

patient **first**

#patientfirst Autumn 2016

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# Welcome to the Autumn edition of Patient First!

In this magazine, we have a number of patient stories and features so you can read some first-hand accounts of the care we have provided to our patients. You'll hear from Lizzie Turner about her daughter Jasmin's journey through the last year with leukaemia and how it changed their lives. We also speak to Don Wise, a prostate cancer patient who has experienced our radium therapy service and had very positive results. And, David Parry, an eye patient, tells us about his part in a clinical trial investigating new treatment options for wet age-related macular degeneration.

There's a feature about our Birth Centre and the fact that it recently welcomed the 2,000<sup>th</sup> baby to be born there, and some information about the 'hello, my name is' campaign which we are adopting here at the Trust.

Our Chief Executive, Glenn Douglas, is behind this edition's Executive Team column, which talks through our financial situation and explains our hopes and aims for the next few months. He also mentions the Trust's Staff Star Awards for 2016 – might you know someone who works for the Trust who always goes the extra mile in the job they do?

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 autumn! See you in winter!

## The Patient First team

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# ALEX IS 2000<sup>th</sup> BABY FOR MAIDSTONE BIRTH CENTRE



The Maidstone Birth Centre has marked two milestones by welcoming its 2,000<sup>th</sup> baby and celebrating its fifth birthday.

Weighing in at 8lb 14oz baby Alex was born at 1.58pm on Sunday 24 July and is the first child for mum, Emma, and dad, Mark.

Emma said: "Everyone was so helpful and reassuring at the Birth Centre. It is a great environment and the staff made it the best experience I could have wished for. We are so grateful for the support and advice we received from everyone."

September marked the 5<sup>th</sup> birthday for the Centre which The Care Quality Commission has described as featuring 'outstanding practice and innovation'.

Mum to two daughters, Laura Kennedy, had her second child, Hollie, at the Birth Centre and said:

"I felt really supported and it was lovely being able to introduce my eldest to her little sister somewhere so peaceful and homely. The facilities are wonderful and I'd definitely recommend Maidstone Birth Centre."

The Birth centre is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and facilities include two birth rooms, four postnatal rooms, a kitchen / diner, a garden area and antenatal areas.

Research has shown that for women with an uncomplicated pregnancy, Birth Centres are just as safe as hospitals. Mothers are more likely to have a straightforward birth and three times less likely to need a caesarean. They are also more likely to feel happier about their birth experience.

Women who wish to deliver at the Birth centre have an antenatal appointment arranged at the Birth centre at 34 weeks.

Weekly tours of Maidstone Birth Centre are available for pregnant women and their families keen to find out more. Please contact the Unit direct 01622 220160 for more information on the tours. The Trust also manages Crowborough Birthing Centre in Sussex – visits can be arranged by calling 01892 654080.



# NEWS FROM YOUR HOSPITALS

## Donation for children with diabetes

Members of the Paediatric Diabetic Team at Maidstone Hospital, along with one of their patients, have been given a cheque for £500 from the Kent Police Property Fund..

The money will go to Maidstone Area Parents Support group (MAPS), set up for parents who have children with diabetes. MAPS hosts numerous events throughout the year which allow children with Type 1 Diabetes, and their parents, to meet others in the same position so they can share advice and experience, and offer support to each other. The events include: bowling, coffee mornings, water sports days, Build A Bear parties and even Laser Tag games. The events also provide a great opportunity for the Paediatric Diabetic Team to deliver Diabetes education in a relaxed and friendly environment.



Jenny Endean and Maxine Libby, Paediatric Diabetes Nurse Specialists stand either side of patient, Eleanor Callaghan-Inge.

Paediatric Diabetic Specialist Nurse, Maxine Libby, said: "Our team are very fortunate to receive donations for MAPS so we can provide events that are invaluable to the children we treat and their families. Money we receive also helps us to supply families with Diabetes books, dietary scales, hypoglycaemic supplies and anything else we feel would benefit the children in our care. We are extremely grateful to Kent Police for this fantastic donation."

Chief Inspector Mick Gardner, district commander for Maidstone, said: "I am pleased to see money raised from Kent Police's Property Fund being used to benefit a local and very worthwhile cause."

"This service provides invaluable support for families raising children with a condition that will impact them for the rest of their lives and I know the money will be put to good use."

In the Maidstone area, there are approximately 100 children with Type 1 Diabetes under the care of the Paediatric Diabetes Team, led by Paediatric Consultant Dr Kala Pathy.

## Could you volunteer for League of Friends?

The Maidstone Hospital League of Friends (LoF) continues to provide invaluable support to purchase items of equipment, such as additional ECG machines and scanners, which would otherwise be difficult to fund.

There are currently 125 active LoF volunteers who give up their time to run a number of services at the Hospital including the bookshop, clinic tea trolleys, retail shop and the ophthalmology tea bar. A summer fundraising gala event involving sales of fruit, cream teas and other delicious cakes was so successful that an autumn gala is now planned.

At this time, the LoF is looking for a new volunteer Treasurer - an important role. This would suit someone with a background in finance or accounting.

If you are interested in the Treasurer role or general volunteering for the LoF, please call Jacqui Featherstone 01622 224781 for more information or to arrange an interview.



## Vote for your Staff Star

Our annual awards event to celebrate the achievements of staff and volunteers takes place in November.

Thank you to everyone who has already taken the time to nominate a team or individual as one of our 2016 'Staff Stars'.

The deadline to nominate a member of staff, volunteer or team for an award is fast approaching – entry forms must be received by 6pm on Tuesday 4 October. If you're a former or current patient and would like to tell us how one of our staff helped support you, we would love to hear your story.

The categories for nine awards are:

- Patient First
- Respect
- Innovation
- Delivery
- Excellence
- Sylvia Denton Award for Care and Compassion
- Volunteer of the Year
- Team of the Year
- Employee of the Year

You can vote online at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/StaffStarsAwards2016>

This year's Staff Stars Awards ceremony will be held at the Hop Farm in Paddock Wood on Friday 18 November. Look out for a special update on the Awards in the next edition of Patient First.



## Hello, my name is...

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) will be focusing on improving communication over the coming weeks.

We know that good communication is pivotal to all other improvements that we could make in relation to positively enhancing the experience our patients have.

Kate Granger, a renowned Geriatrician, who founded the 'Hello, my name is' campaign, sadly passed away, recently. It was during her own battle with cancer that she was saddened to find how poor her colleagues were at introducing themselves to patients, and as a result she launched this, now national, initiative.

MTW has asked all its staff to make sure they are taking the extra time to properly introduce themselves to anyone new they interact with. Research has shown that just smiling and saying 'Hello my name is' is likely to put someone at ease, make them feel welcome and, most importantly, make them feel valued.

This might all seem rather simplistic but it's often the simple things that have the biggest impact. We know that a patient or visitor's first impression of our Trust, and the care or assistance they are likely to receive, might well be based on the way our staff first introduce themselves, so we don't underestimate the importance of this basic gesture.

We want to do our utmost to provide a friendly, understanding and compassionate approach to those we care for and we hope this initiative will have a really positive impact.



## League of Friends donation will help patients

The Chronic Pain Unit at Maidstone Hospital has received a generous donation from Maidstone Hospital League of Friends this week, in the form of two brand new vital signs monitors.

The monitors are vital in helping to maintain patient safety before and after procedures on the day unit so will be invaluable to both staff and the patients they are looking after.

Chronic Pain Unit Sister, Gina Bodiam, said: "I would like to say thank you to the League of Friends for their invaluable support."

"To have up to date monitors, which give us important information about our patients' wellbeing, is essential to the standard of care we offer. They will be of huge benefit to the unit."



## A21 roadworks likely to affect journey times to Tunbridge Wells Hospital

Highways England has now closed the Tonbridge Road between the A21 and Tunbridge Wells Hospital to facilitate the construction of the Longfield road junction. The roadworks are expected to last for at least six months.

This means there will be no access to the hospital from the A21 Longfield Road roundabout. There will also be no right turn out of the hospital towards the A21. Access to the hospital will only be possible via the A228 and Pembury end of the Tonbridge Road.

Patients and visitors to Tunbridge Wells Hospital are advised to leave plenty of time for their journeys, with possible delays expected getting to and from the hospital. Highways England is advising drivers to allow an extra 10 to 15 minutes for their journey.

Highways England has a 24 hour helpline number for more information on the roadworks – 0300 123 5000. In addition, you can check their web site at: [www.highways.gov.uk/traffic-information/](http://www.highways.gov.uk/traffic-information/) or sign up to receive email alerts.





Peter O'Sullivan, Don Wise and Dr Meeran Naj

## SUCCESS FOR RADIUM THERAPY SERVICE AT KENT ONCOLOGY CENTRE

**A pilot service at Maidstone Hospital providing targeted radionuclide therapy for patients with advanced prostate cancer has proved so successful that it will now be rolled out across Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust.**

The Kent Oncology Centre began the pilot of the Radium Service in March 2015. It was set up by consultant, Meeran Naj, and Nuclear Medicine Physicist, Peter O'Sullivan, and supported by Oncologist, Sharon Beesley.

**Radium 223** is a type of internal targeted radiotherapy treatment which is given by injections to patients with castration resistant prostate cancer which has spread to the bones. It uses the Radionuclide Radium-223. Radium-223 emits alpha radiation which delivers a very high radiation dose over a very short range in tissue – less than 1mm.

Radium is taken up by the bones in the same way as calcium, and like calcium, the uptake is greatest in the most active bone cells. In this way Radium therapy is very specific to the more active cancerous areas of the bones. The drug is administered in a similar way to chemotherapy by injecting through a cannula by the nuclear medicine practitioner.

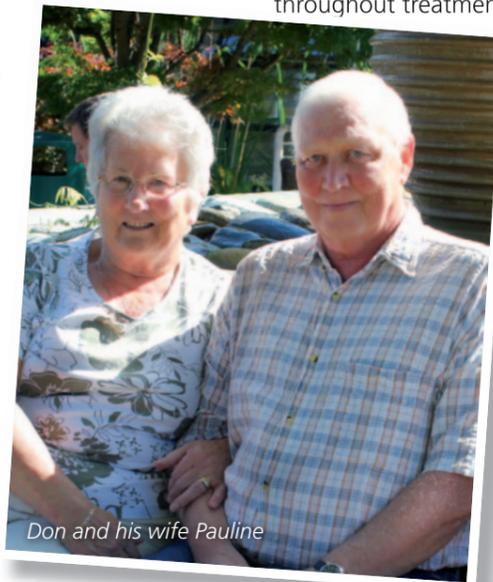
The effects of the targeting nature of the treatment and the very short radiation range combine to minimise side effects by preserving healthy cells in the surrounding environment.

The Radium treatment has shown to improve survival and can potentially improve a patient's quality of life and reduce pain. The treatment is administered by monthly injections over a six month period.

**Don Wise** from Cuxton is one of 55 patients who have received treatment via the Radium Service pilot.

"I was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2009 and first heard about the radium treatment service through Dr Sharon Beesley.

"Dr Beesley referred me to Peter O'Sullivan, at the Kent Oncology Centre, who has been with me throughout treatment.



Don and his wife Pauline

"I have now completed my course of treatments after having one injection a month over six months.

"Luckily I didn't have any side effects as a result of treatment so I have been able to carry on with my life in the same way as before. It means a lot to me to be able to play with my two grandchildren.

I'd definitely recommend the service to other patients who are suitable to receive this form of treatment. The care I received was very thorough e.g. I underwent a complete blood test before every injection.

My prostate-specific antigen (PSA) levels have halved since my treatment which I am pleased about and I'm now looking forward to a well-deserved trip to Lake Garda with my wife. "

A new post has also been created to act as the co-ordinator for the entire service.

The pilot received patient referrals from Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells, Dartford and East Kent.

**Meeran Naj**, Radiology Consultant, says:

"We have received very positive feedback from patients about the use of radium which we are delighted with and look forward to more cancer patients benefiting from the radium service. One example was a patient who phoned the department shortly after his first treatment to tell us that he felt so good he was taking his wife out to dinner that evening, something he had not felt up to doing for the last 18 months. With the Trust supporting our new co-ordinator post we will be able to expand this already busy service to even more patients across Kent."

The Radium Therapy service is also available for patients in East Kent and Dartford who will travel to Maidstone for treatment.

Kent Oncology Centre has been invited to share best practice with peers across Europe about the Radium Service. Meeran and fellow colleague, Peter O'Sullivan, will deliver presentations at the Annual Congress of the European Association of Nuclear Medicine this autumn.

## Are you looking for a new professional challenge?

**Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust are currently recruiting nurses to work at both hospitals in a variety of roles.**

Are you a registered nurse looking for a change? Or are you looking at getting back into nursing after a break? If so, please keep a look out for vacancies that we have, and for recruitment open days that we will be holding.

We promote events and some vacancies on social media (details on inside front cover) and you can also check NHS jobs by visiting [www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk)

## CALLING ALL GREEN-FINGERED VOLUNTEERS!

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust are currently looking for keen and interested people to work alongside our gardening team to help make-over some of the hospital courtyard gardens.

If you enjoy life outdoors, regardless of whether you have any gardening experience or not, you could be involved in helping our team create beautiful outside spaces which would really benefit our patients and visitors. Tasks would include digging over flower beds, pruning plants, propagating plants and flowers, watering the gardens and using battery powered tools.

If you would like to become part of the team, please apply to volunteer at [www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk) and earch for job reference 359-VOL4620

If you would like more information, please contact Anne-Marie Stevens on 01622 224719 or email her – [annemariestevens@nhs.net](mailto:annemariestevens@nhs.net), or you can email Martin Grant – [martingrant@nhs.net](mailto:martingrant@nhs.net)

*The Kent Oncology Centre garden and one of the hospital's courtyard gardens will be the first to be given a makeover*



# Case study



## JASMIN TURNER

Jasmin Turner started her first year at Ashdown Primary School, Crowborough, in September last year. Shortly after, she developed an ear infection which refused to clear up, and at the same time, her mum, Lizzie, noticed some other symptoms which concerned her. Here, we talk to Lizzie and Jasmin about how their family's lives were turned upside down a year ago, and their ongoing journey forward.



Like any four-year-old, ready to start school, Jasmin Turner (now five), was excited at the prospect of joining Owl Class and settled in well to her first term at Ashdown Primary School.

Her mum, Lizzie, said: "About a week after starting, Jasmin developed an ear infection which just wouldn't clear up. She had it for about a month, during which time we went to the GP on two or three occasions. Although the general consensus was that she had a bad cold, I began to notice other symptoms which worried me. Jasmin was very tired and pale, she didn't have much interest in food and she complained of

aching. I spoke to our doctor again and we arranged for Jasmin to have a blood test but in fact, on that same evening, she seemed so unwell that I took her into A&E at Tunbridge Wells Hospital." During that evening, after a number of tests, Jasmin was immediately diagnosed with leukaemia. She spent three days at Tunbridge Wells Hospital, before being transferred to the Royal Marsden Hospital for two weeks, for further tests and to determine what type of leukaemia Jasmin had. It was established that Jasmin had childhood acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL) which is a cancer of the white blood cells. Lizzie, and her husband, Luke, were told that Jasmin's treatment would take a long time but that the long-term outlook was positive. "ALL takes a long period of time to treat," said Lizzie. "Jasmin's treatment will hopefully finish in February 2018. We were told very early on that the first six to seven months would be the worst,

and now, having been through them, I can say it has been really tough. Jasmin has been admitted to hospital numerous times, mainly because she had developed a fever which needed to be managed very carefully. She also developed pneumonia at one point and spent three weeks in hospital, one of which was in St George's Hospital in London, with some of that time in intensive care. She has also had literally hundreds of tests, including ten lumbar punctures."

Jasmin's treatment, so far, has been five phases of chemotherapy. The first two phases were intense rounds, the third was less intense, the fourth was intense again and the fifth was a maintenance round of treatment. She will now carry on with oral chemotherapy every day and intravenous chemotherapy every four weeks, along with five days of steroids. This treatment will continue until early 2018.

Lizzie said: "Jasmin has missed most of her first year at school because of her treatment, which made her feel very poorly. There were days when she couldn't lift her legs, or walk, and she suffered with mood swings and anxiety. She has lost her hair, which fortunately hasn't bothered her too much, and she has been exhausted much of the time. The steroids make her absolutely ravenous so we have to make sure that she can eat any time she needs to.

"Now, the treatment is much more manageable because it is less intense so we are hoping that she will be able to

**'It has been a huge help to all of us to be able to speak with people who know what we are going through'**



go to school much more from September. Of course, if she has a temperature, we will still have to come to hospital for antibiotics as she will be at risk of infection while she is still having the chemotherapy. But hopefully, we should be able to restore a little bit of normality to our lives.

"It has been very hard for Jasmin, not being able to go to school or do the all the things her friends have been doing. It has also had an effect on her brother, Josh, who is 11 – we have spent an awful lot of time in hospital and not at home, and when we were all at home, he couldn't have friends over because of the risk of infection."

Lizzie, who is a nurse at Tunbridge Wells Hospital, put her job on hold to look after Jasmin but is hoping to be able to return in September this year.

She said: "Jasmin's prognosis is good, which is wonderful, but we just take one day at a time, as we have done since her diagnosis. Everyone at Tunbridge Wells, and the other hospitals we have been to, have been fantastic. Helen Stevens, Paediatric Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist, and Nikki Pandya, Consultant Paediatrician

have been especially supportive of us. "We hope that the next 18 months will become our new 'normal' now Jasmin's treatment is less intensive. My advice to other people going through something similar is to take as much advice as possible and speak to others



have been through the things you are experiencing. We met the family of a young boy who was diagnosed at the same time as Jasmin, and it has been a huge help to all of us to be able to speak with people who know what we are going through. You can only take one day at a time but you have to ask for help when you need it. And you will need it.

"Throughout, Jasmin has been incredibly resilient. She has just got on with it and we really hope that she will be able to have a much more normal life in the coming months."

Jasmin, whose interests include running, riding her bike and scooter, playing football and swimming, added: "You have to be brave when you're not well and you have to not mind coming into hospital."

### ACUTE LYMPHOBLASTIC LEUKAEMIA (ALL)

Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL) is a type of blood cancer that starts from young white blood cells called lymphocytes in the bone marrow. The bone marrow is the soft inner part of the bones, where new blood cells are made. It usually develops quickly over days or weeks. It is the most common type of leukaemia to affect children but can also affect some adults. Around 650 people (adults and children) are diagnosed each year in the UK with ALL.

Symptoms of ALL can be flu-like but also include: general weakness, feeling tired, high temperature, weight loss, frequent infections, bruising easily with no obvious cause, bleeding from the gums or nose, a fine rash of dark spots, blood in urine or stools, pain in bones or joints, breathlessness, swollen lymph glands and a feeling of fullness or discomfort in the abdomen.

Most people with ALL start treatment quickly after diagnosis. The main treatment is chemotherapy. Other treatments which might be needed include blood transfusions, platelet transfusions and antibiotics.

For more information, please visit [www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/type/all](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/type/all)

### BEADS OF COURAGE HELP YOUNG PATIENTS COPE WITH SERIOUS ILLNESS

A cheque for £1000 has been handed over to Hedgehog children's ward, to help fund the 'Beads of Courage' initiative which helps children receiving treatment for childhood cancer.

Lucy and Chris Fox, two of the founders of the local charity, Megan's Wish List, came into the unit at Tunbridge Wells Hospital to present the generous donation to staff and patient Jasmin Turner, with her mum, Lizzie.

Megan's Wish List was set up by the family and friends of 17-year-old Megan Fox, who passed away in March 2014, after she was diagnosed with a brain tumour in October 2013. The charity aims to raise money to help local children

and teenagers who are suffering with life-changing illnesses and disabilities.

The money will be used to allow the children's unit to continue to sponsor 'Beads of Courage'. Each time a young person has a procedure, test, or treatment for their illness, they are given a bead. The colour of the bead signifies what has happened – for example, white beads relates to having chemotherapy, light green beads are for scans such as x-rays and MRIs, and yellow beads mean an overnight stay in

hospital. The beads help children to make sense of the experience they are going through and research has shown that programme has helped to decrease illness-related stress and increases the use of positive coping strategies.

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from p9...

Megan collected the beads during her treatment and her parents, Lucy and Chris, are keen for other young patients to be able to do the same.

Lucy said, "We are delighted to be able to donate this money to the Hedgehog Ward to help with the Beads of Courage programme. Megan was cared for, whilst undergoing her treatment, at Tunbridge Wells and The Royal Marsden Hospitals, and it's wonderful to be able to give something back. We know the beads helped Megan to cope and we hope the money we have handed over today will help many other children, and their families, to get through difficult times."

Five-year-old Jasmin Turner, from Crowborough, who was diagnosed with leukaemia last year, has also been collecting the beads throughout her treatment, and now has more than 400.

Her mum, Lizzie, said: "The beads of courage have been brilliant for Jasmin. They have really helped her get through some very difficult times and some extremely tough treatment and she has loved collecting them. It's a way of marking each step towards getting better and a great coping mechanism for many children going through serious illness."

At this time, the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust Paediatric Oncology Shared Care unit currently cares for over 30 children who are receiving or who have received chemotherapy. The unit shares the care of children receiving chemotherapy with The Royal Marsden and Great Ormond Street Hospitals.

Paediatric Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist, Helen Stevens, said: "Beads of courage are visual and tactile symbols that can be used by a child to explain to their friends, family and teachers about their journey through cancer chemotherapy. Megan collected them and they gave her encouragement throughout her treatment. We are very grateful to Lucy and Chris, and the other trustees, for their generous donation which will enable us to provide Beads of Courage to our patients at Tunbridge Wells Hospital. It is an honour to use these beads in Megan's memory."

You can find out more about Megan's Wishlist by visiting [www.meganswishlist.com](http://www.meganswishlist.com)

## PATIENT ASSESSORS GIVE HOSPITALS CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH

**Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells hospitals have received very positive feedback following patient-led assessments to review how the environment supports patient's privacy and dignity, the quality of patient food, cleanliness of wards, and general building maintenance.**

Every year, annual Patient-Led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE) inspections take place at every hospital in the country. This year, both hospitals have seen great results exceeding the national average scores in all categories.

The assessments see staff and local patient representatives analysing how the environment in a hospital (or other type of treatment centre) supports patients. It focuses entirely on the care environment. The results are reported publicly to show how hospitals are performing nationally and locally to drive improvements. Local results for 2016 are:

### CLEANLINESS:

- Maidstone – 98.73%
- Tunbridge Wells – 99.80%
- National average – 98.06%

### FOOD:

- Maidstone – 91.29%
- Tunbridge Wells – 94.11%
- National average – 88.24%

### ORGANISATION FOOD:

- Maidstone – 89.11%
- Tunbridge Wells – 89.27%
- National average – 87.01%

### WARD FOOD:

- Maidstone – 92.36%
- Tunbridge Wells – 95.80%
- National average – 88.96%

### PRIVACY, DIGNITY AND WELLBEING:

- Maidstone – 87.63%
- Tunbridge Wells – 90.30%
- National average – 84.16%

### CONDITION, APPEARANCE AND MAINTENANCE:

- Maidstone – 93.61%
- Tunbridge Wells – 96.51%
- National average – 93.37%

### DEMENTIA FRIENDLINESS:

- Maidstone – 86.35%
- Tunbridge Wells – 88.63%
- National average – 75.28%

### DISABILITY FRIENDLINESS:

- Maidstone – 89.71%
- Tunbridge Wells – 89.51%
- National average – 78.84%

Following the assessment carried out last year, in 2015, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) has invested in making many of the improvements identified and this is reflected in this year's results. The improvements included:

- Completion of Maidstone main entrance refurbishment
- Redevelopment of John Day Ward at Maidstone
- Refurbishment of Maidstone Outpatients
- Redecoration of A&E at TWH
- New patient chairs in main outpatients and in the Ophthalmology outpatients area
- New mealtime aids
- Patient ward furniture
- Redecoration of the bereavement room
- Refurbishment of patient showers in Lord North Ward at Maidstone
- Waste recycling containers
- Development of the Medical Assessment Unit at Tunbridge Wells Hospital

This year, the assessments highlighted for the first time how well healthcare providers have done in ensuring their facilities are equipped to meet the needs of people with disabilities. Both MTW's hospitals scored well above the national average in this new category.

Avey Bhatia, Chief Nurse, said: "We have put in a tremendous amount of work since last year's inspection and are delighted to have made so many positive improvements for our patients."

Jeanette Rooke, Director of Estates and Facilities, added: "This year, we have exceeded the national average results in every category. We are very proud of these results which reflect the Trust's ongoing hard work and commitment to provide the best possible environment and services for patients and visitors."

## TODAY'S TRIAL IS TOMORROW'S TREATMENT

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) is an active research organisation, with hundreds of clinical trials, involving thousands of patients, taking place every year across our hospitals.

The Patient First team caught up with one patient to find out what it is like to participate in a trial and listen to their experience, first-hand.

David Parry, 80, has wet age-related macular degeneration (wet AMD) in his right eye - a condition, which, if left untreated, can cause blindness.

For the past five years, he has attended the eye clinic at Maidstone Hospital every month and, in that time, has received more than 40 injections of the drug Lucentis in his right eye and undergone two cataract operations - one on each eye - to improve his sight.

David explained: "In 2011 I had my driving licence taken away because I failed an eyesight test. My optician referred me to the ophthalmology department at Maidstone Hospital, where it was discovered I had dry age-related macular degeneration in my left eye and wet age-related macular degeneration in my right eye."

He added: "When I first attended the eye clinic, my eyesight was poor. I struggled to read a newspaper and I didn't recognise friends and neighbours when I was out. My condition affected my life and made it very difficult for me to be independent and carry out everyday tasks.

"Initially when I was referred, I thought I would only need treatment for three months, but several years' on and many injections and operations later, I continue to be a regular patient at the clinic.

"The difference in my eyesight since I started treatment has been incredible. Although it has not been possible to save the sight in my left eye, the condition in my right eye has dramatically improved. I can now easily read my favourite newspaper, recognise my friends when I see them on the street and, most importantly, I have started driving again after I passed an eyesight test and was handed back my driving licence.

"The staff at Maidstone Hospital have been incredible and have looked after me so well - I cannot fault the treatment I have received."

While Mr Parry's treatment has been a success, just over a year ago, he was approached to find out if he would be interested in taking part in a clinical trial investigating new treatment options for wet AMD.

David agreed and he was assessed by the Trust's research team through a series of tests to find out if he met the trial criteria. He was also asked to fill in a small number of forms and, in May 2015, he was accepted to be part of a new study.

The STAR Study is a randomised trial that is investigating how effective stereotactic radiotherapy (SRT) is as a treatment for wet AMD, when used in combination with the drug Lucentis. SRT delivers a highly focused narrow beam of X-rays to the eye, which aims to prevent the growth of abnormal blood vessels that are responsible for the leakage of fluid and bleeding that occurs in wet AMD.

To determine the effectiveness of the combined treatment, patients are compared with a group who are only receiving Lucentis injections.

Luke Membrey, the consultant ophthalmic surgeon who oversees Mr Parry's treatment, said: "As a department, we're continually looking at how we can make improvements to the treatments and care we offer patients, and clinical research is the most effective way of testing new practice in a safe way.

"Mr Parry's treatment - injecting the drug Lucentis into his eye - has been successful and has gone some way in reversing his condition in his right eye, allowing him to regain and maintain his independence. Yet there are always ways we can fine-tune treatment.

"Normally, injections of drugs, such as Lucentis, have to be given monthly into the eye for several years. In the

STAR Study we are identifying if using a combination of Lucentis injections with radiotherapy treatment will reduce the number of injections a patient needs.

"If the trial is proven to work and provides a permanent cure for wet AMD, this will be incredibly beneficial to wet AMD patients, who may only require infrequent injections, or potentially never need to have them again."

Patients participating in the STAR Study trial are assigned at random to one of two treatment groups - patients who receive one SRT treatment followed by a Lucentis injection and patients who receive a placebo or 'sham' treatment followed by a Lucentis injection. Patients do not know which treatment group they are in. Participants are part of the study for two years, with additional follow-up visits required at years three and four.

David said: "Once I'd joined the trial, I had to attend Kings College Hospital in London in June last year to receive the radiotherapy treatment. The treatment only took 15 minutes, although I did have to sit very still in a chair for 15 minutes with my eye open for the whole time!

"Since then I've visited Maidstone Hospital every month for an assessment by the medical team and, if it's needed I get given an injection in my eye. This month my condition has improved so much that I didn't need an injection, which I'm really pleased about!

"I would thoroughly recommend patients get involved with research, if they're offered the opportunity. Anything that can improve a condition - in my case my eyesight - has surely got to be a good thing and something we need to support for both patients now and in the future."





# VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO OUR HOSPITALS

MTW has around 350 volunteers, who regularly dedicate their free time to help patients during their stay and visitors to our hospitals.

Every week our volunteers participate in a range of roles from spending time talking to patients on the wards, greeting and giving directions to visitors, and providing administrative support to our clinical teams.

Volunteers make a significant contribution to the well-being of staff and patients. Here, we talk to one volunteer to find out how she contributes to improving patients' experience on the ward...

Annabel Hawkes has only recently started volunteering at MTW. She helps out one or two times a week on the Acute Medical Unit (AMU) at Tunbridge Wells Hospital.

Annabel, who lives in Brenchley, near Tunbridge Wells, and works as a freelance costume maker for film and TV, was inspired to start volunteering at her local hospital after experiencing a period of ill health, which required being treated at Tunbridge Wells Hospital.

She explains: "Last year I had surgery at Tunbridge Wells Hospital and received excellent care and treatment. All the staff were amazing and looked after me so well – I couldn't fault the service.

"After I was discharged from hospital, I spent a long time convalescing at home. During this period, I felt something was missing from my life and realised I wanted to do a role that was more rewarding. I started to put feelers out into the local community to find a charity or voluntary organisation that would suit me.

"While I was researching, I stumbled across the Trust website and there was a big section on volunteering at the hospital. I knew instantly this was what I was looking for as it would allow me to give something back for all the care and attention I'd received when I'd been treated at MTW. I knew I could make a difference, so I contacted the Trust to find out more."

People wanting to volunteer at MTW are required to apply online via NHS Jobs. Once an application is received the Trust meets with applicants to find out

more about them. There are a number of voluntary roles available, including meet and greeters, assisting in office, reception or outpatient areas and being based on the ward. Those wishing to become a volunteer will need to undergo a criminal records check.

"Becoming a volunteer at MTW is quite a stringent process, but rightly so as you are talking to people when they are at their most vulnerable. After I'd met with the volunteer team, I was placed on a ward," added Annabel.

"I love helping out on AMU. During my visits, I spend time talking and listening to patients, helping to serve lunch, assisting those patients that require extra help to eat their lunch, and running small errands, such as making sure their water jugs are filled up.

"Staying in hospital is a daunting experience for patients, some of whom don't have family living close by who can visit them regularly. Being a volunteer means I've got the time to sit and listen to them - something I know ward staff would love to be able to do, but often can't because of the busy clinical demands of treating and caring for patients.

"Volunteering at the hospital is so uplifting and has given me a new lease of life. I feel that my experience of undergoing surgery and recovering in hospital means that I know what it's like to be on a ward and the worries that you have. As a result, I feel I'm better able to reassure

patients about the hospital processes and procedures, and have more understanding and empathy with their situation.

"Thankfully, I can fit my voluntary work around my freelance work, so it's worked out really well. Some weeks I may pop into Tunbridge Wells Hospital for a couple of hours each week, but in the main I try and aim to come over one or two times a week and spend four or five hours with the patients on AMU.

"If I won the lottery, I'd be here every day – I just wish I'd signed up to be a volunteer sooner!"

Anne-Marie Stevens, MTW's Voluntary Services Co-ordinator, added: "Volunteers make a real difference to our hospitals. They're the people who greet you in the main hospital reception area, guide you on your way if you're lost, place hospital letters in envelopes, and sit and chat with patients to ease the pressure from busy ward staff.

"We currently have a variety of voluntary opportunities at both our hospitals for people willing to devote just a few hours a week or month. We're particularly keen to hear from people who are able to commit to volunteering for at least six months. So if you think you want to help make a difference to the lives of our patients during their hospital stay, please do get in touch!"

For more information about volunteering at MTW, contact Anne-Marie Stevens, Voluntary Services Co-ordinator, on telephone 01622 224719, or visit our website [www.mtw.nhs.uk/get-involved/](http://www.mtw.nhs.uk/get-involved/)

## Interested in volunteering at MTW?

We're always on the look-out for people who want to make a difference to our patients during their stay on a ward or help visitors to our hospitals. If you are

- Friendly and approachable
- Caring and a good listener
- Comfortable offering help to people
- Emotionally mature
- and able to stay calm in difficult situations
- Able to commit to volunteering for at least six months
- ...then we would love to hear from you!
- It's easy to get involved – simply look out for our advertisement on the NHS Jobs website – [www.jobs.nhs.uk/](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/) - and complete the online application form.

## Autumn recipe

### Apple Flapjacks

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



#### Ingredients:

200g/8oz butter, plus extra for greasing

200g/8oz light muscovado sugar  
2 tbsps of golden syrup

350g/12oz porridge oats

1 tsp ground cinnamon

2 eating apples (Cox or Braeburn)

#### Method:

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C (170°C for fan ovens) or gas mark 4. Grease a 17 x 30cms or 6 ½ x 12 inch tin.
- 2 Put the butter, sugar and golden syrup in a pan and heat gently, stirring occasionally, until the butter has melted. Do not allow the mixture to get too hot or the sugar will burn.
- 3 Stir in the oats and cinnamon. Remove from the heat and set aside.
- 4 Peel, quarter and core the apples, then chop them into small pieces. Put in a separate pan with two tablespoons of cold water. Cover with a lid and cook over a medium heat for 5 minutes until the apples are soft. Drain well and set aside.
- 5 Press half the oat mixture into the tin, then spread the apples over the top. Spoon over the remaining oat mixture. Use a metal spoon to smooth the top (the mixture sticks to a wooden spoon) and press the mixture firmly into the tin.
- 6 Bake on the middle shelf of the oven for 35-40 minutes until the top is golden and feels firm to the touch. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then, while still warm, cut into four lengthways and widthways to make 16 pieces.
- 7 Leave in the tin until cold. Do not remove them while they are still warm, as the mixture will be soft and they will break up. The flapjacks will keep for 3-4 days in an airtight tin.

# patientfirst AUTUMN QUIZ

## Geography:

1. What is the most northern capital city in Europe?
2. Which is the longest river in Britain?
3. Which English king is credited with writing 'Greensleeves'?
4. What was Germany's largest battleship during World War II?

## Art and Literature:

5. Who write 'Hard Times' and 'Bleak House'?
6. Which artist cut off part of his ear?

## Food and Drink:

7. Which fruit goes into the liqueur Kirsch?
8. What is the fruit flavor of a traditional crepe suzette?

## Entertainment:

9. Who plays Watson to Benedict Cumberbatch's Holmes in 'Sherlock'?
10. Which princess, featured in Disney film 'Tangled', has exceptionally long hair with special powers?

## Sport:

11. How many gold medals did Great Britain win in the recent Rio Olympics 2016?
12. Who is the most decorated British Olympian?

(Answers on p18)

## Executive Team Update

Glenn Douglas, Chief Executive



I don't think it's any secret whatsoever that the NHS, as a whole, is continuing to go through some significant and difficult challenges, financially and in terms of demand.

Locally, our hospitals have been placed in financial special measures by NHS Improvement (NHSI). This differs greatly from the stories you will have read about hospitals being placed in special measures by the Care Quality Commission, who review standards of patient care.

We have a deficit of around £23 million this year. NHSI is supporting our on-going efforts to tackle this by ensuring we are as efficient as possible. They want us to succeed just as much as we do and the extra support we are receiving will help us put our Trust on a firmer financial footing.

We will be doing a great deal of work over the coming weeks and months, for instance, to get the best possible prices for all of our everyday items right the way through to the specialist drugs we use. By obtaining better deals, we can save tens of millions of pounds.

We will also continue to tackle our use of costly temporary staffing. If we fill more of our vacant posts, with permanent staff, it would save between £10 and £15 million a year. We have been innovative in attracting some amazing people to our Trust in the face of fierce competition for staff.

What we will not be doing is cutting back on patient care. The efficiencies we make must maintain or enhance the standards of care we provide our

patients. You can help too by attending appointments, which cost us money, and could have been used by other patients.

During times like these, it's more important than ever that we give staff the recognition and backing they deserve for their ongoing hard work and commitment to making a difference to the lives of patients and their families every day.

We recently, for instance, achieved some of the best mortality rates in the entire country for emergency bowel surgery. As a consequence, more people are surviving potentially life-threatening conditions at Tunbridge Wells Hospital than in the majority of other hospitals who carry out this emergency surgery.

I am extremely proud of the staff we have at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust and I take great pleasure in giving out annual staff awards in recognition of some of the amazing work that goes on, and the exceptional individuals responsible for it.

We have opened nominations for our 'Staff Stars Awards' 2016 and have already been overwhelmed by some of the nominations that have come in for a diverse cross-section of staff.

I have had the privilege of reading some of your stories shared through these nominations, so far, and I wanted to share a few of the comments made that perfectly capture the pride, gratitude and impact these people have on those they work with and care for.

"Their ability to make sure we saw light in the darkest of circumstances will

never ever be forgotten."

"Their personal manner is outstanding and they really know and remember each patient. They know how to deliver both good and bad news in a manner best suited to each individual."

"They have care and compassion which I believe has helped me get better during my hospital stay. All the staff made me feel wanted and cared for and nothing was too much trouble."

What has particularly struck me is the diversity of staff being nominated – from booking clerks, nurses, radiographers and domestics to consultants. It makes me extremely proud to call these people my colleagues.

Nominations for our awards are welcome from everyone - if you know someone who works for Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust who always goes the extra mile, please put them forward.

The nomination process is simple – just visit [www.surveymonkey.com/r/StaffStarsAwards2016](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/StaffStarsAwards2016) and submit your form online. But please note, nominations close on 4 October at 6pm.

It's the staff who enable our hospitals to run round the clock every day of the year so let's celebrate their achievements, their dedication and their passion for our NHS.

Glenn

## 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

Tel: 01622 729000

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

Tel: 01892 823535

Tel: 01892 823535

## NHS Improvement appoints Financial Improvement Director

NHS Improvement has appointed a Financial Improvement Director to work with Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW). His appointment follows the announcement that the Trust has been placed in financial special measures.

Simon Worthington started at MTW on 22<sup>nd</sup> August and will be the Trust's primary day to day contact for special measures. He will oversee, on behalf of NHS Improvement, the actions the Trust is taking to develop their financial recovery plan and reduce its financial deficit.

Mr Worthington is currently Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance at Bolton NHS Foundation Trust. He supported a similar financial turnaround at Bolton NHS Foundation Trust, which is now rated as 'good' by the Care Quality Commission and is in financial surplus.

The appointment is funded by NHS Improvement. MTW is working on a financial recovery plan to make its hospitals more efficient and reduce the Trust's forecast deficit of £23 million in 2016/17.

**AUTUMN QUIZ** **GEOGRAPHY:** 1. Reykjavik, Iceland 2. Severn (220 miles)  
**Answers from p13** **HISTORY:** 3. Henry VIII 4. The Bismarck  
**ART & LITERATURE:** 5. Charles Dickens 6. Vincent Van Gogh

**FOOD & DRINK:** 7. Cherry 8. Orange  
**ENTERTAINMENT:** 9. Martin Freeman 10. Rapunzel  
**SPORT:** 11. 27 12. Sir Bradley Wiggins (eight medals – five gold – over four Games)

## THINK YOU NEED A&E?

**At a time when there is unprecedented demand for A&E, take time to think if you might have an alternative care option before you attend your local Emergency department...**

Accident & Emergency and Emergency Care Centres deal with patients with life-threatening or emergency illnesses and accidents. If the illness or injury is life-threatening, don't hesitate – call 999 straight away.

You can call NHS 111 when you need medical help fast, but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Alternatively, if you have a minor injury or illness, such as a minor cut or head injury with no loss of consciousness, you may find it quicker and easier to seek help at one of Kent and Medway's Minor Injury Units.

You can also use the Health Help Now website or download the app, which helps people find the right service in Kent and Medway for their health needs, especially when they need medical help fast but it is not a life-threatening emergency. Health Help Now lists common symptoms and offers suggestions for treatment. The site lists Minor Injuries Units and Urgent Care Centres too, as well as pharmacies and GP walk-in centres.

# Get the jab Get flu safe

“ Are you at risk from flu? ”



Flu can be really serious. Getting a flu jab can protect you all winter. It's free if you are pregnant, over 65 or have a health condition such as severe asthma, diabetes, a chest, heart, liver or kidney complaint, or lowered immunity.

It's quick, safe and free. To book your jab, speak to your GP practice today.

