregory's School.

All seven of the mosaics went on display in November last year and a number of pieces have recently been lent to Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust for an art exhibition which will run until the end of February.

Oakley School art co-ordinator Jo McAuley said, "Some of our youngsters find art challenging

## Free WiFi on its way at both hospitals



Thanks to Maidstone Hospital League of Friends and Tunbridge Wells League of Friends, both our hospitals will soon have free WiFi available for patients, visitors and staff.

This is fantastic news for the Trust and we are, as ever, extremely grateful to both League of Friends for their on-going support and huge generosity.





# HOSPITALS

## Maidstone Hospital reception area to be updated and improved

Work to redevelop and modernise the main entrance and reception area of Maidstone Hospital is now underway. The project includes installing a new reception desk, new bathroom facilities, a bigger League of Friends shop (including second-hand bookshop) and a new Costa Coffee shop.

Jeanette Rooke, Head of Estates and Facilities for the Trust, said: "The reception area of Maidstone Hospital has remained largely unchanged for well over 20 years. The work we are carrying out will provide better laid out, quality facilities and a more welcoming environment for our patients and visitors."

It is hoped the work will be completed by spring 2015.



but working together on this project has shown them they can achieve and succeed if they put their minds to it. We are extremely proud."

The exhibition can be seen on Level minus 1, near to the restaurant.

## New room for cancer patients at Maidstone Hospital

Hayley Martin, 30, one of our cancer patients, has been tirelessly fundraising for the Trust and on 11 December, officially opened a room in her honour. She has donated in excess of £10,000, which has been put towards refurbishing and upgrading one of the rooms on Charles Dickens ward.

The room will be used for new patient information sessions and monitoring of patients post-treatment. It will also be home to the Trust's new young person's support group - an initiative that has been developed by Hayley and Keli Tomlin, our Chemotherapy Day Unit Manager.

Hayley has been instrumental in the setting up of this room, thanks to her ongoing fundraising, and it was decided to name the room after her as a way of saying thank you and acknowledging all her hard work and efforts.

Hayley said, "I'm absolutely delighted with the room-it has such a warm feeling and you don't feel like you're in the hospital. It's definitely somewhere you want to spend time and I think it will be really well used by patients."

"I'm so glad to have been able to make this donation as I really wanted to give back to the hospital and specifically to the team on Charles Dickens ward who have been incredible and given me fantastic care and support."

Substantial donations have also been made by two other families, the Goodsell and the Kennys, who have both had relatives treated by the team at Maidstone. Their generosity has been recognised by way of a plaque at the entrance to Hayley's Room.

Lionel and Doreen Goodsell, whose son Jeff passed away in April, attended the opening of the room along with their other son Graham.

Jeff had been treated at Maidstone hospital and his family and friends were keen to give something back to the unit that had helped care for him. Jeff's friend Dave Flischer organised and took



part in a charity bike ride and hoped to make the event an annual one. So far the family has donated over £5,000, raised through the bike ride held in June, as well as a charity evening at the end of November.

Lionel and Doreen said: "Dave has been responsible for the vast majority of the fundraising and we as a family have supported him in doing so. We all really wanted to give something back and agreed that we wanted the money raised to be used for something specific and local. We are absolutely delighted with the room and hope that patients and staff will benefit from it."

Members of the Kenny family were also invited to attend the event to recognise their fundraising efforts.

Sisters Rebecca, Julie and Hannah raised the money in memory of their mother, Audrey who passed away on 13 November 2013.

Audrey had asked her daughters to fundraise for the unit as she was so appreciative of the care she received and felt that the staff were incredibly supportive and kind.

An Elvis tribute night was held, which generated £2,000 and donations were also made by family and friends in lieu of flowers at Audrey's funeral.

Rebecca and Julie said: "We are so glad that we have been able to help with the setting up of Hayley's Room and our mum would be absolutely delighted with it."

"The staff had a big impact on us all and the care was marvellous so it's lovely to be able to give something back. We should all do more to support the NHS as we are incredibly lucky to have it."

more

# NEWS FROM YOUR HOSPITALS

## New mobile wig service for cancer patients

**A breast cancer survivor has set up a new mobile wig service to help patients who have lost their hair as a result of chemotherapy.**

Katherine Horn, who runs Panache Wigs, is now offering women and men across Kent the opportunity to try a range of high quality wigs in the comfort of their own home.

Katherine said: "Having experienced losing my own hair I understand how important it is to not only find a wig that looks great and is easy to look after, but more importantly to have someone who completely understands what a cancer patient is going through."

On Christmas Day in 2012 Katherine found a lump in her breast. Following tests, she was diagnosed with breast cancer in January 2013 and had two operations to remove the tumour followed by three months of chemotherapy and two months of radiotherapy treatment.

"During treatment for cancer my hair fell out. I felt totally different without my hair and was worried about being stared at when I stepped out the door. As a result I was desperate to get a wig to help me look and feel as normal as possible," added Katherine.



"However, I found my experience of buying a wig to be rather rushed. I was only allowed an hour to try the wigs on, the selection of wigs available was very limited and I couldn't take samples away to get a second opinion from family and friends.

"The whole process wasn't very special and it inspired me to set this new mobile wig service up to make buying a wig as pleasant an experience as possible.

"I visit patients in their own home so they can try on the wigs with various different outfits and at their leisure.

Choosing the right wig can really boost self-esteem at a time when confidence is at rock-bottom, so it's important to make sure you've had enough time to do this and sought advice from those closest to you."

Generally, it takes around six months post treatment for hair to grow back. Katherine commented: "Wigs are very low maintenance and some cancer patients choose to have two or three wigs in different styles, colours or length. I only supply wigs that have a soft monofilament top, which is lightweight and therefore keeps the head cool and prevents irritation of the scalp."

Panache Wigs supplies a wide range of high-quality synthetic and real hair wigs for women and men in a variety of styles, lengths and colours. Prices range from £120 to £275 and consultations take place in a patient's home, free of charge, Monday to Saturday.

Other products available to buy include wig stands, wig shampoos and conditioners, turbans, hats, bandanas and headscarves. For more information or to book an appointment, visit [www.panachewigs.co.uk](http://www.panachewigs.co.uk) or email [panachewigs@gmail.com](mailto:panachewigs@gmail.com) or telephone 01233 501568 / 07925 323204.

## Breast cancer support group receives donation from local teenager

The breast cancer support group, based at Maidstone Hospital, has been presented with a cheque for £550 following fundraising efforts by a local teenager.

19-year-old Josh Thomason attended the group on Saturday 29 November, to hand over the cheque. Josh raised the money by organising a charity ball. He wanted to raise money for the group as his auntie has received help and support from the breast care team over the past seven years.

Recently, the group has welcomed over 330 attendees who have been able to socialise, share experiences and listen to a variety of speakers.

The money will be used to purchase equipment for the Peggy Wood breast unit at Maidstone Hospital.





Focus on...

## CLAIRE RYAN

New Macmillan Nurse Clinician will support patients with metastatic breast cancer

**M**aidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust, in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support, have joined forces to fund and create a new Macmillan Nurse Clinician role for metastatic (secondary) breast cancer.

Claire Ryan started in the post in September 2014. Claire will already be very familiar to many patients as she previously worked for the Trust as Lead Oncology Research Nurse at Kent Oncology Centre, during which time she was responsible for developing a clinical trial portfolio researching breast cancer.

In her new role, Claire will offer much needed advice, information and support to people with metastatic breast cancer. Metastatic breast cancer is breast cancer that has spread from the breast to other parts of the body.

Nurse Clinicians, like Claire, are senior nurses who are prepared to identify and diagnose patients' problems by using increased knowledge and skills gained through advanced practice and study in a specific area of nursing practice.

Claire will support patients with metastatic breast cancer to make informed decisions about their treatment, guide them through the maze of different services both within Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells

Hospitals as well as the community, and offer the psychosocial support for patients and their families living with this diagnosis. She will work with other health care professionals, specifically the Consultant Oncologists, Dr Russell Burcombe, Dr Catherine Harper-Wynne and Dr Rema Jyothiramy, to develop the service across both hospitals to meet the needs of patients with metastatic breast cancer.

Claire said: "I feel very privileged to have the opportunity to develop a new service within an innovative role, both for the Trust and Macmillan to meet the needs of patients with this diagnosis. When people are diagnosed with cancer, and particularly metastatic breast cancer, they often experience a wide range of emotions during a vulnerable time. I will be able to explain what the diagnosis means and discuss the treatment options available, while supporting the patient and their family to make an informed decision about their treatment plan. I will also be able to offer emotional and practical support to patients and their families from diagnosis and then throughout their cancer journey.

"Another really important aspect of my role is to share information around patient care with community health

When you have cancer, you don't just worry about what will happen to your body, you worry about what will happen to your life. At Macmillan, we know how a cancer diagnosis can affect everything and we're here to support you through. From help with money worries and advice about work, to someone who'll listen if you just want to talk, we'll be there. We'll help you make the choices you need to take back control, so you can start to feel like yourself again.

No one should face cancer alone. For support, information or if you just want to chat, call us free on 0808 808 00 00 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm) or visit [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

care professionals, which will provide an important link to bridge both health care settings – in hospital and when the patient is at home - to improve the continuity of care and the patient's experience."

Dr Russell Burcombe, who worked with Macmillan Development Manager, Kristiina Parkinson, to drive forward this new role, said: "We are delighted to have worked in partnership with Macmillan to appoint Claire to this new role. Cancer is a disease that many people face so it is important that the right team is in place to give the best possible support. We are extremely grateful to Macmillan and everyone locally who has given their support – both in time and money - to help us improve cancer care for patients with metastatic breast cancer."

**As Claire and the team look to develop this service, she would like the opportunity to develop a focus group of patients with metastatic breast cancer that would be agreeable to share ideas on what they would like to see in their new service. If you are patient with metastatic breast cancer and would welcome the opportunity to contribute to this group, please call Claire on 01622 225011.**



## Feature



## THE JOURNEY AFTER STROKE

On 2 January 2013 Hannah Green, aged 45, suffered a stroke with devastating consequences. Here, we talk to her, and her husband Andrew, about their experience and find out how they are slowly re-building their lives.

"It was my first day back at work after the Christmas break," says Hannah, now 47, who lives in Maidstone with her husband and two teenage children.

"As a visual merchandiser at Notcutts Garden Centre, Newnham Court, the start of the new year is always an extremely busy period as we prepare for the sales and change the displays, so I had a lot of jobs to sort out," she added.

"About half way through the morning I started to feel a little unwell and noticed that I couldn't hold a pricing gun properly. I stopped marking up the sales items and I slowly became aware I'd lost the use of my left arm."

Hannah stopped what she was doing and went and sat down hoping her symptoms would pass quickly if she rested, while a colleague phoned her husband Andrew, who also worked at the garden centre, to come and get her.

"It did pop into my mind that I may

have had a stroke, but because I was young, felt okay, my speech was good and my face wasn't drooping I wasn't particularly worried," added Hannah.

As a precaution, Andrew drove Hannah to the A&E department at Maidstone Hospital to get checked over by a doctor.

Hannah said: "I walked into A&E and booked myself in with the receptionist then took a seat to wait to be seen by one of the doctors. The last thing I remember was chatting and laughing with Andrew in the waiting area."

About 10 minutes after arriving at Maidstone Hospital, Hannah collapsed into her husband's arms. Andrew said: "Hannah's eyes were rolling and she was completely unresponsive. I called out to get some help and a nurse rushed over. She looked at Hannah's eyes and immediately took her through for a series of tests and scans."

Two hours later and Hannah was taken to the stroke ward. "She was in

a deep coma and I was told she had suffered a stroke," added Andrew.

However, two days later on Friday, 4 January, Andrew received a call to tell him that Hannah needed to be transferred immediately to Kings College Hospital in London for a life-saving operation.

Andrew explained: "I was told Hannah had severe swelling on the right side of her head and some of her skull needed to be removed to relieve the pressure. Doctors told me to prepare for the worst so I was very worried both for Hannah and for my young daughters."

She was taken to Kings where she underwent a five-hour operation, which was successful. Doctors also performed a tracheostomy two days later.

On 10 January, eight days after her stroke, Hannah came out of her coma. Andrew said: "Because of the severity of Hannah's stroke doctors couldn't tell me how she would be affected. We didn't know what to expect in terms of her long-term prognosis and because of her tracheostomy we couldn't work out whether she would even be able to talk."

He added: "During Hannah's stay at Kings she started to communicate with me using a pen and notebook and I began to have a little hope that the effects of the stroke may not be as severe as anticipated. I took in a photograph of our two daughters and I asked her to point to our eldest daughter and she understood what I was asking, so I was very relieved and I started to be even more hopeful about the future."

After three weeks at Kings, Hannah was transferred back to Maidstone Hospital, initially to Whatman ward until her tracheostomy tube was removed, and then to the stroke unit.

Hannah said: "When I was moved to the stroke unit my rehabilitation started. Although my speech was fine, I had to re-learn all the basic motor skills. I had to do exercises to strengthen my neck, arm and leg muscles as I couldn't swallow properly or even sit up.

"Progress was very, very slow, which I found rather frustrating, but I was



determined to regain mobility. I spent around six months on the stroke unit and in June 2013 I took my first couple of steps with a walking stick, which I was delighted with."

At the end of June Hannah was transferred to the intensive neuro rehabilitation unit at Sevenoaks Community Hospital. "I spent a further three and a half months at Sevenoaks Hospital undertaking physiotherapy, speech therapy and psychological support. Much of the work they did with me was preparing me to be discharged home," explained Hannah.

She added: "Our house had to be assessed and a range of aids were fitted, such as installing a hoist and hospital-style bed as well as rails and various other items to help me either be as independent as possible or help my carers support me.

"On 14 October I finally returned home and it felt fantastic! I was absolutely delighted, but knew I still had a very long way to go. When I first got home I could only walk a few steps aided and couldn't climb stairs. Now I have made some progress over the past year and have completed a sponsored walk, had the hoist removed from my home and can walk up the stairs and to the bathroom."

Unfortunately during Hannah's nine-month recovery in hospital, she also had to cope with the death of both her beloved mother and father.

Hannah said: "2013 was an absolutely horrendous year. In February my Mum was diagnosed with cancer and received her chemotherapy at Maidstone Hospital. Staff on the stroke ward were so caring and thoughtful to me and when my mum was having her treatment session every three weeks, they had permission to put me in a wheelchair and took me round to her ward so that I could be with her, which meant a lot to both of us.

"However I received further devastating news in April when I was told by ward staff that my father had been admitted to A&E after having a heart attack. I was taken to see him at

4am to say my final goodbyes, and to be with my mum, and he passed away shortly after. The staff were terrific to me and one of the nurses from the stroke unit even came in on her day off to help me get ready so that I could attend my father's funeral. My mother then passed away in November.

"Despite struggling with my grief, I have tried to focus on my rehabilitation over the past year. While I would advise anyone to bear in mind that recovery takes time, to be patient and to take each day at a time it's also important to recognise that rehabilitation can be very frustrating as you have to re-learn even the simplest of tasks, which can be a very slow process.

"My life is very different now and I'm taking it a step at a time, but I am determined to move things forward quickly. Recently, I returned to Kings Hospital to undergo a cranioplasty,

where a metal plate is used to repair my skull, which went very successfully.

"My goal now for the next few months is to become more independent and I'm working with my carers to try and cook a meal for my family. I

have also returned to work at Notcutts on a voluntary basis, as and when I am able to, which has done me the power of good and made me more determined to get back to normal!

"Everyone at Maidstone Hospital, from the nurses to the physiotherapists to the support workers, has been amazing and I can't thank them enough for all they've done for me and my family. They were so compassionate during the illnesses of both my parents and when I was down or fed up because my recovery from the stroke was slow they did everything they could to cheer me up and encourage me to keep on trying.

"It's now been nearly two years since my stroke. If anyone is unfortunate enough to be in the same position I'm in, I would recommend keeping positive, working hard with your physiotherapist and listening to their advice, and life will improve for the better!"

**'Recently, I returned to undergo a cranioplasty, where a metal plate is used to repair my skull, which went very successfully'**



## STROKE PATIENT HANNAH GREEN DEVELOPS NEW GARDEN AT HOSPITAL

**Hannah Green was so inspired to help other stroke patients that she is project managing the development of a new garden, which is located next to the stroke unit at Maidstone Hospital.**

So far Hannah has raised around £5,000, which is being used to transform a small grassy area into a tranquil haven for stroke patients. Hannah said: "Patients that are undergoing rehabilitation following a stroke want to be able to enjoy the sunshine, have the opportunity for some peace or be able to have some of their physiotherapy sessions outside.

"During my long recovery in hospital it was difficult to get my wheelchair over the rough grass outside the stroke unit. I wanted to be able to create a tranquil area away from the ward and put in some beautiful plants to make the area as attractive as possible. Gardening can also be a really useful therapy for stroke patients."

Work started on the garden a couple of months ago and so far the area has been flattened and tarmacked, allowing patients to get their wheelchairs outside. Plans are now being developed to build raised beds and set up a gardening club for stroke patients at the unit.

"Notcutts has very kindly donated two wooden benches for the stroke garden in memory of my mum and dad, as my mum worked for the garden centre too. This will create an attractive seating area for patients, their family and friends, and staff to enjoy.

"I want to thank Maidstone Hospital for all they have done for my family and I. Everyone has been so wonderful and I'm looking forward to completing the garden for all to enjoy!"

## Case study



Staff from the Diabetes Unit with Margaret Dance (centre)

# MANAGING DIABETES

**Margaret Dance was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes when she was in her early teens. Now aged 64, Margaret has found managing her diabetes has been revolutionised since she switched to an insulin pump. We talk to her to find out how treating her diabetes has changed over the years and how new technology has helped her deal with her diabetes better.**

"I was around 12 or 13 when I was diagnosed with diabetes," says Margaret, who lives in Sevenoaks. "I had lost a lot of weight and was thirsty all the time and, as my Dad had Type 1 Diabetes and recognised some of the symptoms, he took me to have a test.

She added: "Treating and managing my diabetes has changed considerably over the years. When I was first diagnosed I remember being given an orange and a syringe full of water so that I could practice injecting the fruit before I was allowed to inject myself with insulin.

"The routine was very rigid back then. I had to inject myself twice a day and the syringes were quite big. The advice was to eat a low carb diet and no cakes and sweets, which as a teenager, was tough. However it was probably easier for me to stick to this than most people because I lived in a household geared up for diabetics, so those sorts of temptations weren't available."

Over the years Margaret controlled her diabetes reasonably well. Margaret said: "I started to see changes in the management of my diabetes around 20 years ago, with the introduction of regular testing of blood. This meant I could follow a less restrictive diet because you could change your insulin dose according to what you ate."

Insulin pens, which had smaller needles, were also introduced and these were far more discreet. She added: "Living with diabetes did become a little easier as treating it fitted more into your routine, you could eat a wider range of foods and the equipment became less obvious."

However in December 2012 to February 2013, Margaret's diabetes spiralled out of control and she suffered two hypoglycaemic episodes, one of which required her to be hospitalised.

"It was a wake-up call," explained Margaret. She added: "I had no prior symptoms that the episode was coming on and, with hindsight, I now realise

it was because I wasn't managing my diabetes properly. I was regularly swinging from extreme highs to extreme lows, but because this was the norm for my body, I wasn't getting any warning signs.

"I had been under the care of Dr Barnes and his team for some time and he had previously suggested me using an insulin pump, but I was nervous about moving from an insulin pen to a pump so hadn't wanted to use one. However, following my hypoglycaemic episodes, he stressed that a pump would be the best way forward for me and it's certainly been the best decision I've made!"

Margaret uses an Omnipod insulin pump, which consists of a small pod and cannula and handheld computer. She inputs data about what she has eaten into the computer, which then sends a signal to the pod to deliver an accurate insulin dose throughout the day.

"I wear the pod on my lower stomach and I have to move it to a new site every three days. I feel so much better now as the pump delivers smaller amounts of insulin more slowly a number of times a day, meaning that I don't have the highs



and lows I was experiencing previously. I'm also delighted that I don't have to inject myself anymore!

"Using the pump has been absolutely incredible and has changed my life. Previously I was always tired and everything was so much of an effort. Now I've got a lot more energy and since June 2013, when I first started using the pump, I've lost nearly three stone in weight as I've now got the get-up-and-go to exercise.

"I'm now swimming 2,000 metres, five days a week, walking everywhere and regularly going on day trips and holidays – something that I rarely did before as I didn't feel well enough to get involved with any activity.

"I still have to test my blood for glucose levels frequently throughout the day, but since I've had the pump I've had no more hospital admissions or hypoglycaemic episodes and I have an abundance of energy!"

## Insulin pump therapy

Insulin pump therapy is an alternative to injecting insulin. An insulin pump is a small device that holds insulin and is about the size of a pack of playing cards.

The pump is attached to you by a long, thin piece of tubing, with a needle at the end, which is inserted under your skin. Most people insert the needle into their stomach, but you could also insert it into your hips, thighs, buttocks or arms.

The pump allows insulin to continuously flow into your bloodstream at a rate you can control. This means you no longer need to give yourself injections, although you'll need to monitor your blood glucose levels very closely to ensure you're receiving the right amount of insulin.

Insulin pump therapy can be used by adults, teenagers and children (with adult supervision) who have type 1 diabetes. However, it may not be suitable for everyone. Your diabetes care team may suggest pump therapy if you have frequent episodes of low blood glucose (hypoglycaemia).

Some pumps have a wire that attaches the pod to the handheld computer, while some models are separate giving users more flexibility.

## New consultant joins hospital MAU team

A specialist consultant in general and acute medicine has joined Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust.

Gaurav Agarwal will work in the Medical Assessment Unit (MAU) at Tunbridge Wells Hospital.

He joins the Trust after five years at Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust as a Consultant in Acute and General Medicine where he helped develop an Acute Medical Unit.

Dr Agarwal, 36, initially trained in India before taking up roles in hospitals in London, Birmingham and Bedford. He completed his specialist registrar training in South London and Kent, Surrey and Sussex at hospitals including St Thomas' and King's College Hospital. He also spent 18 months at the Trust as part of his training.

Dr Agarwal has a special interest in endocrinology and diabetes, in which he is about to complete a post-graduate diploma, and is accredited in adult transthoracic echocardiography (heart ultrasound) via the British Society of Echocardiography.

"It is my role to look after acutely ill medical patients from the point of hospital admission," says Dr Agarwal.



"I treat and care for a wide range of illnesses and diseases from kidney failure and heart attacks to pneumonia and diabetes."

"I really enjoy my role in MAU because it is central to the hospital and interacts with all the departments and specialities. I love the variety and unpredictability of acute medicine, and the challenges of diagnosing

what the medical issue is and working out how to best treat that patient."

"As part of my role I'm keen to constantly improve and advance the care and treatment of our patients, ensuring we always put their needs and safety first. As a result I will be looking at developing the Trust's ambulatory care, where we provide the very best of hospital care with minimum hospital stay."

Dr Agarwal represents the Trust at the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Deanery's Acute Medicine Specialist Training Committee and is also the specialist skills lead for the region. He takes an active interest in teaching and training and has received clinical excellence awards for this.

Dr Agarwal is married with two children and lives in Tunbridge Wells.



**NHS**

**Son just had his first broken bone & plastercast.**

**Incredible service from @MTWnhs #BetterThanGoingPrivate.**

via Twitter



Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Hospitals



# Trust staff recognised for going the extra mile



above: Employee of the Year, Janice Bate



above: Team of the Year, Orthopaedic Clinical Administration Unit



right: Volunteer of the Year, Tom Gibson

Earlier on in the year we asked patients, visitors and staff to nominate members of staff and teams at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) for our yearly Staff Stars Awards which recognise those who have gone over and above expectations within their professional role.

We had an enormous number of nominations this year across all wards and departments at the Trust.

The winners and runners-up were announced at a ceremony which took place on Friday 21 November at the Hop Farm in Paddock Wood.

Certificates and prizes were presented by our Chief Executive, Glenn Douglas, and our Chairman, Tony Jones, as well as our special guest, Kim Woodburn, who starred in 'How clean is your house?' and 'I'm a celebrity, get me out of here!'.

Kim's husband, Peter, was treated at Tunbridge Wells Hospital, after he suffered a stroke last year, and she was very keen to help present the awards and support MTW. She also nominated the Stroke Association to receive the proceeds from our charity raffle on the night - over £920!

## Patient First

**Runner up – Individual:** Dr Nathaniel Lawson, Stroke Unit, Tonbridge Cottage Hospital

**Winner – Individual:** Angela Flory, Specialist Nurse, Oncology/Haematology

**Runner up – Team:** Breast Buddies, Women & Children's

**Winner – Team:** Medical Assessment Unit, Tunbridge Wells

## Respect

**Runner up – Individual:** Amanda Sparham, Head of Orthoptics and Optometry

**Winner – Individual:** Sylvia Mannering, Receptionist, A&E, Maidstone

**Runner up – Team:** Maidstone Information Team, Informatics

**Winner – Team:** Ward 12

## Innovation

**Runner up – Individual:** Jackie Riggs, Senior Midwife and Practice Educator

**Winner – Individual:** Jill Collis, Staff Nurse, Ward 30

**Runner up – Team:** Physiotherapy Respiratory Team

**Winner – Team:** Practice Education Team, Radiographers

## Delivery

**Runner up – Individual:** Catherine Malone, Medical Secretary

**Winner – Individual:** Krzysztof Malinowski, Estates and Facilities

**Runner up – Team:** Helen Cunningham and Ann Chapman, Peggy Wood Breast Care Centre

**Winner – Team:** Mortuary Team

## Excellence

**Runner up – Individual:** Louise Burmiston, Senior Clinical Support Worker, Medical Assessment Unit

**Winner – Individual:** Maria Crittenden, Intensive Care Unit, Maidstone

**Runner up – Team:** Zone Managers and Supervisors, Estates and Facilities

**Winner – Team:** Surgical Assessment Unit and Short Stay Surgery Unit, Tunbridge Wells

## Kent Messenger Newspaper Hospital Heroes Award

**Winner:** Dr Syed Husain and his team, with Sandra Wakelin

## Courier Newspaper Hospital Heroes Award

**Winner:** Mr Nick Nicolaou

## Special Award for Commitment and Professionalism

**Winner:** Stephen Gaskin, Senior Pharmacy Technician

## Sylvia Denton Award for Care and Compassion

**Winner:** Ward 21

## Chairman's Award

**Winner:** Jonathan Baker, Catering Assistant

## Volunteer of the year

**Runner Up:** Norman Sales, Tunbridge Wells

**Winner:** Tom Gibson, League of Friends, Maidstone

## Team of the Year

**Runner Up:** Peggy Wood Breast Care Centre Team

**Winner:** Orthopaedic Clinical Administration Unit

## Employee of the Year

**Runner Up:** Edgardo Garcia, Senior Staff Nurse, Theatres

**Winner:** Janice Bate, Administrator, Intensive Care Unit, Tunbridge Wells



## Recipe

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



### Boiled Fruit cake

#### Ingredients:

6oz brown sugar  
5oz sultanas  
4oz currants  
5oz raisins  
3oz glacé cherries  
4oz butter  
½ pint water  
2 eggs  
10oz self-raising flour  
2oz almonds  
8" round cake tin  
1 teaspoon mixed spice

#### Method:

Boil all fruit, butter and sugar in the half pint of water for 20 minutes. Leave to cool.  
Add the two eggs, flour and mixed spice, and mix together.  
Put the mixture into the cake tin and place the almonds on top of the cake.  
Bake for approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours on gas mark 3 or 170° (fan ovens 150°).  
Leave to cool.  
This cake is best if it is left for two days before cutting.

The Maidstone Hospital League of Friends Cook Book is available from The League of Friends Shop near the main entrance of Maidstone Hospital and is priced at £5.

## patientfirst WINTER QUIZ

### Geography:

- Q. On which river are the Victoria Falls to be found?  
Q. On which Greek island are the cities of Chania and Heraklion?

### History:

- Q. Founded in 1411, what is Scotland's oldest university?  
Q. What name was given to the women who campaigned to have the vote in the first two decades of the 20th century?

### Literature:

- Q. The Bennet family appear in which Jane Austen novel?  
Q. What are the surnames of the title characters in Romeo and Juliet?

### Food/dining:

- Q. If you saw canard on a French Menu, what type of meat would be on offer?  
Q. What forms the base of the Indian dish raita?

### Entertainment:

- Q. Who played the Vicar of Dibley?  
Q. Of which television series was Jack Bauer the protagonist?

### Sport:

- Q. From which country does Samba dancing come?  
Q. In cycling, for what is BMX short?

(Answers to be published in the Spring edition)

## Autumn edition QUIZ Answers

**GEOGRAPHY** • Where would you find the whispering gallery? **St Paul's Cathedral** • What is the capital of Madeira? **Funchal**  
**HISTORY** • Which historical killer was also known as 'The Whitechapel Murderer'? **Jack the Ripper** • In which century was the Black Death? **Fourteenth** **LITERATURE** • In which Roald Dahl book does Grandma grow so big that her head breaks through the roof of the house? **George's Marvellous Medicine** • Who wrote the most recent Sherlock Holmes novel 'The House of Silk'? **Anthony Horowitz**

**FOOD/DINING** • What type of pastry is used for a profiterole? **Choux** • In an Indian restaurant, if you were served 'aloo' which vegetable would you be eating? **Potato** **ENTERTAINMENT** • In the 90s sitcom 'Friends' what was the surname of sibling characters Ross and Monica? **Geller** • Sting was lead soloist with which pop group? **The Police** **SPORT** • Who won the men's single at Wimbledon in 1985 aged just 17? **Boris Becker** • In cricket, how many matches generally make up an Ashes Test series? **Five**

## RAPID HIV TEST TAKES JUST 60 SECONDS

**In the run up to World AIDS day on 1 December, Public Health Kent and HIV clinicians across the county delivered an HIV awareness campaign to promote HIV testing, and to educate professionals and the public about HIV transmission and risk factors. The UK HIV report 2014 estimates that 26,000 people are still unaware of their infection.**

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust's Department of Genito-Urinary Medicine (GUM department and Rubin Clinic) played a major part within this and encouraged as many people as possible to have a rapid HIV test by holding clinics at various locations in West Kent.

A rapid HIV test is a simple process which provides results in just 60 seconds.

Consultant for the GUM department, Lesley Navaratne, said: "We want to encourage people to screen themselves for HIV. The quicker HIV is diagnosed, the quicker it can be treated and the better the prognosis in many cases. Late diagnosis can cause complications and poorer outcomes, including shorter life expectancy. We would advise that as many people as possible have the test – it's confidential, simple and quick, and the results are almost immediate."

If you would like to book a test, or if you would like more information or to discuss your own concerns, in confidence, please call our friendly and skilled staff at the Rubin Clinic within our GUM department, on 01622 225713.

## EXPERT PATIENTS

**Living with a long-term condition? The Expert Patients Programme can help.**

The Expert Patients Programme, which has been running successfully in east Kent for more than 10 years, has now been extended to cover more areas in the county.

Designed for people with one or more long-term health conditions, the programme helps people to come to terms with their diagnosis and take the first steps towards a more independent future.

It's run by trained volunteer tutors, who all have a long-term condition themselves. The course aims to help people take more control of their life by learning new skills to manage their condition.

Issues covered include:

- Dealing with pain and tiredness
- Coping with difficult emotions
- Relaxation techniques
- Exercise and healthy eating
- Communicating more effectively and planning for the future.

The programme is now available in Maidstone, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks and surrounding areas.

For more information on the Expert Patients Programme please contact: 0300 123 1220, [www.kenthealthandwellbeing.nhs.uk](http://www.kenthealthandwellbeing.nhs.uk) or email: [kcht.epp@nhs.net](mailto:kcht.epp@nhs.net)

## Executive Team Update

**Angela Gallagher, Chief Operating Officer**



This winter, we, the NHS and Kent County Council (KCC) are reminding people of basic safety tips to ensure everyone stays warm and well during the colder months.

Potentially preventable issues such as flu and poor health, cold homes and malnutrition still contribute to large numbers of hospital admissions and even deaths, every year.

In support of our NHS winter campaign "Feeling under the weather this winter?" and as part of KCC's "Keep Warm, Keep Well" scheme, people are being urged to contact key professionals and services who can help them cope with winter.

Using a special thermometer card – available at GP surgeries, medical centres, libraries and other locations across the county – residents can see how cold their homes are and seek advice from a special phone hotline. People over 65 and those with long-term medical conditions are also eligible for the free flu vaccine and

are advised to book an appointment with their GP.

Basic tips and advice include:

- Regular hot meals to help keep your body warm.
- Keep your home heated – set the heating to the right temperature (18-21C).
- If trying to save fuel, it is advisable to heat the living room during the day, the bathroom when needed and the bedroom, just before going to bed.
- Have your flu vaccine to protect yourself and others.
- Have your heating and cooking appliances checked regularly and make sure the chimney has been swept recently.

More advice can be found at: [www.kent.gov.uk/health](http://www.kent.gov.uk/health)

Within our "Feeling under the weather this winter?" campaign, older people are also urged to seek early advice from their pharmacist for minor winter illnesses.

The initiative is targeted at the over 60s, and also at those aged 45 and above who often look after an older friend, neighbour or relative.

If you're over the age of 60, a minor illness can get worse quickly. The campaign encourages people with a bad cough, trouble breathing, a cold or sore throat, to visit their local pharmacy for quick health advice. It also asks those caring for or visiting an older friend or relative to get early advice from their local pharmacist or from [www.nhs.uk/asap](http://www.nhs.uk/asap) if they are feeling under the weather.

For more information, and to check your local pharmacy, you can visit NHS Choices website – [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
Have a healthy and happy winter!

Angela



# 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](http://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](http://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**, Tonbridge Road, Pembury, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4QJ

Tel: 01892 823535

## HELP US IMPROVE STROKE SERVICES

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells hospitals jointly provide acute stroke care for patients in West Kent and north East Sussex.

National reviews show that our hospitals and many others can improve stroke services.

We are talking to our patients, the public and healthcare professionals about their experiences of stroke care, and using their knowledge to help build better services.

This is an on-going process during 2014 and 2015 to help shape long-term improvements to this important service.

The information we are building up is helping doctors, nurses, GPs and other medical staff better understand the best ways of making lasting improvements for everyone we see.

There will be many opportunities over the coming months for you to help us make stroke services the very best they can be by sharing your experience and knowledge with us.

If you would like to share your views with us on stroke services email [mtw-tr.myhealthcare@nhs.net](mailto:mtw-tr.myhealthcare@nhs.net)



# You wouldn't put off picking up your medicine.

## So why put off the flu jab?



If you have a health condition, even one that is well-managed, catching the flu could cause you serious complications, like pneumonia.

Ask your GP or pharmacist about the flu jab now.  
It's free because you need it.