

# THE Pulse



Issue 108  
September 2023

## In this edition:

Focus on volunteering at NNUH

The N&N Hospitals Charity  
abseil is back!

Digital letters project goes live



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



## Food and drink

**Feast@:** West Atrium, Level 1, open daily 7am - 1am

**Feast@ the Deli:** West Atrium, Level 1, open Monday - Friday, 7am-3pm

**Feast@ Café Bar:** Out-patients East, open Monday - Friday, 7.30am - 4.30pm

**Coffee House:** Plaza (West), open Monday - Friday, 7am - 6.30pm; Saturday, 9am - 4.30pm; Sunday, 9am - 3.30pm

**Little Costa:** Out-patients West, open Monday - Friday, 7am - 5.30pm

**The Pod:** Plaza East, open Monday - Friday, 7am - 8pm; Saturday, 9am - 6pm

**Charity Café:** Car park G outside the Emergency Department, 7.30am - 4pm weekdays

**The Mardle Café at Cromer Hospital:** 8am - 4pm Monday to Friday

## Shopping

**WRVS:** East Atrium, open Monday - Friday, 8am - 8pm; weekends, 10am - 6pm

**WH Smith, M&S Food:** Plaza (West), open Monday - Friday, 7am - 7pm; Saturday, 9am - 5pm; Sunday, 9am - 4pm

**The Stock Shop:** West Atrium, Level 2, open Monday - Friday, 9am - 5.30pm; Saturday, 12pm - 4pm

## Services

**Cash machines:** East Atrium, Level 2, WHSmith and the main restaurant

**Lost property:** Call 01603 286803 or ext 2803

**Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):** For confidential help and advice call 01603 289036

**Chapel:** Open to all. For details of services or to contact the Chaplains call 01603 287470 Cromer Hospital, call 01603 646200

**Hospital Radio Norwich:** To request a song or a bedside visit, call 01603 454585 or from your Hospedia bedside unit dial \*800

## Contact us

**The Pulse Editorial team:** call 01603 289821 or ext. 5821, email [Communications@nnuh.nhs.uk](mailto:Communications@nnuh.nhs.uk)

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**Cromer and District Hospital, Mill Road, Cromer, NR27 0BQ**

**Tel:** 01263 513571

**Please note that all opening times are currently subject to change.**



# Letters and social media @NNUH

“ I underwent a colonoscopy procedure at the Quadram Institute and at that time I had no symptoms of anything sinister but had taken the opportunity for the procedure having read an article in a national newspaper.

That examination revealed the presence of a tumour and led me to a series of treatments culminating in surgery carried out by Mr Mishra.

I want to express my gratitude to your hospital and all of those involved in my treatments and brief hospital confinement. Everybody involved in that period from the colorectal nurses, through to my oncology consultation were excellent. The staff on Dilham Ward could not have been kinder.

**PL**

I truly feel like I have won the lottery and got my life back after surgery and I am happy to tell you I am pain free. I am now five inches taller, completely upright and can't believe the success after living my life in pain. I feel this is all down to Dr Swamy and his team. He was the only surgeon willing to do the operation and for this I will always be grateful.

**DS**

My mother was on Intwood Ward for 12 days due to several complications. During this time the staff on Intwood Ward looked after mum so well, but they also took the time to explain what was happening to myself and other family members.

Mum especially had a rapport with the doctor looking after her on the ward, I only know him as Ben. He was brilliant! He also took the time to walk with me whilst visiting the shop to ask if we were all okay.

**AC**



The Healthwatch Team have been @NNUH all week speaking to patients, visitors, staff and volunteers about their experiences.

Thank you to everyone who spoke to us and to the hospital for making us feel so welcome.

## Healthwatch Norfolk

My husband had to visit @NNUH Cromer Minor Injuries today due to a burn on his leg, in and out within 30 mins! Now that's service at its best, thank you and well done.

**RC**

I've had two abdominal surgeries and can't thank everyone @NNUHTeamSurgery and @NNUH enough for the brilliant treatment I received! We are so lucky to have such a dedicated team in our area.

**AW**

I was referred to the breast clinic/ Boudicca clinic and seen so swiftly and with compassion.

The care that I have received at the Arthur South Day Procedure Unit has been exceptional and comforting.

During my investigations and treatment I was shown nothing but compassion, empathy, support and reassurance from start to finish.

**KW**





If you are a regular visitor to our hospitals, you will be familiar with our red waistcoated volunteers who provide vital support to our patients, their families and staff.

From helping patients and visitors to navigate their way around the hospital, supporting patients at mealtimes or assisting hospital discharge as drivers and settle-in service volunteers, there are dozens of volunteering roles at our Trust.

We are extremely grateful to the 450 volunteers who support our in-patient wards, Emergency Department and out-patient clinics who enhance our services.

During Volunteers Week in June, it was an honour to spend time volunteering with our Older People's Medicine (OPM) wards and in our Discharge suite to see first-hand their vital contribution.

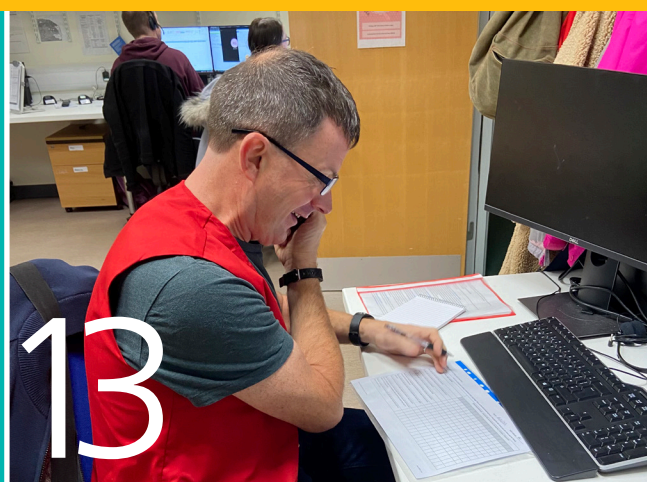
Our Volunteers make such a difference to the hospital, they silently, without seeking recognition, make a huge contribution to our patients, their families and our colleagues. The most common reason people give for volunteering is a desire to help others and many have a desire to give something back to staff or services that have helped them or their loved ones. By giving just a few hours a week, volunteering opens doors to meeting new people, learning new skills as well as keeping active and improving physical health and wellbeing.

You can find out more about volunteering opportunities at our Trust on page 12 and 13 of this edition, including features on volunteering on our Older People's Medicine wards, Butterfly Volunteers and our new welfare call service to help patients who have recently been discharged from hospital.

If you are looking for a pulse-raising way to support our Trust, our annual N&N Hospitals Charity abseil will be returning at the Forum in Norwich on Sunday 17 September and the East Atrium of NNUH on Sunday 10 December.

It was a fantastic experience to take part in last year's abseil as well as supporting and fundraising for our hospital charity, which enhances the care and treatment of patients at NNUH, Cromer and District Hospital and the Jenny Lind Children's Hospital. You can find out more on page 5.

**Tom Spink, NNUH Chair**





## Training simulator purchased for Anaesthetic team

An epidural training simulator has been purchased by the N&N Hospitals Charity to benefit staff and patients in the Anaesthetic Department at NNUH.



*Dr Lalitha Vedham using the Epidural Training Simulator*

The simulator models the lower back in silicone which is cast around plastic anatomy to form an exact copy of the human body.

It can be used for training of a range of procedures, including a spinal block (injections of medicines that block pain from specific nerves which can be used for pain relief) and a spinal catheter which is placed into the epidural space of the spine and left in place for a period of time.

The simulator is not only a useful way to teach anaesthetists, but also allows for more experienced staff to maintain their skills with practice, being able to perform procedures in many different conditions.

Dr Siddharth Adyanthaya, Lead Consultant for Obstetric Anaesthesia, said of the £3,650 grant: **"We are grateful to the N&N Hospitals Charity in helping us procure the Genesis Epidural-Spinal Injection Simulator. It is a valuable teaching and training tool that will help many anaesthetists to practice and hone their skills in a safe environment and, in the process, make the management of our patients safer and efficient."**

To find out more about the N&N Hospitals Charity and our ongoing appeals, please visit the charity's website [www.nnhospitalscharity.org.uk/](http://www.nnhospitalscharity.org.uk/) or email us at [fundraising@nnuh.nhs.uk](mailto:fundraising@nnuh.nhs.uk)

## Fundraising support for our cancer services

The charity team was delighted to meet Owen Richards and Dave Brigden to thank them for supporting our cancer teams over recent years.

They brought three cheques, two of which were raised from fundraising race nights at The Crown in Costessey.

A further £300 was money raised from the funeral of Dave's wife, who sadly died from cancer. She was treated at the Colney Centre and both Dave and Owen are determined that money raised will go to support cancer services at the hospital.



*Oncology Sister Tina Shaughnessey, Dave Brigden, Owen Richards*

Owen and David met Tina from our oncology team and saw where donations have benefited patients at the Weybourne Day Unit. They are planning for fundraising events for the future, also in support of our cancer teams.

## Surgeon meets Prince and Princess of Wales at 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary party

One of our Consultant Surgeons met Their Royal Highnesses The Prince and Princess of Wales to talk about advances in robotic-assisted surgery at an event to mark the 75th anniversary of the NHS.



*Irshid Shaikh, right, at the NHS 75 event*

Hosted by NHS Charities Together – the national charity caring for the NHS, of which Their Royal Highnesses are Patrons – and television presenter Mel Giedroyc, the event was attended by members of the workforce and patients representing a myriad of achievements of the NHS and NHS charities over the last 75 years. It was held in the wellbeing garden of St Thomas' Hospital in London.

The Prince and Princess met with guests ranging from Aneira Thomas, the first baby born on the NHS, to pioneers in research and those on the frontline tackling Covid-19.

Mr Irshad Shaikh, Consultant Colorectal Surgeon, who has been leading robotic-assisted colorectal surgery at our Trust, was also in attendance.

He said: **"It was a great privilege to represent NNUH and the N&N Hospitals Charity who generously funded the two surgical robots we have at our Trust. It was a real surprise as well to see the Prince and Princess of Wales. I am grateful to the N&N Hospitals Charity for funding our advanced technology to perform complex procedures."**



## Charity abseil returns with a double dare



*ITV News Anglia presenter Becky Jago abseiled down the Forum in 2019 for the N&N Hospitals Charity*

**The N&N Hospitals Charity abseil is returning in what is fast becoming an annual tradition for thrill-seekers and daredevils, raising vital funds to support patients and staff at the hospital, Cromer and Jenny Lind Hospitals.**

And for 2023, there's a double dare - take on the iconic 42-foot Forum building in Norwich as well as an abseil down the main hospital.

The first opportunity to test your courage takes place on Sunday 17 September at The Forum when qualified events team leader Dave Talbot, from Adventure Events, will provide training and support on the day.

You'll experience fabulous views of the city while supporting the charity which raises millions of pounds each year to benefit patients and colleagues.

The abseil moves to NNUH on Sunday 10 December when you have the chance to have some festive fun. Why not dress up in a Santa suit, pin on some angel wings or pull on a Christmas jumper to descend the 40ft from the fourth floor of the East Atrium.

Our 2022 charity abseil sold out within weeks so please sign up as soon as possible to guarantee your place on the wall.

In both events, you can take part as a team or as an individual in support of our hospitals during this special year as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the NHS, with a discount for those who sign up for both abseils.

Last year's event saw Prof Nancy Fontaine, Chief Nurse, Tom Spink, Chairman, and Adrian Woodbridge, Head of Chaplaincy, take part, along with teams from infection control, switchboard and members of the public. No experience is necessary, and registration is £25. You'll be asked to raise a minimum sponsorship of £50 for the N&N Hospitals Charity - you can raise money for any one of our main appeals, a department of your choice, or for our general fund which supports projects across the Trust.



Participants of 15 years and over can take part, but for those under 18 full parent consent will be required.

<https://register.enthuse.com/ps/event/ForumAbseilSeptember2023>

Registration for the Christmas abseil will open later in the summer when those taking part in both events will receive a £5 discount. For more information, contact [fundraising@nnuh.nhs.uk](mailto:fundraising@nnuh.nhs.uk)

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## Families continue to save and improve lives through deceased organ donation

**Our Trust was in the top 20 hospitals for organ donation last year, according to new figures published by NHS Blood and Transplant.**

During 2022/23 20 patients went on to save the lives of 51 patients following their death at NNUH. Nationally 1,429 people who donated their organs after death and 958 living donors helped 4,533 people with organ failure, who desperately needed a transplant.

NHS Blood and Transplant and NNUH have released the figures to mark the publication of the annual Organ Donation and Transplantation Activity Report showing that NNUH was one of the top 20 donor hospitals in the UK last year.

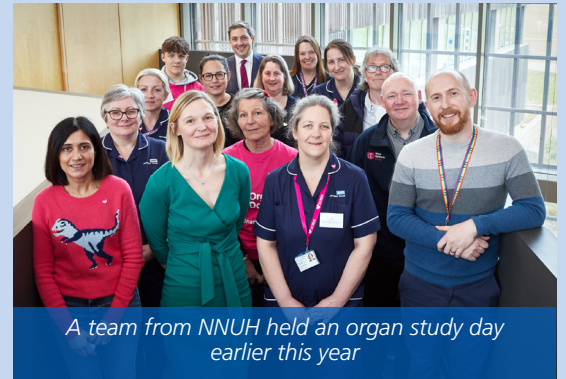
The annual report shows deceased organ donation in the UK increased by 2% last year thanks to the continuing recovery of organ donation and transplant activity following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Despite this, the number of people being listed for a transplant has increased, due to most being suspended during the height of the pandemic and, subsequently, others needing a transplant being added to the list. There are more than 7,000 people on the active waiting list.

Natalie Ashley, Specialist Nurse for Organ Donation at NHS Blood and Transplant, said: **"I have the privilege of meeting some of the most incredible families who have made the selfless decision to support their loved ones to help save and improve the lives of others through the gift of organ donation. What better legacy can there be?"**

**"In September we will celebrate Organ Donation Week and are planning 'The Great Organ Hunt' in Norwich city centre on Saturday 23 September, between 10am and 4pm in Chantry Place. Look out for buses in and around Norwich which will be promoting organ donation. All these events help us to get more people talking about organ donation, so that their loved ones know their wishes when they die."**

**Find out more and register your decision by visiting NHS Organ Donor Register at [www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk) and share your decision with your family.**



A team from NNUH held an organ study day earlier this year



**Yes I donate**  
ORGAN DONATION

## Interim Chief Executive announced

**Nick Hulme, Chief Executive of East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT) has been appointed as the interim Chief Executive at our Trust.**

The appointment is from August until February 2024 while NNUH seeks a permanent CEO. He will remain Chief Executive of ESNEFT during this time.

It comes after Sam Higginson moved to NHS England this summer to work on the national outpatient recovery programme, after nearly four years at the Trust.

Tom Spink, NNUH Chair, said: **"I am delighted to announce that we have appointed Nick Hulme as our interim CEO. Nick is a very experienced leader who has worked in large, complex organisations like ours and we look forward to welcoming him in a few weeks' time."**

Nick said: **"I am very much looking forward to meeting and working with colleagues at NNUH and getting to know more about the wider health and social care system in Norfolk and Waveney, to help improve how we care and treat people."**

**Nick Hulme has worked in the NHS for more than 40 years. He is also a Board member of NHS Providers which represents NHS Trusts throughout the country.**



## Save the date: our Annual General Meeting

**Our Annual General Meeting will be taking place on Wednesday 4 October at the Benjamin Gooch Lecture Theatre on Level 1 of the East Atrium.**

You can meet our teams and Governors outside the lecture theatre from 2pm with talks starting from 4pm. This year, we will have presentations about our Electronic Patient Record (EPR) and thrombectomy service as well as our annual N&N Hospitals Charity Awards.

**If you'd like to attend, email [communications@nnuh.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@nnuh.nhs.uk)**



# £86m investment in three new diagnostic centres to be built at region's hospitals

People across Norfolk and Waveney will be able to have imaging faster and earlier diagnoses thanks to three new diagnostic centres set to be built in the region over the next two years.

A project to create new out-patient imaging buildings at each of the three hospitals in Norfolk and Waveney has been given the green light by the Department of Health and Social Care and will see £85.9 million capital invested, the largest investment in the region for over 20 years.

The new facilities will be based at the James Paget University Hospital, the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital and The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn. Each of the sites will house MRI and CT scanners as well as X-ray and Ultrasound imaging. These are used for diagnosis and monitoring of a very wide range of conditions, including cancer, heart disease, stroke, respiratory diseases, trauma, musculoskeletal diseases, neurology and, most recently, COVID-19. To help deliver the scans, there will be more staff recruited including radiographers, radiologists and support staff.

The Norfolk and Norwich Hospitals Charity is also kindly supporting this project by pledging £1.6m for Imaging equipment.

**This collaborative approach between hospitals and the wider Integrated Care System to deliver these services will:**

- Increase capacity for diagnostic imaging
- Separate GP referrals and out-patient appointments from in-patient and emergency demand, improving waiting times
- Improve health outcomes with earlier diagnoses
- Provide modern, bright facilities and state-of-the-art equipment to improve the experience for patients and staff
- Standardise practices and collaborative working in Imaging services across the three hospitals

Leading the programme for the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System (ICS), NNUH Director of Strategy and Major Projects Simon Hackwell, pictured right, said: **"This is a once in a generation opportunity to invest significantly in modern scanning equipment which is essential to so many of the patients under our care. By delivering a county wide programme of this size it will allow the NHS to transform scanning services across Norfolk and Waveney. The result of which will help us see patients more quickly, meaning faster diagnosis and therefore faster treatment and improved outcomes."**



Chair of NHS Norfolk and Waveney, Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt, said: **"I am delighted to see this investment being used to significantly increase our imaging capacity adjacent to our hospital**



**sites across Norfolk and Waveney.**

**"It's vital we do all we can to see and treat people as efficiently as possible; this will no doubt help us to diagnose people more quickly. We are determined to help people lead longer, healthier and happier lives."**

Regional Clinical Lead for Imaging, and NNUH Chief of Clinical Support Services, Dr Richard Goodwin said:

**"The approval for this investment in imaging to go ahead is very welcome and takes us one step closer to our shared aspiration to transform how imaging and other diagnostic services are provided for the whole of Norfolk and Waveney."**

The NNUH Diagnostic Centre is due to be operational early in 2025 following building work and will include five MRI, four CT, two Ultrasound and two X-ray rooms.

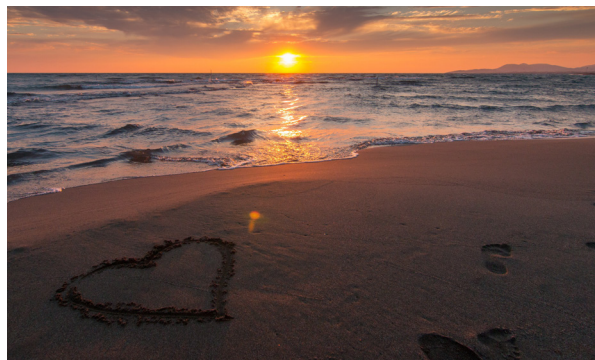
To find out more about the N&N Hospitals Charity or to donate, visit [www.nnhospitalscharity.org.uk](http://www.nnhospitalscharity.org.uk)

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## Supporting patients and families through palliative, end of life and bereavement care

We understand talking about dying is never easy. There are a lot of taboos surrounding death and dying and the concept of dying can prompt different reactions to people depending upon their previous experiences/knowledge.



*Daniela Ayre and Julie Noble,  
Palliative Care team*

Julie Noble, Lead Palliative Care Nurse at NNUH, said: **“Talking about dying with people you love and care about can be even more difficult, because so many powerful emotions can emerge – love, fear, anger, frustration, sadness, isolation, sensitivity, vulnerability – which impact on feelings and reactions. Added to this when a person is dying in hospital both the person dying, their family and carers find themselves in a new unknown environment with a new routine: often making everyone feel a sense of loss of control.”**

Therefore, at this time the NNUH staff and palliative care team want to support both patients and their families. All patients referred to the palliative care team have a holistic assessment to ensure comfort and dignity at this important time. This involves assessing physical,

psychological/emotional, social, and spiritual needs and working with patients and their families to ensure as far as possible their wishes and goals can be identified and met, and that comfort and dignity is prioritised. The team also offer support to the family members.

This is an important time for the patient, family, and clinical team, and as Dame Cecily Saunders, the founder of the hospice movement, quite rightly says “we only have one chance to get it right”. Therefore, it is important to ensure there is timely and sensitive communication with the patient and with their consent the next of kin/carer/ family.

**Based on feedback from family and carers the following things are available for carers/next of kin:**

- Carer beds so family member/s can stay overnight in the same room as their loved one
- Carer packs providing essential items to make a carer’s stay easier such as shower gel, toothbrush/ paste, flannels, deodorant, tissues
- Butterfly Volunteers who offer companionship/respite to the patient/carer
- Open visiting so family can visit when they want and stay as long or as little as they want
- If one family member is staying, refreshments can be offered to them by the bedside
- Written information about what to expect as their loved one reaches the end of life
- Carer’s passport which supports free parking and discounts on meals in the main canteen
- Memory boxes
- The Spiritual Healthcare team also offer bereavement support
- Carer’s information leaflet

It’s also vital to support the staff in delivering care to our patients at the end of their lives. Therefore, as a Trust we have listened to patient, carer and staff feedback and offer education and support both emotionally and practically on the ward to further assist all staff caring for patients who are dying and those important to them.

**For further advice and information on end of life visit [www.nnuh.nhs.uk/news/experience-of-care-week-palliative-end-of-life-and-bereavement-care/](http://www.nnuh.nhs.uk/news/experience-of-care-week-palliative-end-of-life-and-bereavement-care/) or scan this QR code**





## Digital letters project goes live

**A project to make it easier for patients to manage their hospital appointments has been launched, which will see thousands of letters move to a digital platform. Almost 70,000 letters are sent by our Trust every month - the equivalent of eight trees worth of paper – from out-patient clinics.**

NNUH teamed up with digital health company DrDoctor last year so that some patients under the care of the hospital can request a patient-initiated follow-up appointment via the DrDoctor platform.

We are expanding this project by moving all suitable patient letters to the online platform, rather than sending letters in the post.

The DrDoctor platform works with the NHS App, which will enable patients to view their upcoming appointments in one place and to request, change or cancel appointments using the online portal. It will also help patients prepare for a hospital visit with clinic and location information, including Google maps, as well as being able to add appointments to personal phone or email calendars.

Patients who are unable to access the online platform or prefer paper letters, will continue to receive appointment letters through the post.

Chris Cobb, NNUH Chief Operating Officer, said:

**“We are pleased to be working with DrDoctor on this project, which means patients can view their letters quickly and easily in one place. It will help to reduce confusion from lost letters, or if they arrive in the wrong order, and will make the patient experience smoother.**

**“As well as benefits for patients, this service will help to reduce our environmental impact and provide a better value for money by reducing the amount of paper and postage costs.”**

**Patients will receive a text message from the Trust from DrDoctor with a link allowing them to view and download their letters on their mobile phone, tablet, or computer.**



## Young patients and carers invited to transition information evenings

**Two information evenings are being held for young people and their carers to discuss moving from the care of Children's Services to Adult Services at our Trust.**

The first event is taking place on 12 September from 6pm – 8pm in the Benjamin Gooch Lecture Theatre at NNUH. The focus will be on young people with diabetes transitioning from Children's to Adult Services. Diabetes UK will be attending to talk about their youth project and there will also be a talk from a young patient with lived experience. There will also be a chance to meet members of the adult diabetes team and presentations from two youth workers who work in the department.

The second event will be held on the 26 September from 6pm – 8pm and is for young people under all specialities who are transitioning from Children's to Adult Services. Information will be given as well as general adolescent health and wellbeing support including talks on sleep health and mental health. There will also be information about the Norfolk and Norwich Youth Forum, a new group set up to help improve patient experience for young patients. There will also be other professionals outside the Benjamin Gooch Lecture Theatre providing personalised and speciality specific information, as well as tours of the adult out-patients areas.

Kat Kitchener, Lead Transition Nurse, pictured right, said: **“These evenings are an opportunity to make sure we can give age-appropriate information to young people so that they are empowered to manage their long-term health conditions as they become young adults. It's important we fill in any gaps in patients' knowledge and skills so they can manage their conditions safely in the future.”**

She added: **“We're excited to recruit members of our new Norfolk and Norwich Youth Forum so that we can give patients the chance to take part in improvement projects, co-produce patient information and offer peer support. The new forum will give us an opportunity to listen to valuable feedback from young patients.”**



**The events are taking place in the Benjamin Good Lecture Theatre, East Atrium, Level 1. Parking will be free for attendees.**

# Anaesthesia research achieves 1,000 volunteer patients at NNUH

**A research team at our Trust has achieved a significant milestone by enrolling over 1,000 patients in the Perioperative Quality Improvement Programme (PQIP).**

With approximately 10 million operations taking place within the NHS each year, ensuring the utmost safety for patients throughout the entire surgical process is essential.

PQIP is a national study which takes a deep dive look at the care patients receive when admitted to hospital for major surgery. Analysis of the data collected is used to refine and improve care with the aim of reducing complications.

Currently running in over 150 hospitals across the country, PQIP has successfully enrolled 46,000 patients to date. Patients play an important role in the study by giving feedback on their satisfaction with care and on their long-term quality of life.

The NNUH first joined the study in 2017. Dr Caroline Reavley, Consultant Anaesthetist and Research Lead for Anaesthesia, said: **"Our team of nurses, data managers and anaesthetists are up and running again following the Covid-19 pandemic and we**



**have been a big contributor to the study. Data from NNUH is used to help improve care in our own hospital and throughout the UK. This research helps us to keep on refining our care pathways based on big data, driving down complication rates."**

Research themes for next year will include a renewed focus on reducing complications and length of stay after surgery.

Deirdre Fottrell-Gould, Clinical Research Nurse, added: **"I wish to say a heartfelt thank you to the 1,000 plus patients who have trusted us with their data and taken the time to participate in the study especially at a stressful and worrying time when they are coming in for major surgery."**

## Double success for radiography researchers

**Congratulations to Rebekah Girling who won the 'Research Inspiration' award and Sarah Bailey who won the 'Unsung Hero' award at the NIHR CRN East of England Celebration Awards ceremony.**

Rebekah Girling, pictured right, was the winner of the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Clinical Research Network (CRN) East of England Celebration Award 2023 for 'Research Inspiration', which praised her achievement of inspiring others through her excellent research work.

Rebekah is the Imaging Research Lead Radiographer here at our Trust and has worked in research for ten years.

Reflecting on her award, she said: **"I am so thankful for this award and appreciative to have important research activity at the NNUH recognised. To be contributing to the advancement of our healthcare provided by the NHS is such an important aspect of the work we do at the NNUH."**

Sarah Bailey, Advanced Radiographer in Trials and Research, pictured right, was the winner of the NIHR CRN East of England Celebration Award 2023 for 'Unsung Hero', which praised her for going 'above and beyond' within her role to support research within NNUH.

Sarah has worked hard to produce a radiotherapy report on the NIHR Open Data Platform for all radiotherapy studies that are open at radiotherapy centres within the East of England Radiotherapy Network.

She said: **"I am really pleased to have received this award. It really reflects the work by the East of England (EoE) Radiotherapy Network (RTN). I firmly believe that patients should be able to access appropriate clinical trials irrespective of whether they are available at their local radiotherapy department. By working together, the EoE RTN are determined to ensure that all patients in the region have equal access to radiotherapy clinical trials."**





## Trial of foldable incubator at NNUH helps save lives in Ukraine

Research carried out at our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) to trial an innovative foldable incubator is helping to save lives in war-torn Ukraine



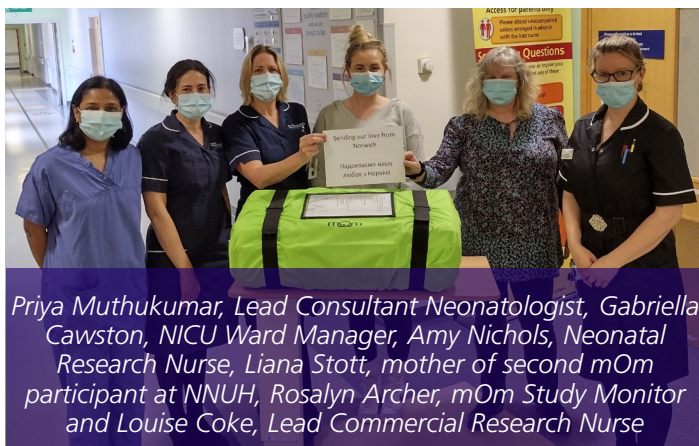
Our Trust was one of three hospitals in the UK to trial a lightweight and battery powered incubator, which has gone on to help more than 1,500 babies in Ukraine. Seventy-five incubators are being used in Ukraine and their Ministry of Health has requested 100 more.

The mOm incubator aims to reduce the number of premature baby deaths globally by giving a flexible solution to neonatal care and making incubators accessible everywhere. The portable, compact, fold-away incubator aims to be an alternative to conventional incubators to keep premature and term babies warm.

The mOm Incubator has been designed, developed and manufactured in Britain and is also being used across the UK to reduce short-term admissions to special care.

Seven babies under the care of our NICU took part in the study and the mOm team visited NNUH last year to demonstrate the equipment to staff and students. Initial findings have found no significant difference in performance and thermal care when the mOm incubator was compared with a standard incubator.

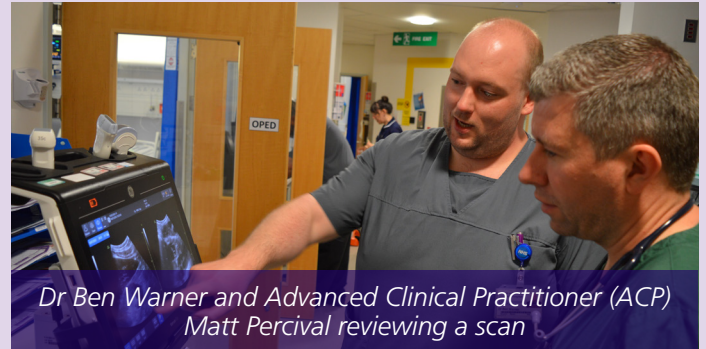
Amy Nichols, Women's and Children's Lead Research Nurse at NNUH, said: **"We are pleased to be involved in this important evaluation to help demonstrate the effectiveness of keeping babies warm in this new incubator. We are extremely grateful to their parents who have agreed to take part in this project. Any project that can help save lives in places where conventional incubators are not universally used or feasible can only be a good thing."**



Priya Muthukumar, Lead Consultant Neonatologist, Gabriella Cawston, NICU Ward Manager, Amy Nichols, Neonatal Research Nurse, Liana Stott, mother of second mOm participant at NNUH, Rosalyn Archer, mOm Study Monitor and Louise Coke, Lead Commercial Research Nurse

## Dedicated Older People's ED reduces waiting times, according to new NNUH research

The formation of the country's first Older People's Emergency Department (OPED) has led to a significant decrease in the time spent in A&E and a small reduction in patients being admitted, according to new research.



Dr Ben Warner and Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP) Matt Percival reviewing a scan

The first OPED in England was opened at NNUH in December 2017 to bring older people's medicine specialists to the front doors of the hospital and provide earlier assessment and treatment for patients over the age of 80.

Research published in the Journal of Emergency Medicine evaluated outcomes of patients who received treatment in the main Emergency Department and a similar group of patients who were seen in OPED. The cohort consisted of two separate sets of patients aged 80 years and older attending NNUH's ED on Saturdays and Sundays between 9am and 5pm over four months in 2019 and 2020.

The team found that patients spent 20% less time in OPED and patients received a frailty assessment on average within 34 minutes of arrival, compared with 75 minutes in ED. As a result of seeing an older people's medicine specialist earlier, there were proportionally fewer admissions from the OPED (46.1%) compared with the main ED (50.3%), although this difference was not statistically significant.

Dr Katharina Mattishent, Consultant in Older People's Medicine at NNUH and Clinical Lecturer at Norwich Medical School, UEA, said: **"We have demonstrated that patients seen in our environmentally modified area of the ED, led by Consultant Geriatricians, were three times more likely to meet the four-hour national target compared with those seen in the main ED. This is an important finding, as increased wait times are associated with increased inpatient length of stay, mortality, hospital admissions, and functional decline in those with cognitive impairment."**

## Supporting our Older People's Medicine wards

**The number of Older People's Medicine (OPM) Volunteers has grown substantially over the last year, from just a handful post pandemic in August 2022 to more than 40, who give their time across five different areas.**

Lead by OPM Volunteer Co-ordinator, Helena Scott, volunteers can be found on OPM wards offering a befriending service and bedside activities.

They also help deliver the 'Move to Improve Project', come to hospital with their Pets As Therapy (PAT) dogs, help to complete 'This Is Me' booklets for patients with dementia, carry out Friends and Family Test surveys and support mealtimes on wards.

They help on the OPM wards, including Elsing, Brundall, Dunston, Earsham and Loddon. They sit with older patients who may not have any relatives or visitors, chat, do a puzzle, or simply hold their hand.

For patients who do have visitors they also can signpost relatives and carers to other services where needed. Helena also receives referrals from the mental health team if they feel a patient may benefit from a visit by one of the OPM volunteers too. Some volunteers also telephone relatives of patients with dementia, to find out their likes and dislikes which goes into their 'This Is Me' booklets. These booklets are crucial in helping ward staff connect with patients and delivery truly personalised care.

When it comes to the type of person who would make a good volunteer, all they need is empathy. **"Being able to relate to people is the main thing," said Helena. "Good communication skills are also important. But really, we just want people who want to give their time and are willing to make a commitment. We can be flexible in terms of how much time a person gives. Some of our volunteers come in early, some do lunchtimes, and some are on wards from 6.30-8.30pm. It can be once a week, once a fortnight or monthly, but the thing that's important is to come in regularly so that the volunteer settles easily and gets to know everyone on the ward."**

The Move to Improve Project has also been running on OPM wards to help prevent patients from deconditioning. Physiotherapists train our volunteers and show them how to help patients carry out gentle exercises such as gripping a ball, which helps them to keep moving, regain strength, and prevent losing muscle and function.

Our PAT dogs which visit us with their volunteer owners also bring joy to patients across the hospital. Dog owners have to register with Pets As Therapy first. Once they have done this and become NNUH volunteers they can visit patients on any ward agreed by Infection Prevention and Control team, and not just OPM wards.

Around 35 volunteers support mealtimes on wards across the hospital as well. They receive special training by Speech and Language Therapists to ensure they know how to help patients who may have difficulties swallowing.

Helena is looking for more volunteers to give their time on our OPM wards. **"I'm constantly amazed people give their time so generously to us, but our volunteers tell us how rewarding it is to spend their time with someone who doesn't have anyone else. As volunteers, we've got all the time in the world. Even if a volunteer only spends time with one person on a shift, they can make that patient's day."**

**If you are interested in joining the OPM team of volunteers, contact Helena in the Volunteers Office on 01603 286064 or email [Helena.scott@nnuh.nhs.uk](mailto:Helena.scott@nnuh.nhs.uk)**



*Volunteer coordinators line dancing as part of 'Move to Improve'*



*PAT dog Ted and his owner Glen with Elsing Ward staff*



## Volunteering to support end of life patients

Across the hospital we have over 30 volunteers who give their time to provide comfort to patients who are in their last days, weeks, or hours of their lives. Our Butterfly Volunteers service was set up in 2019 in partnership with the Anne Robson Trust. The charity helps hospitals set up and run teams of bedside volunteers. Our Butterfly Volunteers are on site every day to provide support and companionship to patients at this difficult time.

Volunteers can spend their time chatting to patients, reading to them, or playing music. They can simply sit with patients who may have no relatives and let them know they're not alone. Butterfly Volunteers also support relatives, from making them a cup of tea, letting them take a break, and signposting them to other services.

**"The main qualities a Butterfly Volunteer needs is simply to be compassionate and caring. They don't need to have a previous clinical background. They just need to be a supportive person, but they do need a bit of resilience"**, said Caroline Stevens, Butterfly Volunteer Co-ordinator.

That resilience is necessary to help deal with the emotional impact the role can have. Some patients may be lucid, but others may be unresponsive or be joined by relatives who are very upset. After every session the volunteers meet with Caroline or a member of the Chaplaincy team to have a debrief so that they can talk about how they are feeling.

Caroline added: **"Of course it can be highly emotional. Spending time with relatives is a joy because they share so much with us about their loved ones. It's a real privilege. We try to make sure the time we're there is a good experience for the patient and family."**



Chris Adlam, Caroline Stevens and Carol Robinson

## Supporting hospital discharge with welfare calls

Over the last year a new service has been provided by our volunteers to check on patients after they've been discharged. Welfare/Safety Netting calls are made to patients who have no recognised support needs. Any issues are immediately escalated so that patients can receive further support at home, with the aim of reducing readmissions.

The service started in April 2022 and since then more than 16,000 calls were made in its first 14 months. Before this, patients had no follow-up call after discharge. Now a team of 13 volunteers contact patients 24 hours after discharge, except for discharges made on a weekend which are followed up on the Monday.

Volunteers are given a list of patients to contact each day and run through ten short questions with the patient to assess how they are managing back at home. This can range from asking the patient if they are eating, drinking and sleeping okay, whether they have enough food in the house and whether patients are feeling lonely.

Anything that concerns a volunteer is fed back to Lorraine Nelhams, Voluntary Services Discharge Co-ordinator, who oversees the team. Volunteers will often signpost patients back to their GP. Lorraine liaises with other agencies including British Red Cross, Age UK and Voluntary Norfolk to arrange further support to discharged patients, if necessary.

She said: **"The aim is to prevent re-admissions. Volunteers can pick up little things in a patients voice, but they're really important things. Sometimes we speak to relatives if they're there. Sometimes we make a note to follow up with another call to the patient in a week, if needed. Patients are overwhelmingly grateful for the call and usually so positive about the care they have received at the hospital, which is lovely to hear."**

We have more than 50 different volunteer roles at NNUH. There are five steps to becoming a volunteer at NNUH and we'd advise people to contact us direct by emailing [volunteers@nnuh.nhs.uk](mailto:volunteers@nnuh.nhs.uk) or call 01603 286060 so that we can have a conversation and find the best volunteering role to suit your skills.



Isabel Farrelly, Volunteer

**For more information, visit [www.nnuh.nhs.uk/getting-involved/volunteer-with-us/become-a-volunteer/](http://www.nnuh.nhs.uk/getting-involved/volunteer-with-us/become-a-volunteer/)**



## Surgical team and Occupational Therapist shortlisted for patient safety awards

**A surgical team at our Trust has been shortlisted in the HSJ Patient Safety Awards which recognises safety, culture and positive experience in patient care.**

Our team who run a radiofrequency ablation clinic for the treatment of varicose veins is in the running to win the Patient Safety in Elective Recovery Award at this year's awards.

The ambulatory clinic has been running in West Out-patients since October 2022 and uses radiofrequency energy to heat the wall of the vein so that it collapses and reduces the pain and swelling associated with varicose veins.

Mr Philip Bennett, Consultant Vascular Surgeon, said varicose veins were previously treated in an operating theatre at NNUH, but moving to an out-patient setting had increased efficiency and patient satisfaction scores.

He said: **"By taking treatment into an out-patient clinic, we can treat 11 patients a day compared to eight when we were in theatres. This service is currently only for patients who are ambulatory who can 'walk in and walk out' for treatment. Patients have reported high satisfaction as they can choose a date and 45-minute time slot to have their treatment and don't have to wait around as they would being treated in theatre.**

**"This clinic would not have been possible without the support of the multi-disciplinary team. It is very rewarding to get thank you cards and letters from patients hearing how this treatment improves their quality of life."**

The HSJ Patient Safety Awards acknowledges the hard-working teams and individuals across the UK who are continually striving to deliver improved patient care.

Holly Bray, Clinical Specialist Occupational Therapist, pictured right, has also been shortlisted in the HSJ's Patient Safety Awards. Holly has made the shortlist for her role in creating provision of OT in Critical Care, in the "Harnessing a Human Factors Approach to Improve Patient Safety" category.

When visiting a patient in Critical Care, Holly could see there was a missed opportunity to maintain patients' functional independence and the benefits that OT input could bring to this patient group. Holly helped to develop a business case and, as a result, a new core OT role was created for the unit.

She has created a "Focus on Function" initiative where she is working to support a culture change, educate staff and help fight deconditioning right from the start of a patient's journey.



## In safe hands: presenter praises NNUH surgical unit

**We welcomed David Whiteley from ITV Anglia into the Norwich Hand Unit to mark the 75th anniversary of the NHS in July.**

David wanted to film in the unit after severing a tendon in his thumb while using a Stanley knife at home and received care at the hospital.

Surgeons repaired his thumb and he has been conscientious in performing his exercises to regain as much movement as possible, under the care of our specialist hand rehabilitation team.

The service evolved during the pandemic as the team adapted to the restrictions on aerosol generating procedures.

**"People were at home doing DIY and the number of injuries was escalating and we couldn't help them under general anaesthetic,"** said Consultant Anaesthetist Morne Wolmarans.

**"We developed a service whereby we could treat them with a nerve blocker so they would feel no pain while we repaired their injury."**

The team has now carried out 4,000 procedures within its outpatient service which operates five days a week and treats elective cases as well as on the day walk-ins and emergencies.

Consultant Plastic Surgeon Sam Norton added: **"This is a ground-breaking unit and shows how the NHS is always evolving, always looking to improve the care we give to our patients."**





# Understanding Inflammatory Bowel Disease

**Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is a term used to describe conditions that cause severe tummy pain and diarrhoea. The main types of IBD are Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.**

It is a complex condition affecting increasing numbers of adults and children worldwide. A study commissioned by Crohn's & Colitis UK shows there are over half a million people (1 in every 123) in the country living with these conditions.

**The main symptoms of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) can include:**

- **diarrhoea that lasts longer than four weeks**
- **tummy pain**
- **blood or mucus (clear slime) in your poo**
- **bleeding from your bottom**
- **feeling tired all the time**
- **losing weight without trying**

It is not clear what causes IBD, which happens when your immune system attacks your bowel, which causes it to get inflamed. If you do have concerning symptoms, it is important to speak to your GP who will refer you to the Gastroenterology department for further investigations.

Research to further our understanding of these conditions is ongoing, but you are more likely to get IBD if one of your close relatives has it, for example, one of your parents, grandparents, or a sibling. Children and adolescents with IBD may present with delayed growth and puberty, until their condition is treated effectively.

People receiving IBD treatment need specialist care and support from clinicians including doctors, gastroenterologists, nurse specialists, dietitians and psychologists to help them manage the impact of their condition.

There is a range of investigations that are helpful in various combinations around the time of IBD diagnosis and subsequently, during follow-up, to monitor the activity of IBD and a patient's response to treatments. These investigations include specific blood tests, stool tests, camera tests from the mouth (upper endoscopy) and from the bottom (colonoscopy) and imaging (including magnetic resonance, ultrasound).

Routine blood tests and stool tests are particularly important to monitor the condition throughout the follow-up and make decisions on treatment changes or adjustments.

Medicines to help ease symptoms, such as steroids, and other medicines that can help keep your symptoms under control and in severe cases surgery may take place to remove part of the bowel.

If you have Crohn's or Colitis, what you eat may affect your symptoms. However, there is no particular diet that works for everyone with IBD.

**What works for one person might not work for another, but there are some tips we can all follow:**

- **It's important to try to eat a healthy, balanced diet that gives you all the nutrients you need to stay well**
- **You do not need to limit how much fibre you eat, unless you have a narrowing (stricture) in your bowel**
- **You might need to take supplements if you are low on nutrients**
- **Always speak to your GP, IBD team or dietitian before making any big changes to your diet**

**For more information and help, visit [www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/](http://www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/)**



# Macmillan Centre receives five star report

Healthwatch Norfolk officers have praised staff at the North Norfolk Macmillan Centre at Cromer Hospital for the excellent service they offer to patients and their families.

Healthwatch visited the centre to gather feedback from patients, families and visitors. **"All the people we spoke with rated their experience as five stars,"** said Sophie Slater, Community Development Officer for Healthwatch Norfolk.

**"They were complimentary of the staff for how they treat both patients and their families or carers. They also told us they liked the convenience of the hospital which meant they did not have to travel as far for treatment."**

This is some of the feedback from patients and their relatives:

**"It's a fantastic local service. The staff are wonderful and very caring. I am very impressed with how comfortable the seats are in the waiting room. I can't say enough positive things about this place."**

**"I've never had any issues coming here. It is a very convenient location. The service always feels nice and personal."**

**"All the staff are wonderful. I joined a breast cancer support group here through Macmillan and it's been a huge help to me and others."**

**"We're so proud of such positive feedback,"** said Anita Martins, Cromer Matron.

**"We do always get feedback from patients and relatives but to see it all highlighted in one report makes it seem even more special and truly reflects the hard work and dedication of the team involved."**

**"It is very important that we hear what people have to say about the centre and what it offers,"** said Wendy Marchant, Macmillan Information Manager.

**"Everyone works very hard to make sure that patients and their families have a good experience at a time when things can be tough for them."**



## New podcast launched

We have launched a new podcast where we invite experts from across our hospitals to discuss topics that affect our health.

'Behind the Hospital Curtain' is available now on Spotify.

You can also find it on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Amazon Music and YouTube – just search for 'Behind the Hospital Curtain'.

In Episode 1 we speak to Head of Spiritual Healthcare, Adrian Woodbridge, and Beth-Anne Mancktelow, Senior Health and Wellbeing Practitioner to discuss what impacts our wellbeing and the simple steps we can all take to look after ourselves.

We discuss spirituality and what that means to different people, and the importance of connecting with others.

There are simple tips we can all take to improve our wellbeing, plus advice on how to talk about your wellbeing if you're finding things difficult.

