

patient

first



Maidstone and
Tunbridge Wells
NHS Trust

#patientfirst

Summer 2019



P11

**"I've been absolutely delighted
with my experience and the results."**

How targeted therapy helped Sai Hubbard

Welcome to the summer edition of Patient First!

In this edition of the magazine we have a number of patient stories so you can read first-hand about the services and care the Trust provides.

We talk to Sai Hubbard about how her fibroids were treated using innovative minimally-invasive techniques and hear from Maurice Gilham who shares his experience of the new Hospital@home initiative.

You can also find out about the Trust's dedicated charity and some of the incredible fundraising people have carried out, read about the renovation and upgrade of Crowborough Birthing Centre, find out about the new helipad we're currently building at Maidstone Hospital, and the pioneering techniques which are helping cancer patients.

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. Best wishes for a healthy, happy summer! See you in autumn 2019.

PS don't forget you can view this magazine online. Visit www.mtw.nhs.uk/patientfirst

The Patient First team

Contacts

If you have a story to tell us, please contact the communications team:



01622 228658



mtw-tr.communications@nhs.net

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



01622 729000 - Maidstone Hospital



01892 823535 - Tunbridge Wells Hospital



Or visit www.mtw.nhs.uk



Contents

4-5 Stroke support

Find out about a group that is helping stroke survivors and their family and carers.

7 Treating patients at home

Maurice Gilham reveals how a new initiative helped him return home quicker after a spell in hospital.

8-9 Fundraising

We share some remarkable fundraising stories that have helped our dedicated charity.

10 Farewell

Read about the remarkable work of our Head of Radiography who has retired after 29 years with the Trust.

11 Case study

Sai Hubbard tells us how she is now living a pain-free life after undergoing treatment for fibroids.

14 Our volunteers

Patient Experience Volunteer Pam Croucher talks about her role and the joys of volunteering.

Find us - @MTWnhs



Like us - mymtwhealthcare



Connect with us - Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust



Follow us - mtw_nhs_trust



Makeover for birthing rooms

Crowborough Birthing Centre has been given a makeover thanks to the Friends of Crowborough Hospital donating over £120,000 towards the renovation work.

The money allowed us to modernise the two birthing rooms and three postnatal rooms, which are designed to provide a comfortable oasis and tranquil birthing experience for new mothers.

Large scenic wall murals and pot plants were installed as well as a new birthing pool, soft lighting, waterproof speakers, kneeling mats, beanbags and exercise balls.

To mark the opening of the new look rooms, a ribbon was cut by 'Call the Midwife' actress Melody Grove, who gave birth to her second child at the centre this year.

She was joined on the day by our Chief Executive, Miles Scott, Dr Kate Stokes, President of Friends of Crowborough Hospital (FoCH), as well as midwives, MTW staff and mums who have had their babies at the facility.



The birthing centre has seen a 16% increase in mothers choosing to have their babies at the unit this year with 181 babies delivered between April 2018 – March 2019.

Karen Leeson, Birthing Centre Manager, said:

"A huge thank you to the Friends of Crowborough Hospital for their support and generous donation. Everyone has worked really hard to make the rooms as comfortable and relaxing as possible.

"Special thanks also to all the midwives and maternity support workers for their ongoing professional and excellent care provided to women and their families."

Women and their partners can book a tour of Crowborough Birthing Centre by calling 01892 654080.



Helipad construction flying along nicely!

A 24-hour helicopter landing area is set to return to Maidstone Hospital thanks to an amazing donation.

HELP (Helicopter Emergency Landing Pads) Appeal awarded £300,000 to the Trust to permanently replace the temporary site at the rear of the oncology unit, which is frequently

waterlogged, with an all-weather pad.

Work started in April and the helipad is expected to be finished and ready for use by this autumn.

Once operational it will help increase the life chances of seriously ill or injured patients being brought to Maidstone Hospital for treatment, or flown from the hospital to specialist centres elsewhere in the country for treatment.

Air Ambulance Kent Surrey Sussex will be the main user but it can also be used by other emergency services as well as charities such as the Children's Air Ambulance which provides a medical transfer service for critically ill babies and children up to the age of 18.

John Weeks, the Trust's Head of Emergency Planning and Response, said: "We are extremely grateful to the HELP Appeal for generously agreeing to fund the landing site which will make a real difference to Maidstone Hospital."

Leigh Curtis, Executive Director of Service Delivery, Air Ambulance Kent Surrey Sussex, said: "Having access to hospitals like Maidstone, is vitally important to Air Ambulance Kent Surrey Sussex, as it gives us the ability to reduce our patients' journey time, giving them access to critical care quicker.

"This one is particularly meaningful to us, as it allows us to serve our founding community at its very heart."



Comfort blankets

Coloured and patterned blankets are being handed out to elderly patients, particularly those with Dementia, as part of a scheme to help reduce falls.

The blankets help patients find their way back to their bed more easily and also see the edge of the bed more clearly when getting in and out.

Due to infection control, blankets are single use items and are taken home with the patient following discharge.

If you're interested in knitting a blanket, please email mtw-tr.blankets@nhs.net

New blankets can also be left in main reception at both Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells hospitals.

Supporting stroke survivors

Suffering a stroke can have a devastating impact, and in some cases life changing effect, not only on the survivor but also their family members.

It goes without saying that everyone who is admitted on to MTW's Stroke Units receives the necessary care and support to help them on the road to recovery. But when their hospital stay comes to an end and it's time to return home it can be a daunting experience for everyone involved.

To help alleviate any concerns, a stroke education group is available for both patients and carers to attend, either together or individually, at both Stroke Units from 3pm to 4pm on the first Thursday of every month at Tunbridge Wells and the last

Thursday of every month at Maidstone.

The free service was set up by Lead Stroke Nurse Vicky Williams and the Stroke Therapy Teams in partnership with the Stroke Association's West Kent branch.

Vicky said: "It's a place people can turn to for answers to any questions they may have. We also tell them about the help and support that's available both in and out of hospital.

"We help people understand the different types of strokes, and the importance of therapy to aid recovery. We also invite stroke survivors along to talk about their experiences and give people a sense of hope."

New online pre-op tool for patients

A new online system called MyPreOp has been introduced to help minimise hospital appointments for patients requiring surgery.

After the necessary health checks have been carried out by staff at one of our Pre-Assessment Clinics, low-risk patients are asked to complete an assessment of their general health and medical history online via a mobile device either in hospital or in the comfort of their own home.

Once submitted, a senior member of staff from the Pre-Assessment Clinic will review the information. Where there are no areas of concern highlighted the patient will be referred straight for surgery. If concerns are flagged the patient will be contacted and asked to return to the clinic for a face-to-face consultation with a nurse and/or undergo further tests.

Within the first month of going live, more than 440 patients completed MyPreOp, with the majority completing it from home.





Getting patients up and moving

It's been a year since we launched #EndPJPAralysis which aims to get patients up, dressed and moving whilst staying in our hospitals.

Nikki Lewis, Practice Development Nurse for Medicine and Emergency Care, said: "Since launching the campaign in April last year, we have helped get more than 1,200 patients moving.

"The benefits of getting patients out of their PJs are huge. Not only does it promote a sense of normality and mental wellbeing, it can prevent problems caused by staying in bed too long such as pressure sores and loss of muscle strength, all of which leads to a reduction in the amount of time they have to stay in hospital. We've also recruited volunteers to help with activities such as board games, craft activities, reading, colouring, assisting with meals, drinks and befriending."

Family, friends and carers are encouraged to bring in day clothes, underwear, and shoes for the person they are visiting as well toiletries, such as toothpaste, soap, deodorant and a toothbrush, plus everyday items like dentures and reading glasses, to help staff get patients up and moving.

Unfortunately not all patients have the facility or the family to bring in clean clothes. To help solve this issue, people can donate new or nearly new clothes for patients to wear during their stay. Clothes can be dropped off at the main reception of Maidstone Hospital or the Discharge Lounge at Tunbridge Wells Hospital.

Peter, 72, a patient on Edith Cavell Ward, Maidstone Hospital, said: "I like to get dressed as not only is it more comfortable to wear my own clothes, it means that I look and feel better when I go to physio or see visitors; it makes me feel human."

If you would like to become an #EndPJPAralysis volunteer please email mtw-tr.volunteers@nhs.net

For more information about the campaign visit www.endpjp paralysis.com



New end of life care plan model



We are now operating the SWAN care plan model at both of our hospital sites to help promote dignity, respect and compassion for patients who are in the last stages of their life.

With a patient's permission, staff can place a small round magnet on their name board, and a large rectangle magnet outside their room or above their bed, which carries the swan symbol.

The magnets act as a reminder to staff that they need to pay extra attention to relatives and friends and for visitors to wards and departments to be mindful of maintaining a quiet and peaceful environment wherever possible.

Information and comfort packs for relatives will be provided at a later date.

Guiding patients the right way



Some of our Accessible Information Standard (AIS) Champions have taken a huge step towards helping blind or partially sighted patients after undertaking a course with Guide Dogs UK.

Attendees qualified as Level 1 Community Sighted Guides after they completed the My Guide programme which teaches staff how to identify someone who is visually impaired and in need of help, how to approach them and guide them across roads, along corridors, through doors and up and down stairs.

The course forms part of our commitment to the Accessible Information Standard (AIS) which all health and social care providers have to follow. Introduced by the government in 2016, AIS aims to make sure that people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss get information they can access and understand.

Introducing...

Dr Joe Davies is our new Consultant Radiologist based in the Radiology Department at Maidstone Hospital.

The 32-year-old, from South East London, is a General Radiologist with a subspecialist interest in musculoskeletal radiology.

Thanks to his speciality it means we can offer patients suffering from medical conditions affecting the bones, joints, muscles, tendons and ligaments, treatments such as steroid injections and other therapies including shoulder hydrodilatation and image guided percutaneous trigger finger release to relieve musculoskeletal pain. These treatments lessen the need for patients to undergo surgery.



Picture menus

New picture food menus have been fully rolled out across our wards at both of our hospital sites.

The menus, which are shown on iPads, are perfect for helping those with communication difficulties select the food they want to eat, giving them both independence and choice.

They are currently being offered to patients with Dementia, those who have recently suffered a stroke, those with learning difficulties and patients where English isn't their first language.

They are also great for patients who don't have much of an appetite as seeing pictures of the food can make people want to eat it!



Family climbs to new heights for fundraising

A family from Tonbridge paid tribute to the Trust for caring for a loved one who they lost back in 2007, by climbing Mount Snowdon and raising almost £7,000 for charity in his memory.

Daniel Strawson died of a brain tumour aged just 11 months. On what would have been his 10th birthday, his parents, Susannah and Richard, brother Thomas and sisters Hannah, Lydia and Faith, along with other members of the family, took on the challenge in North Wales.

Settings themselves the target of raising £1,000 for six different charities, including the Trust, The Salvation Army and Demelza Hospice Care for Children, the family exceeded their target after they tackled winds of 50mph and torrential rain in order to complete their challenge.

A few weeks later they returned to Tunbridge Wells Hospital to donate a variety of multi-sensory equipment for use by children undergoing treatment there.

Daniel's mother, Susannah Strawson, said: "Daniel was at Pembury for a few days before diagnosis and those days were very stressful. We were always so impressed with Daniel's care. The staff were available during the ups and downs and the playroom in particular was a great space for us to be as a family. Even once we brought Daniel home we were able to pop back in to the hospital during the evenings if we were worried or needed advice."

Helping respiratory patients breathe easier

A basic piece of household furniture is helping patients with breathing problems.



The League of Friends of Tunbridge Wells Hospital kindly spent £1,000 on a recliner armchair for the Respiratory Specialist Ward so patients who find it difficult to breathe whilst lying down in bed can remain in a chair throughout the day and night.

Specialist Medical Matron Alan Dando said: "Thanks to the League of Friends' generosity our patients now have a comfortable and safe option to sit or sleep during their stay on the ward. This will aid in their recovery and improve the quality of their experience while in hospital."

Case Study

Hospital@home

A pensioner from Tonbridge who was able to go home from hospital sooner, thanks to a new scheme called Hospital@home, has nothing but praise about the care he received. He spoke to Patient First about the benefits of the service.



Spending Christmas Day in hospital wasn't exactly what Maurice Gilham planned, but that is what happened when he was admitted on Christmas Eve after becoming unwell.

Roll forward a few weeks and the 86-year-old was back home with his wife Doreen, 85, and feeling far more chipper than he did. Part of that is due to a scheme called Hospital@home, which offers intensive medical and nursing support for a short time when people are discharged from hospital.

Maurice explained: "For several days my vascular system was flooded intravenously with antibiotics and I was faced with the daunting prospect of spending six or so weeks in hospital to complete the course. Then I was offered the chance to go home and still be left under the care of my consultant."

Maurice had been admitted to Tunbridge Wells Hospital in Pembury with an infection near the heart which caused him to collapse at home in Tonbridge.

Thankfully, Doreen, his wife of 60 years, was able to phone for an ambulance and Maurice was rushed in.

"We were going to Woking for Christmas, but my heart had other plans," he said.

That's where Hospital@home stepped in. Once Maurice had been stabilised, he was visited in the ward by the team's co-ordinator, who explained how he could go home sooner but that he would still be the responsibility of the consultant at Tunbridge Wells Hospital.

Maurice added: "It has been marvellous. I came out on a Monday and by Thursday, my friend was able to pick me up and take me to play bridge. It was such a huge boost."

Hospital@home is aimed at patients in West Kent who need further nursing or medical care following admission to hospital for a surgical procedure or medical condition. It was developed by Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust in partnership with Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust

(KCHFT) to support suitable patients to return home sooner to recover faster. With the right support, the care and treatment recommended by the hospital consultant is delivered at home.

The team includes senior registered nurses, doctors and healthcare support workers, who keep in touch with the person's GP and hospital staff.

KCHFT Discharge Manager Dawn Hallam said: "We know staying in hospital is not good for patients; there is a psychological effect leading to deconditioning. We treat patients who can be safely managed at home and who do not need to be in a bed in a main hospital.

"People generally want to go home as soon as they can where everything is familiar. We always set parameters and safety is key. We want to support patients to go back to normal a life as possible, as quickly as possible."

Maurice said: "Looking at the bigger picture, hypothetically my lounge becomes extra bed space in the hospital at Pembury. Multiply this many times and the capacity of the hospital can effectively be enhanced – it's a win-win situation. My experience has shown me there is nothing to worry about at all. Everyone who visits me is so pleasant and competent. I felt safe in their hands."

The H@h community team provides a number of different treatments to patients such as intravenous drugs - including antibiotics, wound care, catheter care, stoma care, drain care, taking and monitoring blood tests as well as blood pressure, plus injections.

Once treatment is completed, patients are either discharged from the service or if the team feels the patient would benefit from other services they will refer them, with their consent, to other community teams.

Since launching on 1 December 2018, up until 30 April this year, the Hospital@home service has cared for 149 patients.



Fundraising



Support our charity

We all have a charity that is close to our heart and many people generously donate to our dedicated charity, The Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Charitable Fund.

In 2017/18 the Fund spent more than £400,000 on improving the patient and carer experience as well as supporting service development.

Fundraising Manager, Laura Kennedy, explains more about the charity's vital work.

"Donations, small or large, really do make a difference to our patients. From purchasing a table and chairs for the children's area in our phlebotomy department to blood pressure monitors and funding for patient health and well-being days, there are so many ways that charitable funds make a positive impact."

Here we share some of our inspirational fundraising stories...



Sponsored run for Intensive Care Unit

A mum of two ran 13 miles and raised nearly £4,000 after the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Tunbridge Wells Hospital saved her husband's life.

Isabelle Campbell ran the Tonbridge Half Marathon after her husband, Jason, spent 50 days in hospital with multiple organ failure, pneumonia and sepsis.

She said: "The expert care of the ICU staff was unbelievable. They nursed Jason back to life, providing 24/7 medical care and showed incredible compassion and kindness, not only looking after his immediate medical needs, comfort and dignity, but also caring for me as I spent every one of the 50 days at his bedside."

"Staff - alongside our amazing family, friends and community, were my saviour. We feel so lucky to have been in their care. We will never forget the individuals we met along the way."

Happily, Jason is now back at home with Isabelle and their sons. He is pictured here with Isabelle after her run.

Family's Lord North donation

A new observations machine is now benefiting patients on Lord North Ward at Maidstone Hospital thanks to a generous charitable donation made in memory of a former patient.

The late Wesley Padgham was cared for by the Lord North Ward team and to pay tribute to his excellent care, donations were made to the ward following his funeral.

Wesley's family, including his widow, Di, pictured far left, recently visited Lord North to see the new observation machine, affectionately known as 'Wesley', unveiled.

It is now one of three machines on Lord North that enables the team to have quick access to accurate vital signs for patients.



Supporting our Neonatal Unit

Patients of all ages benefit from our charity, including premature babies at Tunbridge Wells Hospital. The Neonatal Unit's Equipment Fund is just one fund supported through charitable donations.

Charity supporters rallied round to raise funds for a new phototherapy light system to treat jaundice in babies. Three Giraffe Blue Spot Lite Phototherapy systems at a cost of £8,600 were purchased for the unit, which offer high-intensity phototherapy for effective treatment of jaundice and hyperbilirubinemia.

Jaundice is a condition in which there is too much bilirubin in the blood. When red blood cells break down, a substance called bilirubin is formed. Babies, especially those who are born prematurely, are not easily able to get rid of the bilirubin and phototherapy can help with this process. This new system is quickly positioned for precise delivery of therapeutic light.

Julia Moat, Specialist Matron, said: "This state-of-the-art equipment will hopefully reduce the time that babies have to spend under light therapy. Ultimately this will make treatment more effective, gives parents better access to their baby and reduces the separation time between parent and baby."



League of Friends

The Trust is also supported by our wonderful League of Friends volunteers at Maidstone Hospital and Tunbridge Wells Hospital as well as the Friends of Crowborough Hospital.

If you'd like to find out more about volunteering for these groups please contact Maidstone on 01622 224781, email Tunbridge Wells on email@friendsoftwhospital.org or call Crowborough on 01892 664626.



Cath Lab's heartfelt thanks for legacy

Cardiac patients are benefiting from a major refurbishment of the Cardiac Catheterization Unit at Tunbridge Wells Hospital thanks to a significant charity legacy.

The legacy, left by a former patient, funded both an X-ray and hemodynamic system which was gifted to Cardiac Services via the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Charitable Fund.

The unit, also known as the Cath Lab, carries out minimally invasive diagnostic procedures to diagnose and treat cardiovascular disease.

X-rays or angiography is taken of the arteries supplying blood to the heart muscle. This facilitates the diagnosis of heart conditions and helps plan future treatment. The Lab also carries out procedures such as the fitting of stents and pacemakers, as well as revascularization post myocardial infraction.

Jennifer Norman, 63, was the first patient to benefit from the refurbished Cath Lab when she recently received a diagnostic angiogram. She is pictured alongside Dr Budack, Cardiology Associate Specialist.

Did you know?

- The charity spent £225,000 on medical equipment in 2017/18.
- There are 36 separate funds including neurology and cancer services.
- If you Gift Aid your donations we can claim back from the government 25p for every £1 you donate to the charity.



Get involved with the charity

If you are thinking of doing something for charity choose our Charitable Fund and help support your local hospitals!

- Donate online via our JustGiving page www.justgiving.com/mtwnhscharitablefund
- Use your hobby to fundraise for us.
- Help spread the word by telling your friends, relatives, colleagues.

For more information contact Laura Kennedy, Fundraising Manager, on 01622 26428 or email mtw.fundraising@nhs.net



Head of Radiotherapy retires after 29 years

After a career which spanned almost five decades of being dedicated to Radiography and cancer patients, our Head of Radiotherapy Services Christine Richards has retired.

Christine, 68, from Maidstone, qualified as a Radiographer back in 1972 and joined the Trust in 1990.

Her work was recognised nationally after she travelled to Buckingham Palace in June last year to receive an MBE from Prince Charles for her services to cancer patients.

A member of the College of Radiographers, Christine has won Radiographer of the Year twice, has been at the forefront of projects to improve patient care and helped to shape how the Trust's innovative Radiotherapy Department looks today.

Christine also chaired a working group relating to skin care for radiotherapy patients as well as worked on projects to enhance staffing standards for therapeutic radiographers and gave expert presentations at national meetings.

During her early career with the Trust, Christine travelled to the US as well as Sweden and Norway to source state-of-the-art equipment for the Trust and oversaw training for staff.

Christine said: "I will miss the people because it's such a friendly atmosphere here and I've worked with some of my colleagues for many years. I'm also going to miss the patients because being part of something that is going to make such a difference to someone's life is so rewarding.

"I've been very fortunate in being able to achieve many things and going to Buckingham Palace to be awarded an MBE is something I never even dreamed of, so it really topped off my career.

"Everyone at MTW really respects one another and works as a team to help our patients and it's been a real honour to work alongside them all for so many years."

Former Radiotherapy Planning Manager, Amanda Williams, who has worked for the Trust for 21 years, has stepped into Christine's shoes.

Amanda qualified as a Radiographer 27 years ago after training as a Therapeutic Radiographer in Velindre Cancer Centre, Cardiff, South Wales.



Smokefree hospital sites

Did you know that Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells

hospitals are both smokefree zones?

This means visitors, patients and staff are no longer able to smoke anywhere on the sites.

We introduced the smokefree policy in August 2018 because we know smoking has a significant negative impact not only on the health of smokers but passive smokers too.

Although smoking is banned vaping is permitted in designated areas.

If you would like support to give up smoking contact Kent Stop Smoking Service on 0300 123 1220 or email kcht.sss@nhs.net



Trust hosts expert event

Almost 120 delegates from across the South East enjoyed a day of expert guest speakers from around the country when we hosted the South East Shoulder and Elbow Symposium.

Our very own Research Extended Scope Practitioner, Jayanti Rai, organised the day which was attended by consultants, registrars, general physicians, nurses and therapy staff involved in shoulder and elbow pain management.

The event, held at our Academic Centre in Maidstone, included talks from experts in the field on joint and nerve injuries, as well as rehabilitation and surgery.

Case Study

Treating fibroids with Interventional Radiology

After years of discomfort and pain, Sai Hubbard recently underwent an innovative, minimally-invasive technique to remove fibroids from her womb.

Here we talk to Sai about her condition and how our team of experts helped her back to full health.

About seven years' ago, 51-year-old Sai, who is a staff nurse at Tunbridge Wells Hospital, started to feel unwell. "I had really severe abdominal and lower back pain, bloating, very heavy periods and frequent migraines," said Sai.

"I went to the GP with my symptoms and they referred me for some diagnostic tests, which showed I had fibroids."

Fibroids are non-cancerous growths that vary in size. They develop in or around the womb and are made up of muscle and fibrous tissue. Many women aren't aware they have fibroids and they don't need to be treated if they aren't causing any symptoms.

Some women are given medication to shrink the fibroids, but in Sai's case, doctors recommended a hysterectomy as the preferred course of treatment.

"It was a bit of shock to be told I needed an operation," commented Sai. "I was very anxious about having surgery and I didn't feel comfortable progressing with this option."

So, for the next few years, Sai's nerves about undergoing surgery meant she chose to live with the discomfort, until a transfer to a new department at work highlighted a new course of treatment for her.

"About a year ago, I took up a really exciting nursing role in our Radiology team, where I spent a lot of time working in Interventional Radiology. One day I helped care for a patient who was having a fibroid embolisation and I realised that this technique could help me too.

"I talked to one of our Consultant Interventional Radiologists, Dr Aidan Shaw, and he explained the procedure to me, outlining how it could help alleviate my symptoms.



"On the day of the procedure, I met Dr Kevin Fai, a Consultant Anaesthetist, who gave me a spinal anaesthetic and some light sedation during the embolization to make sure that I would be comfortable and pain-free."

Using a very fine tube inserted into the artery in the groin and guided by X-ray images, interventional radiology doctors navigate to the blood vessel supplying the uterus and inject small particles of medicine to target the fibroids and cut off the blood supply to them. Over the next few weeks the fibroids shrink in size.


Sai added: "The procedure only took an hour and was completely pain-free. Recovery from the op is quick too, around two weeks, which is much better than alternative surgical options.

"Since the fibroid embolization my symptoms have massively improved. I have more energy and no lower back or abdominal pain anymore. I've been absolutely delighted with my experience and the results, and I cannot praise the team at the Trust highly enough, who have been so caring, reassuring and professional."

Consultant Interventional Radiologist Dr Aidan Shaw said: "We have successfully treated around 40 women with fibroid embolisation and all our patients have seen good improvement with their symptoms.

"While embolisation is sometimes used by other NHS trusts to help treat fibroids, at MTW we carry out the procedure with an anaesthetist, usually Kevin Fai, ensuring the procedure itself is completely pain-free, with patients having a better recovery."

Got a story to share?

 mtw-tr.communications@nhs.net

Family funds ground-breaking cancer treatment

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) has become the first Trust in the UK to routinely offer a ground-breaking technique for treating patients with prostate cancer thanks to a £355,000 donation from a local family.

Roy and Margaret Sutcliffe, from Maidstone, gifted the money to the Kent Oncology Centre after Mr Sutcliffe was treated by the Trust for bladder cancer.

Their generous donation enabled the Trust's Specialist Urology Surgeons to buy a new piece of equipment which allowed them to develop a unique technique which involves injecting tiny gold markers, known as fiducial marker placement, into the prostate through the skin instead of being surgically implanted. The markers are then used to ensure radiotherapy is delivered more accurately for prostate cancer, thus minimising radiation to the surrounding, healthy organs.

Consultant Urological Surgeon Hidekazu Yamamoto said: "We are incredibly thankful to the Sutcliffe's for their donation which has allowed us



to lead the way with treatment in this field.

"By using this equipment and the unique method of delivery we have developed, we can continue to give world-class cancer treatment to our patients whilst greatly reducing the risk of any infections.

"Following our first successful treatment using this new technique, we now plan to set up the UK's first transperineal prostate fiducial marker clinic so that all patients can receive accurate prostate radiotherapy."

MTW sees approximately 900 new prostate cancer patients per year in the region. The new method is expected to benefit around a third of these patients.

Pioneering techniques that are helping cancer patients

Two Trust Doctors recently organised and attended a special event in London to showcase two innovative techniques they've developed to help improve the lives of patients with gastrointestinal cancers.

Consultant Interventional Radiologists Dr Aidan Shaw and Dr Paul Ignotus spoke to 70 delegates about the ground-breaking best practice they're undertaking, which involves using particular types of stents to open up blockages caused by upper and lower gastrointestinal tumours, as part of a national masterclass to share learning.

The procedures have both received international recognition and acclaim.

Dr Shaw said: "The stents open up blockages caused by tumours in the colon and the oesophagus allowing patients, who previously may have been too unfit for surgery, to continue to eat and drink. This has avoided the need for these patients to have surgery, avoid a feeding tube or a stoma and has significantly improved their quality of life.

"We are the only Trust in the country carrying out these minimally invasive, image-guided procedures and we have the largest series of patients in the world. Our work for both procedures has recently been published in international journals and presented nationally and internationally. We are now looking at other ways to build on this success and apply what we've developed to see if it will help patients with other types of cancers."

Dr Shaw and Dr Ignotus started performing these special image-guided surgeries about three years ago to help patients with incurable oesophageal and colon cancer.





20 years of friendship

A huge thank you to Gary Purdy, Chairman of the League of Friends of Tunbridge Wells Hospital, who has clocked up 20 years' service with the charity which supports the hospital.

To mark the occasion, our Chief Executive, Miles Scott, presented Gary with a certificate of thanks and a gift in front of the charity's committee members when they recently met at the hospital's Education Centre. The event was also attended by Trust staff.

During Gary's stewardship £1,173,866 pounds has been donated to Tunbridge Wells Hospital by the League of Friends.

Every penny helps improve care for our patients so we are extremely grateful for all the money they raise by hosting various fundraising events including table top sales held on the fourth Friday of each month in the main reception area of the hospital. Helpers sell homemade cakes, jams and chutneys as well as a selection of cards, books and knitted items for babies and toddlers.

Dementia Event for West Kent Emergency Services

More than 150 people attended the first ever West Kent Emergency Services Dementia Event which was held at the Academic Centre at Maidstone Hospital.

Representatives from the Trust, Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS), South East Coast Ambulance (SECamb) Service and Kent Police joined forces to offer the free session designed to educate and empower staff about the support available for people living with dementia, and their carers, in the West Kent area.

Guests heard from a range of speakers including Kent County Council (KCC) Community Wardens Sandra Edmonds and Adam McKinley, and our very own Lead Nurse for Dementia Liz Champion. Kent Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott gave a closing speech.

Information stands meant people were also able to take details away with them about the different forms of support available, including safe and well visits offered by KFRS and support groups run by the Alzheimer's Society in the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells region.



Liz Champion, who was instrumental in setting up the session, said: "The Dementia Event was created as it was felt it was the best way for emergency care professionals in West Kent to learn about the different services offered by charities and agencies in the area which they can then signpost people living with dementia, or their carers to for further help and support.

"It's been really well received and our hope now is to make it an annual event so we can keep on sharing ideas, best practice and knowledge with one another."

Feature



OUR VOLUNTEERS

MTW has more than 350 wonderful volunteers who give their time to our patients, visitors and staff.

Some volunteers are clearly visible and others blend into the background unseen, but all bring with them a wealth of life experience, care, dedication, love and a warm smile!

In this edition of Patient First, we're shining a spotlight on Patient Experience Volunteer, Pam Croucher.

Where do you volunteer?

I volunteer at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells hospitals.

Tell us more about the volunteer role...

I attend meetings as a patient representative to remind people the patient is the heart of everything. Part of the role is speaking to patients about the care they receive - not medically but the other things that matter when you're receiving care like their views on food and waiting areas.

I also support the Complaints Manager in reviewing a sample of complaints to look at the quality of responses, undertake assurance audits, am part of the I Want Great Care meetings and the Learning Lessons and Embedding Evidence meetings. I've recently taken part in mock OSCE assessments by acting as a patient to help test our international nurses. I also review patient information leaflets, which I do from the comfort of my own home!

How often do you volunteer?

It depends on when the meetings are – some are monthly, some every three months and some annually.

How long have you been volunteering here?

Over five years now. I took a bit of a break but volunteering is quite addictive so I came back.

What did you do before?

At first I was a Sorceress's Apprentice (a pharmacy dispenser to you) – then I decided it was time for a change and a challenge and became a secretary.

Why do you volunteer?

When I first retired, it was like being on holiday – I didn't have to get up or be anywhere at a

particular time. After a few months I began to feel a bit useless and became a volunteer driver for four years. Sometimes I would sit with patients whilst they underwent chemotherapy treatment or waited with them for their appointments. I felt that I really gained a purpose whilst giving something back.

Why do you volunteer at a hospital?

The driving volunteer work led to me volunteering within healthcare. I always feel that my views are listened to and that I'm treated respectfully. I really feel like I'm making a difference – it's so worthwhile.

Do you volunteer anywhere else?

Yes I do. I work with Healthwatch and also Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT). I do some general admin work for the neuro-rehab team and type clinic appointment letters and do the filing for the Parkinson's Nurse Specialist – that way she can spend her precious time working with the patients.

What advice would you give to anyone considering volunteer work?

I find the work really enjoyable and interesting. You might not be involved every day, you are always asked if it's convenient and if it isn't, that's OK – there's always next time. It fits into your life. I couldn't ever imagine not being a volunteer.

To find out how you can become a volunteer at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells hospitals:



01622 224719



mtw-tr.volunteers@nhs.net

Help us, help you

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

Self Care

NHS: Medical advice 24/7

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

Emotional support

Mental Health Matters confidential helpline
0800 107 0160

Stop Smoking Service

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

GP And Dentist Out Of Hours

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

Pharmacy

Late night and Sunday Pharmacies

Maidstone

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

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

Morrisons Pharmacy, Sutton Road, ME15 9NN
01622 661750

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

Tesco Pharmacy, Lunsford Park, ME20 6RJ
01622 701449

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

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

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

Sevenoaks

LloydsPharmacy, Otford Road, TN14 5EG
01732 457017

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

Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells

Boots, Calverley Road, TW1 2TE
01892 526486

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

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

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

LloydsPharmacy, Linden Park Road, TN2 5QL
01892 517736

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

Minor Injuries Units

Edenbridge Hospital, Mill Hill, TN8 5DA

01732 862137

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

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

Sevenoaks Hospital, Hospital Road, TN13 3PG

01732 470200

Mon - Sun 8am - 8pm

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

Crowborough War Memorial Hospital

Southview Road, TN6 1HB

01892 603602

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

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

Emergency Care Centres And A&E

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

Maidstone Hospital, Hermitage Lane, ME16 9QQ

01622 729000

Tunbridge Wells Hospital, Tonbridge Road, TN2 4QJ

01892 823535

Get The Right Care For Your Symptoms



Grazed knee
Sore throat
Coughs

Self Care



Headaches
Upset stomachs
Aches & pains

Pharmacy



Call 111 for
fast advice
& support

NHS 111



For symptoms that
don't seem to be
going away

GP Surgery



Urgent but not life
threatening
Sprains, Fractures
Minor burns

Urgent/Walk-in
Center

999

Unconsciousness
Severe breathing difficulty
Heavy bleeding

A&E
or 999

IF YOU'RE FEVERISH OR SHIVERING
AND FEELING REALLY UNWELL



JUST ASK “COULD IT BE SEPSIS?”

**IT'S A SIMPLE QUESTION,
BUT IT COULD SAVE LIVES.**

Sepsis is a potentially life-threatening condition, triggered by infection.

It's hard to spot, but it kills 52,000 people a year in the UK.

It can be easy to treat if caught early. The charity urgently needs funding to train the public and the healthcare community on how to spot sepsis more quickly.



THE UK
**SEPSIS
TRUST**

Please support our work by donating now at www.sepsistrust.org