

THE Pulse

Issue Number 40
December 2008

Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Star quality
Our Staff Award
winners celebrate
their success

PHOTO BY KERON TOVELL



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260 years and counting
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Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital

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OTHER TRUST DEPARTMENTS

• **Cotman Centre**, Colney Lane, Norwich

Cellular Pathology, Histopathology and Cytology), Radiology Academy

• **Francis Centre** (Health Records Library)

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• **Norwich Community Hospital**,

Bowthorpe Road, Norwich NR2 3TU,

Tel. 01603 776776:

Breast Screening, Pain Management.,

Microbiology: Tel. 01603 288588

• **Aldwych House**, Bethel Street, Norwich,

NR2 1NR: Occupational Health (ext. 3035):

HR Recruitment (ext. 3578), Outpatient

Appointments, Training, Choice team, Norfolk

Research Ethics Committee, some IT services,

• **The Norwich Central Family Planning**

Clinic, Grove Road, Norwich NR1 3RH.

Tel: 01603 287345

Medal for services to cardiology

ROGER HALL, Professor of Cardiology at the UEA Medical School, has been awarded the prestigious Mackenzie Medal by the British Cardiovascular Society for his outstanding services to cardiology.

Prof. Hall was head of cardiology and cardiovascular surgery at Hammersmith Hospital before moving to Norfolk in 2003 to help set up the new medical school. He was editor in chief of the BMJ's *Heart* journal for six years until 2007 and in 2002 he helped the Royal College of Physicians to make recommendations for improving services nationally for patients



with heart disease.

More recently he has been involved in education and research projects looking at heart problems in pregnancy and diabetes, working closely with the European Society of

Cardiology and the Royal College of Physicians. In 2005 he helped to introduce the first angioplasty procedures at NNUH.

Married to an eminent London barrister, Sally Smith QC, he has three grown-up children and four grandchildren and lives in Blakeney.



Mum's the word for Physiotherapy team

THIS HAS been a bumper year for Physiotherapy at NNUH as no fewer than nine of the team are celebrating the birth of new babies. And eight of the new arrivals are girls.

Nicola Clemence, head of Physiotherapy, commented: "We congratulate all our mums – it's certainly a record for this department and if we could find the chair they were all sitting on we would remove it!"

"Operationally this presented us with quite a challenge as it affected 10 per cent of our staff, from Physiotherapy Assistants to Senior Physiotherapists. Luckily we were able to recruit a number of physiotherapy graduates on fixed term contracts, which was good for them as well as us. I am pleased to say that eight of the mums will be coming back to work by next summer."

Pictured from left are (back row) Christina Devlin with Evie; Caroline Button with Aiden and new baby Niamh, Laura Walsh with Madeleine, Emma Willoughby with Lily, Claire Howlett with Ellie, Helen Duke with Thomas. Front row: Kate Wilson with Max, Francis and new baby Raphael, and Nicky Russell with Isabelle.

THE LATEST feedback from nearly 1,000 patients at NNUH showed they were highly satisfied with the standard of service they received.

Using touchscreen "trackers", the patients answered questions on services across the hospital. In both Medicine for the Elderly out-patients and the Arthur South Day Procedure Unit, 100% of patients said they would recommend the hospital to family and friends. In the Emergency Assessment Unit the figure was 98% and on Wards 96%.

Earlier this year the Healthcare Commission reported that NNUH was the highest-rated multi-specialty hospital in the country for quality of care.

New Dean's hopes for more joint research

PROFESSOR IAN HARVEY has been appointed Dean of the Faculty of Health at the UEA, succeeding Professor Peter Kopelman who has moved on to become Principal of St George's Medical School, London.

As the Chair of Epidemiology and Public Health at the UEA, Prof. Harvey has encouraged research of all types and he is now keen to further strengthen the Health Faculty's academic links with NNUH and the Norwich Research Park. "One of my key aims is to help further develop NNUH as a teaching hospital and to increase the number of clinical academic staff working with the UEA Medical School," he commented. "If anyone has an area of clinical research they would like to pursue, I would be very interested to hear from them."

Prof. Harvey now heads a Faculty which includes the Medical School, School of Nursing and Midwifery and School of Allied Health Professions. He qualified in medicine in 1982, having trained in Cambridge and Cardiff, and went on to complete his specialist training in South Wales before becoming a lecturer in clinical epidemiology at medical schools in Wales and Bristol.

In 1998 he was appointed to the first clinical Chair at UEA and he holds an honorary consultant contract in clinical epidemiology with NNUH. His own PhD was undertaken in the area of skin cancer epidemiology and he has since published more than 150 research papers, having successfully secured grants worth over £16 million.

David Prior, Chairman of the NNUH Trust, said: "I am delighted that Ian has been appointed. We share the same vision of developing the capability to achieve world class clinical research and for creating a much closer relationship between the hospital, the university and the Norwich Research Park."

Ian lives in Norwich and is married with three children.



HISTORY IN THE MAKING

There was standing room only in the Gooch Hall for our Annual General Meeting in September and many visitors followed proceedings on large screens in the East Atrium (above). The record attendance was largely due to our swelling Foundation Trust membership – we now have 10,600 public members plus another 6,500 staff members – and there was a great deal of interest in staff presentations about patient food and our performance during the year.

GOVERNORS' ACTIVITIES

Since the election in March 2009 our Foundation Trust Governors have met twice to consider issues such as patient waiting times, infection control and finance. They have also had an input into our plans for the future, including developing cardiac services, orthopaedic services (such as hip and knee replacements) and cancer services.

Governors have also started to help us with environmental inspections, patient nutrition groups, recruiting new members and judging our staff awards.

NHS CONSTITUTION

In September, the Governors were asked to comment on the NHS constitution and they submitted the view that "top-up" payments for NHS treatment should be allowed, provided there was a clear separation of NHS and private care. The Secretary of State for Health subsequently announced that top-ups for cancer care will be allowed for NHS patients.

BRIAN'S SURGERY SESSIONS

Brian Matthew, Staff Governor for the volunteers and contractors, is holding a series of open sessions where people can meet him and ask questions. The next drop-in sessions are planned for 26 January and 23 March, from 10-12 in Room 6, Education Centre.

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

March 2009 Medicine for Members event on the theme of diabetes (date to be announced)

24 March 2009 Council of Governors meeting: NNUH boardroom

27 June 2009 Open Day at NNUH

CONTACT YOUR GOVERNOR

The Governors are keen to hear members' views so please send your comments or questions to: Membership Office, NNUH, FREEPOST Plus RRJT-ERAK-YEKZ, Colney Lane, Norwich, NR4 7UY (no stamp required) or email Governors@nnuh.nhs.uk



IN THE PINK

Staff at NNUH were tickled pink when they raised nearly £400 for breast cancer research with a 'Wear it Pink' day (left) which included a sale of pink cakes, pink lemonade and a raffle of pink prizes. Organiser Julie Sherwood was delighted by the enthusiastic response from colleagues.

- In November, staff in the Medical Division raised £280 for Children in Need with a cake sale and raffle.

More than 260 years' service and still going strong

WHEN JANE Lebbell and Maureen Harris began training to be radiographers at 16, they never imagined that they would still be doing the job 47 years later. In October, the two friends were among seven of our staff to pick up awards for more than 40 years service to the NHS:

"I don't know why we've both lasted so long," says Maureen. "Maybe it's the radiation! In the early days we used to process the X-ray film ourselves. Now everything is digital. We have developed our roles and taken on tasks that were previously done by doctors. There are never two days the same as every patient is different."

Jane, who works in A&E X-ray, says: "I never thought I would work beyond my forties but I've had fantastic support from my colleagues over the years and there is always something new to learn."

At 63, Jane has won medals at Chelsea for her flower arrangements and loves tennis, swimming and skiing. She believes in living life to the full: "Don't wait until you retire to



do what you want - do it now," she says.

Angela Lowe began her career as a cadet nurse in 1962 at Wayland Hospital and is now a senior sister in genito-urinary medicine: "Technology has had a big impact on nursing but you can never replace basic, hands-on patient care. I hope to go on nursing for as long as I can."

Vivienne Curson was the sewing room supervisor at the old N&N for 30 years before becoming a ward clerk at Cromer Hospital: "We used to make everything from nurses' uniforms to the surgical gowns, hospital curtains and shrouds," she recalled.

Marion Baxter began as a typist at 19 and worked in various secretarial roles before becoming office manager in Medical Illustration. Now 61, she has seen many

Pictured with chairman David Prior are, from left: Angela Lowe, Jane Lebbell, Jean Humphrey, Maureen Harris, Vivienne Curson and Marion Baxter

changes – not least the transition from manual typewriters to computers. With a twin sister and daughter both working at NNUH, she says: "My sister and I started school together and I hope we will finish work together - but not for a few years yet!"

Despite a combined total of 263 years' service, only two of our "over-forties" have chosen to retire: Jean Humphrey was a nursing auxiliary in plastic surgery for 40 years and Edna Bunkle, who did not attend the presentation, was a medical secretary at Cromer Hospital for 43 years.

Diabetes study will change lives

PEOPLE IN Norfolk who may be at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes are being asked to take part a £1 million research study to find out if lifestyle changes can reduce their chances of developing the disease. Funded by the National Institute for Health, the UEA-IFG project will involve Professor Mike Sampson and researchers from NNUH and the UEA.

Initially the aim is to screen 6,000 people in Central, North and South Norfolk to see if they could be at risk. Up to 800 individuals with previously undetected Type 2 diabetes or impaired fasting glucose (pre-diabetes) will then be asked to take part in a lifestyle programme for up to two years.

People who already have diabetes will act as lifestyle trainers and there will be group activities to advise about diet and exercise.

If you would like to take part in this study, please contact the study team on: 01603 597300, or go to www.uea-ifg.nhs.uk

The UEA-IFG Study



City College students join NNUH staff and family members for the launch of Project Search

Project Search is under way

A PIONEERING project to help people with learning disabilities find suitable employment has been launched at NNUH.

Project Search UK is supported by Rempoy, in partnership with the NNUH Foundation Trust, City College Norwich, Serco and Norfolk County Council. It was initiated in Cincinnati, Ohio, where it was found that people with learning disabilities often enjoy jobs that require lots of repetition, and that they have low absence rates.

Eight students from City College with conditions such as autism and Aspergers Syndrome are taking part in the Norwich pilot, which will see them undergo training and development placements in the hospital over the next nine months.

The project is being co-ordinated at NNUH by Stevie Read, who received the Links Award for her work with people with learning difficulties (see page 8).

2008 STAFF AWARDS: THE WINNERS

Our first ever staff awards came to a stirring conclusion at The Forum in Norwich on 17 October when the winners were announced before an enthusiastic audience of colleagues and supporters. More than 270 individuals and teams were nominated in 12 categories and the judges had a difficult, if not impossible, task to pick out the bronze,



silver and gold award winners from a richly deserving shortlist of finalists.

The event was sponsored by Serco and compered by the BBC *Look East* presenter Carol Bundock

(pictured) who paid tribute to the many unsung heroes who dedicate their lives to helping patients.

Trust chairman David Prior commented: "It's a pleasure to be able to recognise those special employees who go above and beyond the call of duty in helping our patients. The response from both staff and patients has been overwhelming and we are hoping to repeat the awards next year."

Patients who had written to the EDP with the most touching tributes were among those who clapped and cheered the winners as they stepped up to receive their awards.



AWARDS NIGHT PHOTOS BY KIERON TOVELL

STAFF AWARDS 2008

PATIENT CHOICE

GOLD Ruth Harcourt, breast reconstruction specialist nurse
SILVER Richard James, oral and maxillofacial surgeon
BRONZE Eddie Morris, consultant in obstetrics and gynaecology
HIGHLY COMMENDED Neurology consultant Paul Worth and his team; Rebecca Anderson, midwife



Patient choice: Specialist nurse Ruth Harcourt (centre) with grateful patients Anna Beckingham (left) and Beverley Birritteri. For more information about their support group

serco
EDP

RUTH HARCOURT was delighted when two of her patients suggested starting a support group for other women undergoing breast reconstruction after a mastectomy. As the breast reconstruction specialist nurse at NNUH, Ruth's role is to offer information and support for breast cancer patients who may be considering having plastic surgery.

Appropriately named Keeping Abreast, the support group now meets regularly at NNUH, attended by up to 50 women. The two founders, Anna Beckingham and Beverley Birritteri, say this would not be possible without Ruth's unstinting help and encouragement.

"Ruth is helping to fill a gap in the NHS because breast reconstruction is a relatively new specialty and she offers information and support at a time when women are feeling most vulnerable," says Anna. "She has become a good friend as well as a professional nurse."

Despite working only part-time, Ruth attends all the Keeping Abreast meetings and has also taken part in fund-raising events. "I think the support group is a brilliant way for women to share experiences and see the effects of breast reconstruction for themselves," she says. "Although it is not my role to raise funds, these women do such a fantastic job that I am pleased to help them in any way I can."

SERCO AWARD

GOLD Dawn Collins, assistant director of nursing
SILVER Sian Watkins, matron
BRONZE Emma Jarvis, hospital arts co-ordinator



Dawn Collins receives her award from Mike Brown, chief executive of Serco Integrated Services

DAWN COLLINS is highly valued by our contractor colleagues for her “honesty and openness, and her advice always comes with a large dose of common sense”.

Dawn worked as a cleaner and a barmaid before training to be a nurse and has since risen through the ranks to become assistant director of nursing at NNUH. She is passionate about patient care and says her people skills have helped her to work in partnership with staff at all levels.

“I am really proud to work with Serco because I think they do an absolutely superb job,” she says. “When you think about it, patients have a basic need to be warm, safe and comfortable, to have a clean bed and good food to eat. All this and more is provided by our Serco colleagues and

we could not run the hospital without them.”

Dawn trained in King’s Lynn and worked in London and Yorkshire before joining the NNUH three years ago. Unusually she still lives in the East Riding of Yorkshire, spending weekdays in Norwich and travelling home to her husband and five cats at weekends.

“I am quite a restless person so I like to have lots of projects on the go at any one time,” she says. “People know I don’t mince my words. I understand the job they have to do and if there is a problem I will talk to them and we will work through the issues together.

“It’s easy to take Serco for granted but they do a fantastic job in looking after the building and grounds as well as all the portering, catering and cleaning at NNUH.”



Eleanor Swales: best volunteer

BEST VOLUNTEER

GOLD Eleanor Swales, cardiology rehabilitation
SILVER Peter Adcock, meet and greet
BRONZE Eileen Aimes, patient services

WHEN IT was suggested that volunteer Eleanor Swales might like to help out in the cardiac “gym” she initially thought it was a joke. “I laughed all the way home,” she recalls. “I had offered my services to the cardiology team after my own heart surgery, but I didn’t picture myself running around a gym! Still, I am game for anything so I decided to give it a try.”

Since then, Eleanor’s cheerful and welcoming approach has helped scores of other heart patients to get the most out of cardiac rehabilitation at the Norwich Community Hospital.

Led by specialist nurses and therapists from NNUH, the rehabilitation programme offers heart attack patients advice about how to change their lifestyle for the better, encouraging them to take up gentle exercise in a safe and supervised environment.

The cardiac team point out that Eleanor has developed her role as a volunteer, responding to the needs of patients and their families to help provide a better service.

“I find the patients and their families can relate to me because I’ve been a heart patient myself and I know something about what they are going through,” says Eleanor.

A 62 year-old grandmother, she has fostered 14 children over the years and worked as a basic skills instructor at Wayland Prison before her retirement.

“It was a shock to find I had a serious heart problem and as time went on I became more and more debilitated. After having a new heart valve fitted at Papworth Hospital three years ago, I gained a new lease of life and that made me want to become a volunteer.”

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

GOLD Jim Clarke, general and vascular surgeon
SILVER Terri Johns, specialist neurology nurse
BRONZE Doreen Kelf, specialist hepatology nurse



Mr Jim Clarke: employee of the year

MR JIM CLARKE declares himself “baffled, flattered, but mostly completely stunned” by winning the Employee of the Year award.

“I can only assume that the people who nominated me are extremely competent and helpful because if they were not I would have been bound to upset them!” he commented.

Joking apart, he admits he works long hours but says: “All consultants have to come to terms with the same pressures.

“People often imagine that being a surgeon is just about operations but that is only one aspect of the job. Much of your time is spent communicating with patients and their families both before and after surgery, not to mention the time given over to diagnosis, outpatient clinics and ward rounds as well as teaching and building good working relationships with your teams.

“I am lucky to have a fantastic team around me and an understanding wife who was prepared to tolerate my working patterns and introduce me to my children from time to time...”

Coming from Birmingham, Jim trained at the Westminster and Middlesex Hospitals in London and joined the staff of the old N&N (and the West Norwich and Cromer Hospitals) as a consultant general surgeon, specialising in vascular surgery, 20 years ago.

“I would find it difficult to identify the high points of my career. I prefer to stay on the fairway, rather than trying to hook balls around the trees (which is a good thing, because I don’t play golf).

“Every day has something to offer. Without wanting to sound condescending, dealing with patients and people has always been a privilege and a pleasure.”

Married to a former theatre sister, he has two daughters and enjoys travelling, reading, running and listening to classical music – “especially when played by my daughter who’s a trained classical pianist”. Jim plays the piano too but insists: “I’m execrable.”



Unsung hero: Jacky Greenwood receives her award from the Lord Mayor, Jeremy Hook

UNSUNG HERO

GOLD Jacky Greenwood, admin officer in Critical Care
SILVER Jane Craske, ward assistant in Cromer’s Dialysis Unit
BRONZE Christine McKenzie, recruitment manager

JACKY GREENWOOD had been a librarian, a radar operator for the RAF and spent 30 years in the employment service – latterly as a jobcentre manager – before taking early retirement 11 years ago. It wasn’t long before she was itching to get back to work, however, and she joined the hospital staff in 2000, initially as a part-time ward clerk in the Emergency Assessment Unit.

Now 62, she works two days a week in the Critical Care Complex and offers her services to the admin bank on other days of the week.

Colleagues pay tribute to her ability to “think outside the box” and to troubleshoot difficult situations.

“I suppose it helps that I’ve been a manager myself but I honestly don’t think it matters what your role is in the team if

you all pull together,” says Jacky, who also does voluntary work with a charity that provides holidays for child victims of the Chernobyl disaster.

“Given the seriousness of what they do in Critical Care, the camaraderie makes coming to work a real pleasure.

“The travelling can be a chore as I live in Reedham, but I tried leaving the hospital once before and I ended up coming back! It’s just very enjoyable to feel that you are doing something worthwhile for other people.”

Jacky says she was “absolutely amazed” to win the Unsung Hero award, adding: “I am grateful to Marie Cummins for the nomination and to all the staff on CCC for their support. I would also like to thank Graham Turner for his help, support and friendship during my time on the Unit.”

LEADERSHIP AWARD

GOLD Tanya Moon, sister on Kilverstone Ward
SILVER Lisa Luckings, admin manager in the Day Procedure Unit
BRONZE Anita Martins, sister in Cromer Hospital's Endoscopy Unit

TANYA MOON had overwhelming support from her colleagues for the leadership award but she herself is keen to play down the achievement.

"I do love my job and it can be very challenging at times but I am surrounded by experienced, intelligent nurses who are equally deserving," she said. "I am lucky to have an extremely loyal ward team and the support of a fantastic group of consultants."

Describing herself as an "old-fashioned nurse", Tanya says her passion is her patients and that she learned her leadership skills from role models such as Ann Hare (now retired) and Paul Creasy.

So what are the qualities that make a good leader? "Well, for a ward sister it's important to show that you can cut it on the shop floor," she says. "You can't expect

high standards from others if you don't uphold them yourself.

"I think you also need to be open to suggestions, to involve the team in any decisions and to respect staff of every grade, level and ability.

"We all have bad days and we need to be prepared to ask for help if we need it – and that applies to leaders as much as the rest of the team. Personally I've had a tremendous amount of support from my colleagues and that's one of the things I love about the job."

With two daughters aged five and seven, Tanya leads an extremely busy life but she is always prepared to answer calls and texts if there are issues at work. She "chills out" by going to the gym. "It's the one place where there are no phones and no possibility of being interrupted!"



Tanya Moon: leadership award

LINKS AWARD

GOLD Stevie Read, practice development nurse
SILVER Wendy Goode and Hilary Winch, nurse managers in Occupational Health
BRONZE Caroline Rijpstra, senior occupational therapist



Stevie Read: links award

STEVIE READ won the Links Award for her work to integrate the needs of people with learning disabilities into the hospital. She has forged links locally, nationally and internationally to raise awareness and improve care for these patients, and she is currently working on a collaborative project to develop supported work placements within the hospital for people with learning disabilities.

"The employment project is exciting because it allows us to fill posts where there is traditionally a high turnover," says Stevie. "With appropriate training and support, people with learning disabilities can become valued members of the hospital workforce. This project is the first of its kind in the country and we hope to become a beacon site for others to follow."

One of Stevie's achievements was to invite

people with learning disabilities and their families to join the hospital steering group and give their views about how their care in hospital could be improved. This work led to the NNUH winning the 2008 East of England award for addressing health inequalities.

"Having trained as a learning disability nurse before I came to the NNUH, this is a subject close to my heart," says Stevie. "It's important that staff are aware of the issues and have resources available to help them give the best service. There is now a link nurse in most wards and we are also appointing a liaison nurse to work between us and the local community.

"I am delighted to have won this award because it raises the profile of the particular needs of people with learning disabilities in all aspects of the hospital."



Winning teams: hand therapy (above) and pacing and ICD (right)



Sharing skills: the hand therapy team

HAND THERAPY involves a range of core skills that are common to both physiotherapy and occupational therapy. Combining these skills to create an integrated service has been an ongoing project at NNUH over the past 18 months and the



Chairman's Team of the Year award is a tribute to their success.

Waiting times have been reduced dramatically as patients are no longer required to make repeat visits to the hospital to see different therapists.

"In the past orthopaedics and plastics services were based on different sites so it made sense to have separate teams for hand therapy, but having moved to the Colney Lane site we started to look at the benefits that could be gained by the teams joining forces to provide a better service for patients," explained unit head physiotherapist Sue Christie.

"There were some training issues to be addressed and there were also concerns among staff about professional integrity and the impact on existing teams," said Jane Purser, head occupational therapist. "The hand therapy clinics are extremely busy and combining the teams has resulted in fewer problems with covering for holidays and sickness absence. Patients benefit from a one-stop service and the teams benefit from sharing and gaining skills."



TEAMS OF THE YEAR

JOINT GOLD Hand therapy team; Pacing and ICD team;
SILVER Cromer Hospital's Endoscopy team

THERE ARE more than 5,000 patients in Norfolk living with pacemakers and another 500 are fitted with implantable defibrillators (known as ICDs, see picture below) to "shock" their hearts back to a normal rhythm. The care of these patients is not confined to office hours and the pacing and ICD team at NNUH is always on call to deal with emergencies.

The seven-strong team is specifically trained in cardiac physiology and they see these heart patients on a regular basis to check on their progress and offer advice and support. They also work closely with specialist arrhythmia nurse Simon Bowles and the rest of the cardiology team.



"We see patients over many years – the youngest is currently 16 and the oldest is 102 – so we do get involved for the long term, potentially for the life of the patient, and we build up good relationships with the patients and their families," says Helen Corr, chief cardiac physiologist.

"Often they need psychological as well as technical support so the work can be very stressful. The team is very cheerful and positive and I think this rubs off on the patients. We are good friends as well as colleagues. In fact we are a bit like an extended family. When you are dealing with life-and-death situations it helps to be part of such a strong, supportive team."



Setting the pace: Cardiology's pacing and ICD team

BEST SUGGESTION

GOLD Anticoagulant nurse specialists
SILVER Guy Fiske, charge nurse in Cromer Hospital's Minor Injuries Unit
BRONZE Women's health Physiotherapy team



Anticoagulant nurses: best suggestion

THE ANTICOAGULANT nurse specialists at NNUH first began by pioneering nurse-led clinics for patients with suspected deep vein thrombosis (DVT) in 1997. They went on to win the Nye Bevan Modernisation Award in 2000 and in recent years they have extended their remit to manage several other specialist services.

Their latest suggestion – to take on the management of patients with atrial fibrillation who are waiting for cardioversion (a procedure to “shock” the heart into normal rhythm to correct their condition) – will dramatically cut waiting times for patients requiring this procedure, thus improving their medical outcome.

“It is very important for this group of

patients to have anticoagulant drugs for a period of four weeks before and after they undergo cardioversion to prevent the risk of thrombosis,” explained specialist nurse Ruth Alderton.

Prescribing anticoagulant drugs can be very complex and historically used to be managed by doctors. The anticoagulation nurse specialists have a lot of expertise now in this field. Their aim is to standardise warfarin dosing and safely monitor and regulate patients’ blood levels to reduce the risk of bleeding or clotting.

“The NNUH is extremely forward

thinking in the area of anticoagulation and allows us to pilot new ideas,” says the team leader, Trish Price. “In particular we have excellent support from Dr Jennie Wimperis, consultant haematologist, who is an advocate of nurse-led clinics. She is a constant motivator and she has encouraged us all the way.”

INNOVATION

GOLD Hilary Winch, nurse manager in occupational health
SILVER Carrie Wingfield, clinical lead nurse in dermatology
BRONZE Women's health physiotherapy team



Hilary Winch: innovation

WHEN PRESENTED with a problem, Hilary Winch will try to find a solution. So when it became clear that community nurses were contacting Occupational Health with back and knee problems from kneeling to apply leg dressings, she resolved to go to the root of the problem rather than just tackle the symptoms.

“It seemed to me that what was needed was a folding stool that could take the weight off the knees,” she explained. “I went to the internet and found a wooden meditation stool that almost fitted the bill – but not quite.

“We needed something that was easy to clean for infection control purposes and could be easily folded away. Working with the manufacturer over a period of two years, we eventually produced a padded metal prototype that was more suitable for our needs.”

Since the stools have been in use, the number of referrals to Occupational Health has reduced and the stool has sparked interest from a number of healthcare organisations, including one in New Zealand.

“It’s very satisfying to see the stool being used and to know that we are saving staff from the misery of back and knee trouble,” says Hilary.

“I’m the sort of person who likes to find solutions to problems so this was just down my street.”



Hilary demonstrates her winning kneeling stool

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

JOINT GOLD Iain Brooksby, medical director;
 Tony Innes, ENT consultant and deputy medical director
SILVER Christine McKenzie, recruitment manager
BRONZE Sheila Wood, principal cardiac physiologist

DR IAIN BROOKSBY has seen the cardiology team go from strength to strength since he became a consultant at the N&N 30 years ago.

“When I arrived there were no CT scanners, angioplasty was in its infancy and the MRI scanner hadn’t even been invented,” he recalled. “Since then there have been huge advances in medical technology, but it’s worth remembering that technology does not have all the answers – there is really no

substitute for talking to patients to reach a reliable diagnosis!”

Affectionately known as “Dr B”, Iain is first and foremost a “people person” and admits he views his impending retirement with some trepidation. “I have certainly been a workaholic in my time so there will be some adjustments to make when I

step down as medical director next year.

“I’m rather old-fashioned as a manager – I tend to lead from the front and hope that others will follow – but I’ve been lucky to have fantastic support from my colleagues and I will miss the daily contact with hundreds of staff and patients that make this job so worthwhile.”

Having trained in Cambridge and London, Dr B worked briefly in Slough, Burton-on-Trent, Kingston and St Thomas’s Hospital before moving to Norwich. At school he dreamed of being a farmer but he has never regretted becoming a doctor because of the mental challenges it presents.

“The highlights of my career are too numerous to mention but I suppose I am most proud of building a strong Cardiology team, the links we have forged with Papworth Hospital and the planning of the new hospital,” he says.

“I am pleased to say that we are a lot more cohesive as an organisation than when I first arrived. We have a great relationship with Serco and there is a lot more transparency about how the place is run.”

Married to Sarah, a counsellor who works with renal patients at NNUH, Dr B keeps donkeys on his nine acres of Norfolk countryside and enjoys shooting, fishing and playing golf in his spare time. “There’s a lot of work to be done on nine acres of land so I expect that will keep me busy in the years to come.”



Lifetime achievement: Dr Iain Brooksby (left) and Mr Tony Innes with Trust chairman David Prior (centre)

IN HIS ROLE as deputy medical director, Mr Tony Innes is known to colleagues throughout the Trust for his courtesy and professionalism. His many supporters point out that he is always generous with his time, whether talking to patients and their families, teaching junior staff or troubleshooting problems while on call.

“I regard myself as extremely lucky to have worked with such a great bunch of people,” says the ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat) consultant, who joined the staff of the old N&N in 1981.

“Over the years I have seen my own department grow enormously and we have created solid links with the James Paget and Queen Elizabeth hospitals to provide better services for our patients.

“It has always been my aim to create a department where people enjoy working and I am delighted to say that this seems to be the case – there is a tremendous team spirit among the staff in ENT.”

Having trained at St Thomas’s and the Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital in London, Tony went on to work at Great Ormond Street Hospital before taking up a consultant post in Norwich. He particularly enjoys the fact that, as an ENT Surgeon, he is able to work with patients of all ages, from the newborn to the elderly.

He has been an examiner for the Royal College of Surgeons, he currently directs Paediatric Life Support courses for the Trust and particularly enjoys teaching.

With retirement looming in February, Tony is looking forward to travelling with his wife, Jill, and to having more time for playing golf, gardening, and spending time with his family, including two young grandchildren.

“It was extremely humbling to receive this award and I’d like to thank my colleagues who were generous enough to nominate me,” he commented.



SPECIAL AWARD

JOINT GOLD Madeleine Skipper, fundraiser for Balloons4Hearts; the Sudan Links team

MADELEINE SKIPPER was a “complete rookie” when she took on the job of raising £1 million for the Balloons4Hearts Appeal.

“I was playing golf with Leisa Freeman (clinical director for cardiology at NNUH) when the idea was first mooted and I thought it sounded like something worth coming out of retirement for,” she recalled. “I had undergone angioplasty at Papworth myself in 1996 so this was a cause close to my heart.

“My only real qualifications for the role were that I had run my own business and I had been a corporate wife for 30 years. My connections with Norwich City Football Club gave me a wonderful opportunity to earwig a lot of people from business and the media and we also had the support of the Lord Mayor and the Chief Constable.

“When the appeal was launched by the

Norfolk Heart Trust, £1 million sounded like an impossible dream but we had a great start with a £200,000 donation from the Geoffrey Watling Trust. After that we just took it one step at a time.”

Madeleine’s master stroke was to set up the Balloons4Hearts website with the help of her son and “the whole thing just snowballed. I called it the ‘people’s appeal’ because 80 per cent of the donations were sums of less than £500.”

Madeleine admits there were times when she wondered if she had taken on too much but hitting the £1 million was “just fantastic”. “All I had to do was to harness the goodwill that was already there – it was like a huge outpouring of thanks to Cardiology.

“We are now £82,000 over our target and this will be used by the Norfolk Heart Trust to keep on improving cardiac care in Norfolk.”



Madeleine Skipper: special award



The Sudan Links team (above) and scenes from the Wad Medani hospitals in Gezira

• **IF YOU** would like to find out more about our links with Sudan or help with fundraising for the project, email terry.nickolls@nnuh.nhs.uk

THE SUDAN LINKS programme started in 2005 with a small group of enthusiasts who wanted to develop twinning arrangements with a developing country. Led by ophthalmic consultant Nick Astbury and nurse Dianne Logan, who had both previously been involved in voluntary service overseas, they enlisted the support of colleagues from the Trust and the UEA, including Trust chairman David Prior and deputy nursing director Carol Edwards, to help forge a long-term partnership with Gezira University Hospital near Khartoum.

As Nick Astbury said at the time: “You may wonder why we are venturing into a potentially dangerous country to offer help that will at best be just a drop in the ocean. In fact, experience shows that professional partnerships with overseas hospitals can help to motivate staff, as well as widen their experience and sharpen their skills.

“Money for the project is provided by grants and donations so there is no question of diverting funds away from patient care. Also, those who take part do so on a voluntary basis, often in their own holidays or when back-up can be safely provided without compromising patient care.”

So far the Sudan Links team has succeeded in setting up teaching programmes in diabetes and ophthalmology to enable many more patients to be seen and treated. The next step is to develop neonatal and maternity care and to create a practice-based nursing curriculum.

“We are actively fundraising so that we can continue to provide the help that these people so desperately need,” said Carol.



Tackling a new challenge

From professional footballer to plastic surgeon, Andrea Figus has taken an unusual route to NNUH

AT 34, Andrea Figus is the youngest consultant plastic surgeon working in the NHS. He is also, just possibly, the only one to have combined his medical training with a professional football career in Italy.

“I could earn far more as a footballer than a junior hospital doctor and I was lucky to be able to do both,” he says. “For years I would attend lectures in the mornings, train in the afternoons, then spend the evenings catching up on my studies – I was very focused.”

The son of a plastic surgeon, Andrea was picked for the top team of Sardinia, Cagliari, as a teenager but eventually he faced a choice, to continue with his football career or follow in his father’s footsteps and become a surgeon.

“Although I loved playing – I was obsessed with football from the age of five – I realised that the chances of playing for the very best teams in Italy were very few. Also, I was enjoying my academic studies and I didn’t want to stop.”

After medical training in Cagliari, Andrea went on to specialise in plastic surgery in Sassari, Italy, gaining further experience during Fellowships in Brazil and Chelmsford and then as a Consultant in Rome and Perugia.

With a special interest in breast reconstruction, hand surgery and microsurgery, he has published more than 35 research papers and hopes to continue his research at NNUH.

“The NNUH already has a formidable reputation for breast reconstruction surgery so I am extremely proud to be part of this team. I hope my experience and enthusiasm will help us to achieve even more on an international level.”

So has Andrea now hung up his football boots for good? “Well, just at this moment there is no time for training. I am fully aware of my responsibility as a consultant and my

patients are my number one priority. I also have a fiancée in Sardinia so we try to see each other every couple of weeks, either here or in Cagliari. But who knows, maybe in the new year there will be time to get fit again. I could never imagine a life without football.”



WELCOME

...to the following consultants who have joined the Trust since 1 October 2008:

Dr Sarah McCracken, consultant in Medicine for the Elderly, **Dr Kamal Al-Naimi** and **Dr Maiya Balanchandra**, both anaesthetists, and **Dr Lindsey Wright**, consultant in Occupational Health.

FAREWELL

...to the following long-serving staff who have left the Trust since 1 October 2008:

Ann Moir, specialist nurse practitioner, and **Helen Paton**, midwife, both with 29 years’ service; **Gloria Hawes**, healthcare assistant on Blakeney Ward, and **Carina Moore**, ward clerk on Hethel Ward and liaison officer for overseas visitors, after 28 years; **David MacDonald**, healthcare assistant on Gateley Ward, and **Christine Peck**, healthcare assistant in Dermatology, after 27 years; **Judith Middleton**, staff nurse in Dermatology, after 24 years; **Dr Linda**

Tasty treats available in our Deli food2go



A RANGE of tasty snacks and pastries is now available in the revamped coffee shop in the Plaza at NNUH. On offer at the renamed Deli food2go is a wide variety of sandwich fillings, breads and cakes, along with speciality coffees, cold drinks and smoothies. All staff are now employed and trained by Serco.

Malpas, clinical assistant in Anaesthetics, after 23 years; **Joyce Simpson**, healthcare scientist in Cytology screening, after 21 years; **Denise Moss**, deputy manager in Sterile Services, and **Christine**

MacKintosh, breast care specialist nurse, after 20 years. We also mourn the loss of **Denise Batchelor**, who has died after 19 years’ service as a medical secretary in General Surgery.

NEW HORIZONS

THE NHS HAS seen many changes in its 60 year history and hospitals are continually evolving to improve patient care. One of the biggest challenges is to ensure that staff are equipped to adapt to these changes and that appropriate training is provided.

“For many people, training and development is part and parcel of their professional education. For others it depends on the opportunities we are able to offer as an employer,” says Bernard Scully, director of human resources for the Trust.

“This is a two-way process because tailored training programmes help us to tackle skill shortages in the workplace while providing opportunities for our staff to gain confidence and climb the career ladder.

“The key to this process is the staff appraisal system, which is designed to

In any large organisation there is huge potential just waiting to be tapped. HR director Bernard Scully explains why training is the key to future success and (right) some of the staff and students who are making the most of opportunities at NNUH

identify the training needs of each individual member of staff.

“Of course, I am aware that there are areas where staff are fully stretched and managers are hard pressed to find the time to carry out appraisals, let alone address each individual’s training needs.

“However, as an organisation we are committed to tackling this issue. We are reviewing staffing levels where necessary and we have redesigned the appraisal form to

enable each individual to have their say about how they would like their own careers to develop. We are creating new training opportunities within the organisation and these are already paying dividends – not just for the individuals concerned but for the Trust as a whole.

“Appraisals and personal development plans are not discretionary as far as we are concerned – they are essential for us to develop a workforce that is fit for the future.”

Training is teamwork

BASED AT Aldwych House, the Training team (pictured right) co-ordinates all non-clinical and mandatory training programmes for staff throughout the Trust.

“People tend to assume that we are only about co-ordinating mandatory training,” says manager Julia Watling. “In fact we are constantly expanding the range of courses on offer and we aim to tailor these programmes to the needs of the organisation.

“In the next 10 years in the East of England, we will need to recruit more than 250,000 staff into the care sector to ensure that services are maintained. It is therefore essential that we invest in our current workforce and that we encourage potential employees to join our organisation. We work closely with Serco and with training providers such as City College Norwich and we aim to maximise the funding available from the Government and other agencies.”

Some of the programmes supported by the Training Department currently include: **NVQ – Level 2 and 3** Funding is available for all staff in Bands one to four to

undertake NVQs in Business and Administration, Health and Social Care, Health and Contact Centres, plus other accredited training courses.

AMSPAR – Certificate in Medical Terminology is now provided in-house to enable admin staff to become familiar with medical terminology.

Foundation Degree in Public Sector Management is a two-year course developed with City College Norwich. Candidates may go on to study for a BA in Professional Studies or a BA in Business Administration.

Certificate in Management Studies, leading on to the **Diploma in Management**, is taught in-house to give staff a better understanding of management and how to be an effective team leader.

Award in Management is designed for staff to develop their team leadership skills.

E-learning packages will allow staff to undertake mandatory training courses online. Interactive packages currently



being trialled at NNUH include the NHS Core Learning Units.

Work experience is now available for pupils aged 14 upwards in admin and clerical roles, and from 16 upwards in some agreed clinical areas, to encourage students to access careers in the NHS.

Work trials give those who have been unemployed for six months or more the opportunity to return to work via a supported route.

• For more information call the Training team on ext. 2204 / 5089 / 2663 or go to the Training department pages on the Trust intranet. For mandatory training enquiries call ext. 5736.

KAREN BERRY admits she was daunted by the thought of “going back to school”, but after a five month-course in medical terminology, she was delighted to pass the AMSPAR programme with flying colours.

A 50-year-old grandmother, she had been a cleaner, a shop assistant and a supermarket manager before applying to join the staff of NNUH.

“I was a manager at Tesco for eight years and it became very stressful – I was pushed over by one customer and another poured a bottle of wine over me.

“Eventually I had to take time off with stress and, because I was so unhappy, my mum persuaded me to apply to the hospital. It was the best thing I could have done. I loved working in the hospital right from day one – it’s great to be in such a supportive environment where people work as a team.”

Starting with the nurse bank, Karen went on to complete NVQ training in admin and business management while working in the Colney Centre as senior receptionist. She now works in Haematology as a medical secretary.

“I find the work really interesting and I am learning new things every day,” she said. “I’ve grown so much in confidence since I came here – this job makes all the hard work and learning worthwhile.”

CAROLYN MENIN had been a medical secretary for 16 years when she began to explore the training opportunities at NNUH. She completed a NVQ Level 3 in Business Administration before embarking on the Foundation degree in public sector management, combining one day a week at City College with her part-time job in Medicine for the Elderly. The two-year course could eventually lead to a BA.

“Julia Watling in the training department was very helpful and encouraging,” says Carolyn. “She organised pre-study days which I found really useful and informative.

“Already the Foundation course has broadened my horizons – you can get quite insular when you are working in one department and this has helped me to see



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS
(from above) work experience students Daniella Scott, Rebecca Whitby and Anna Camara; medical secretary Karen Berry; Michael Smith in Orthopaedic out-patients; and (below) Foundation degree students Carolyn Menin, Deborah Hitchins and Karen Turner with City College tutor Alan Rampling



the opportunities that exist elsewhere in the hospital. Also my children are more independent now so I feel this is ‘my time.’”

REBECCA WHITBY, 19, is one of five BTEC business and admin students from City College who are spending one day a week on work placements at NNUH: “Talking to patients and helping out in Anaesthetics has really boosted my self confidence,” she says.

MICHAEL SMITH was devastated when a back injury forced him to retire from his job as a psychiatric charge nurse at the age of 43. He became severely depressed and all attempts to find employment ended in rejection

At 57, he has now been offered a contract in Orthopaedics out-patients, after successfully completing a Work Trial arranged through Jobcentre Plus.

“I lost all my self-confidence when I lost my job – for 13 years

I hardly left the house,” he recalled. “But then I was offered a two-week course with Norfolk Training Services to practise skills such as writing a good CV. It was a turning point for me as I gained enough confidence to apply for a Work Trial.

“It’s an admin role but I find that working with patients and staff satisfies a fundamental need in me to care for others. My family say I’m a different person, and of course the extra cash helps, too.”

Views of the new hospital

Plans and computer images of the new Cromer Hospital have now been unveiled

THE PLANS are subject to planning permission but, if approved, work on the new hospital could start next summer and be completed by 2011.

Up to £26 million has been allocated for the project – £12 million from the NNUH Foundation Trust and the remaining £14 million from legacies left to Cromer Hospital, most of which is made up by the Bernstein legacy.

The hospital already provides a wide range of acute services on a day-case or out-patient basis. Added to these will be a



Plans of the new hospital with Mill Road on the left and (above and far left) how it will look

number of new services: mammography for breast screening, DEXA scanning for osteoporosis, and out-patient rehabilitation services such as physiotherapy.

The renal dialysis unit will stay where it is but all the remaining buildings will be demolished and rebuilt in stages, with the aim of keeping disruption to a minimum. For patients it will be business as usual throughout the construction process.

As with the current hospital, there will be no in-patient beds. There will, however, be two fully equipped operating theatres, plus an ophthalmology theatre, to cope with the rising demand for day case surgery. In 1996/97 a total of 1,945 day-case operations carried out at Cromer but in 2007/08 this had risen to 5,257, an increase of 170 per cent.

Patients with more complex health problems or who require major surgery will continue to be treated at Norwich, where the university hospital offers all the specialist back-up facilities necessary for in-patient surgery.

The new hospital will have a Minor Injuries Unit but not a full accident and emergency service. Emergency patients will continue to be treated at NNUH, the James Paget Hospital in Gorleston or the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn.

• *For more information go to*

THE PULSE

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