



# the foundation times

The Newsletter for our Foundation Trust Members

## Restoring confidence in our hospital



“It is understandable that patients and visitors are concerned at recent reports about Basildon University Hospital”, said Michael Large, Chairman. “Everyone has the right to expect that if they or a loved one need to go to hospital, they will receive the best possible treatment and care in a clean, comfortable and safe environment. It is our responsibility to prove to you that you are safe in our care.

“Our main concern was the mortality ratio for last year (2008-2009) was higher than the national average. But just two days after the mortality figures were released by a data company called Dr Foster, the Trust received a written notice stating that figures collected for the last six months (April to September) show that our rate has been within their expected performance. We will continue with our efforts to drive down the mortality rate further.

“We very much regret that unacceptable cleaning standards were found during a spot-check from the Care Quality Commission (CQC). There is no excuse for this and we have agreed with our cleaning contractor a robust plan that is already being carried out.

“The same visiting team from the CQC carried out a follow-up visit and their report was extremely positive. To make improvements in a very short period is testimony to the pride and dedication our staff show in their work. There is a heightened level of scrutiny in regards to cleaning, as our matrons and senior nursing staff carry out inspections in every clinical area, daily, on a shift by shift basis. Any problems are immediately dealt with.

“We have a Programme Management Office, run with external experts, as they support us in the delivery of our Quality Improvement Plan. The plan has 14 key performance indicators, which we aim to fully achieve by the end of May.

“Since Monitor’s intervention, we have had nine further assessments and spot-checks by organisations including the Royal College of Physicians, and the Nursing and Midwifery Council. Most of the clinical people who have visited the Trust are surprised because what they see on the ground doesn’t add up with what they have read in the press and told by our regulators.

“That is not to say that we are complacent. We know there are issues which need addressing. We are determined to put right our mistakes and restore confidence in our hospital and I believe we will become a better hospital as a result of this.

“Our top priority will always be the safety and wellbeing of our patients. The kind gestures of patients and members of the community, who have praised dedicated staff for their care, make us even more determined to earn the confidence and support of the whole community.”

There is more information about Monitor’s intervention, Dr Foster mortality ratio and the follow-up CQC visit, on our website. Click on [www.basildonandthurrock.nhs.uk](http://www.basildonandthurrock.nhs.uk) > Publications > Press Releases.

### Who’s who?

#### Monitor:

Monitor was established in January 2004 to authorise and regulate NHS foundation trusts. Monitor is independent of central government and directly accountable to Parliament.

#### Care Quality Commission (CQC):

The CQC regulate all health and adult social care services in England, including NHS, local authorities, private companies or voluntary organisations. The CQC carry out the Annual Health Check, for which we scored ‘Excellent’ for use of resources and ‘Good’ for quality of services for 2008/09.

#### Dr Foster Hospital Guide and Quality Accounts:

Dr Foster is a private company, which analyses hospital performance, using statistics and research. Every year they publish a Hospital Guide, which focuses on Hospital Standardised Mortality Rates (HSMR).



**New Children’s A&E Area: See page two for more details.**

L to R: Sarah Barton, Lead Paediatric Nurse, Ashleigh Evans, Ms Aliya Ahmed, A&E Consultant and Emma Evans

## New children's A&E area

Children who need emergency treatment at Basildon University Hospital are now being seen in their own separate area of the A&E department.

The new facility for young people aged 16 and under opened last month to give sick or injured children, and their parents or carers, a better environment for treatment. All nurses in the children's area are trained in paediatrics, and there are toys provided in the waiting area.

Ashleigh Evans was the first patient to be treated in the new children's A&E area. The two-year-old dislocated her elbow and arrived at Basildon University Hospital screaming in pain. Her mother Emma said: "When we arrived at A&E we were called through straight away, and a nurse put Ashleigh's elbow back in place."

"We had never had to bring her to A&E before, but it is a very good thing there is a separate children's area because

Ashleigh has suspected Autism, and doesn't like people she doesn't know. When we first arrived she was hiding her face, but in the children's area, she let the nurse hold her hand and talk to her while she treated her."

The temporary children's area will remain until a £17million refurbishment of the emergency department is completed in two years time. This will include a children's A&E department, with a play area, facilities for baby changing and nursing mothers, and its own plaster room.

Ms Aliya Ahmed, A&E Consultant and Paediatric Lead, said that the new children's area was welcomed by patients and staff. "We have been busy, but in a good way. It has taken pressure from other areas, so that the department runs more smoothly, and is a much better place to treat children."

Better  
patient  
experience

## Patient At Risk Service goes 24/7

The Patient At Risk Service (PARS) treats acutely ill patients on the ward before they become very sick – and the service has just gone 24/7.

Also known as the mobile critical care team, PARS is made up of 10 nurses with many years' experience of critical care. They respond to calls from ward staff who are concerned about the deteriorating health of a patient and provide critical care expertise to any patient within the hospital.

The team provides care for patients before or after they are transferred to

the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) or High Dependency Unit (HDU) and ensures patients are followed up when they return to the ward. The PARS team also supports patients with a tracheotomy, and the staff caring for them.

Joanne Peacock, Advanced Nurse Practitioner for PARS, said: "We are delighted to have the service 24hours allowing us to provide seamless care to the sicker patients in the hospital. It also enables us to support staff around the clock with caring for the critically ill."

Better  
patient  
safety



The PARS Team

## Staff Swine Flu jab

More than 2,000 members of staff have been immunised against swine flu.

Keeping patients safe during the swine flu pandemic is a crucial priority for all of us. Being vaccinated against swine flu is the easiest way NHS staff can reduce their chances of spreading the virus to others.

Frontline healthcare workers will be absolutely critical as swine flu spreads and that is why they are being offered the vaccine as a priority. The swine flu vaccine does not protect you against seasonal flu and vice versa.

**Remember - "If you can't catch it, you can't pass it on".**

## Don't forget

**The next Board of Governors meetings are:**

- Tuesday 19 January, 6pm, in the Education Centre of Basildon University Hospital.
- Thursday 25 March, 2pm, Woodview Campus, Thurrock and Basildon College, Thurrock.
- Wednesday 5 May, 2pm, Education Suite Level D, The Essex Cardiothoracic Centre.

**Important telephone numbers**

- Membership Office 01268 598975
- Fundraising Office 0845 155 3111 ext 4198

# New champion for learning disabilities patients



A nurse specialist with 15 years experience with patients with learning disabilities has taken up a new post at the Trust.

Shoenagh Mackay arrived on Monday 4 January, as Clinical Nurse Specialist for Learning Disabilities. Her role is to offer support to vulnerable patients and also to support and advise the staff who care for them.

Shoenagh says: "I really want to be high profile so people know where to find me. If anyone needs advice or help on anything to do with learning disabilities, I want to help."

"I also want to encourage staff to talk to me if they have any ideas about caring for vulnerable patients so we can put them into practice."

She emphasises that her role is not to care for patients, but to support staff to do the caring. She will be advising on staff training and hopes to hold open day sessions and add learning disabilities awareness to staff induction courses.

"I couldn't wait to start at the Trust," she adds. "I am absolutely passionate about making sure that people with learning disabilities get the best possible care."

## Your Comments

"I wish to compliment the staff on Linford Ward. I was amazed how all staff from many nations got on well together and were all good and an inspiration for this world to be better." **D C, Upminster**

"I am convinced that I owe my recovery to the A&E staff, all nurses, doctors and auxiliary staff in Pasteur Ward and Lister Ward, catering staff (food excellent) for their consistent expertise and professionalism." **J B, Laindon**

"Just like to say a big thank you for the TLC shown to me whilst in your care back in April. Have enclosed a £50 donation which no doubt you can put to good use." **P N, Wickford**

"I write a big thank you to all the people who looked after me so well. I was in the Medical Assessment Ward and they were kindness itself. From the doctors right down to the nursing staff they were professional. You hear so many complaints about the health service but I wish to give my thanks for the treatment I have

received and would say I do not add to those complaints I think the service I received was first class." **L B, Wickford**

"I am prompted to write as I know the headlines will be full of damning reports vis-a-vis Basildon and Thurrock Hospital Trust. I have nothing but praise and the utmost respect for the people who work at the hospital. I spent many, many weeks there - my life hung by a thread on several occasions and each time it was saved by the professionalism, care and love of the doctors and nurses and auxiliary staff. It is easy to jump on the bandwagon and criticise and I am sure everyone who has spent a few hours waiting in A&E will want to moan about it. But, at a time like this, the hospital and above all its doctors and nurses need us, the local community to rally round and back them." **W W, Grays**

We are always happy to hear from our readers. Send your comments to: Ali Jones, Membership Officer, Level G, Basildon University Hospital, Nethermayne, Basildon, Essex, SS16 5NL or email [foundation@btuh.nhs.uk](mailto:foundation@btuh.nhs.uk)

## 01268 number is back

We have reintroduced a 01268 main switchboard number. The existing 0845 number is not a premium rate number, but 0845 numbers are not included in call packages for all telephone providers.

The Trust began using the 0845 number in December 2006, for disaster recovery reasons. The 0845 number means that, if an incident disrupts our service or if our main switchboard is unusable for any reason, we can divert lines in a matter of seconds, keeping vital communication channels open at all times. We were not able to do this before.

## Call main switchboard on 01268 524900

During this time, all of our wards, and several of our departments where patients need to call regularly, for example anticoagulation and appointments, kept their 01268 direct dial numbers. This number is given to patients and relatives as needed. These numbers are not for general use, and are not publicised to anybody who does not need to contact that particular service.

If a member of the public needs to contact the hospital regularly and has not been given the appropriate 01268 number to call, they can ask the department where they are being treated for their direct dial number.

# Not on my ward

From the ward to the board, protecting our patients' rights to privacy, dignity and respect is a top priority for everyone. These rights are confirmed in the new NHS Constitution, and we have a responsibility to uphold them.

To help maintain these standards, we are working to provide appropriate same-sex accommodation for all patients, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Already, nearly one in three of our inpatient beds are in single rooms.

NHS South West Essex is supporting us with this work and provided £200,000 for improvements to the Medical Admissions Unit (MAU) and Surgical Admissions Unit (SAU).

Posters, personalised for different wards to highlight the campaign to promote same-sex accommodation.



Mixed sex accommodation?  
**'Not on my ward'**  
*Your privacy, our responsibility*

## Same-sex accommodation

Same-sex accommodation means:

- Whole wards occupied by men or women only, or
- Single rooms, or

- Mixed wards, but men and women in separate bays or rooms.

In addition, men and women should not have to share washing or toilet facilities, or pass through areas used by the opposite sex to reach their own facilities.

At Basildon University Hospital, nearly a third of our inpatient beds are in single rooms. Other accommodation is in same-sex, four-bed bays, usually within a mixed ward. Each bay has access to washing and toilet facilities, and patients do not have to pass through areas used by the opposite sex to reach them.

## Making improvements

- In MAU and SAU, four side rooms have been converted into shower rooms and toilets, to provide patients with same-sex facilities.
- The design of the £17m refurbishment of A&E and the Fracture Clinic will improve privacy and dignity for patients.
- The Day Surgery Unit is being redeveloped, to provide same-sex washing and toilet facilities.
- All development plans for the hospital will be designed to deliver same-sex accommodation for patients, including more single rooms.

## Exceptional circumstances

Occasionally, providing fast, effective care for a patient may take priority over providing same-sex accommodation. In exceptional circumstances, where high numbers of patients need urgent or highly-specialised care, it may be unavoidable to mix patients.

When this happens, staff will decide where to place patients in the best interests of everyone affected, and must try to move patients into same-sex accommodation within 24 hours.

# NHS Constitution consultation on new patient rights – have your say!

The consultation, which runs until Friday 5 February, is seeking the views of patients, staff and the public on new patient rights. This includes the right to treatment within a maximum of 18-weeks from a GP referral and the right to being seen by a cancer specialist within two weeks from a GP referral. Where this is not possible the NHS would have to take reasonable steps to offer alternative providers.

It is also suggesting a new right for NHS Health Checks for those aged 40 to 74 to assess their risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease should be created.



You can find out more about the consultation, or take part in the Department of Health's online questionnaire, by logging onto the 'Get Involved' pages at [www.swessex.nhs.uk](http://www.swessex.nhs.uk)



# Brightening the corridors



The Art Group has been working hard choosing prints to brighten the main corridors at Basildon University Hospital. The group made up of six members of staff and five Governors recently purchased, framed and hung the artwork in the main corridor on Level C.

David Anderson, Deputy Chairman of the group, said: "Originally Eileen Palmer and colleagues worked in their own time to brighten up the hospital corridors with artwork. Now this committee has been formed, we plan for further works to be hung in other areas next year. We also want to explore working with school and local community art groups."



The Art Group admiring the work

# What happens to your blood sample?



**This year's National Pathology Week in November focussed on heart disease. Let's follow the path of a blood sample, taken from a patient who may suffer from heart disease, from taking the sample to testing, diagnosis and treatment.**

One of the most common tests undertaken is for cholesterol, which is used to estimate the risk of developing heart disease and is a routine part of preventative health care. High blood cholesterol is associated with hardening of the arteries, heart disease and an increased risk of death from heart attacks.

Cholesterol may be measured with other blood fats as part of a lipid profile in order to provide a better estimate of the risk of heart disease; this includes measurement of total cholesterol, LDL-cholesterol or 'bad' cholesterol, HDL-cholesterol or 'good' cholesterol and the triglycerides.

Tony Everitt, Consultant Biochemist, said: "In the modern NHS, preventative medicine is important and pathology plays a vital part in ensuring patients at risk from heart disease are detected and offered appropriate advice and treatment."

To measure cholesterol, a blood test is sent to the pathology laboratory where it is put into a centrifuge, which is a machine that spins the blood to separate the red cells from the serum. The blood sample is then transferred to one of two analysers, known as 'Bert' and 'Ernie', and loaded into a metal rack.

A single blood sample can be used for up to 30 different tests. 'Bert' and 'Ernie' can process approximately 5,000 tests per hour. The results are then sent electronically to a validation station where they are checked before they are reported. The GP examines the results of the cholesterol test against the patient's known risk factors, in order to assess the patient's risk of developing heart disease, and what type of treatment is required.

A patient with a raised cholesterol will have to make changes to their lifestyle, such as giving up smoking or adopting a diet that's low in saturated fats. If diet cannot lower cholesterol enough, drugs such as statins are used. Statins reduce the amount of cholesterol made in each cell and force the body to gather excess cholesterol from the blood stream, thereby reducing the overall blood cholesterol levels.

## Pathology Facts

- Our Pathology Department works 24/7, employing around 17 doctors, 200 scientific staff and 60 support staff, who process more than 2,000 samples a day.
- 40 per cent of samples that are received for testing come from GPs, while the remainder are from hospital inpatients and outpatients, along with urgent samples arriving from A&E.
- Two million test results a year are sent from Basildon University Hospital to GPs across the area.
- Pathology is the study of disease and more than 70 per cent of diagnoses in the NHS involve pathology tests.



Geoff Brindle, Senior Biomedical Scientist with Pathology machine 'Bert'

# A Governor's story



In October, the Trust held a symposium to mark national Infection Control Week. The event was organised by the Trust's Infection, Prevention and Control Team to improve understanding of hospital acquired-infections. The audience heard from experts on the clinical, legal and personal aspects of the subject.



One of the speakers was **Jacqueline Coleman**. "I am a Trust governor who also has extensive experience as a patient at Basildon University Hospital.

"Unfortunately I am well-qualified to speak about the importance of infection control. There is no doubt that without Basildon University Hospital, I would not be alive, but my life has been seriously affected by hospital acquired-infections.

"I used to be a teacher. One day in class in January 2000, just after the new term had begun, I felt quite unwell and thought I must be going down with flu. By the afternoon, my husband was told I had half an hour to live.

"I was taken to A&E where a triage nurse immediately recognised the signs of meningococcal septicaemia – severe blood poisoning caused by the meningitis bacteria.

"I was given a five per cent chance of surviving, and it is thanks to the expertise of staff at the Trust that I beat those odds.

"But during my lengthy stay in hospital, I caught MRSA. This resulted in major complications which required more surgery. The infection caused me a huge amount of pain and anguish and I am still debilitated by it.

"I am thankful to the hospital for saving my life, but I am cross that I picked up this infection. I was not able to return to teaching, and four years ago I decided to become a Trust governor. I wanted to work with the hospital, find out more about how it functions and also discover what was being done to avoid more patients suffering from infections the way that I did.

"I do know that things are much better now. I think it would be far less likely that I would catch MRSA today because of the progress that has been made at the Trust in reducing hospital acquired-infections. There is also much more awareness and discussion of the issue."

There have only been two cases of MRSA in the Trust between April and November 2009, one of which was not acquired in this hospital.

## NHS asks people to choose well this winter

People with minor illnesses and injuries are being asked to 'choose well' if they need treatment, to allow A&E staff to deal with serious and life-threatening cases.

The NHS estimates that at least 75 per cent of people who go to hospital A&E departments could receive the treatment they need from another service, usually within a shorter waiting time.

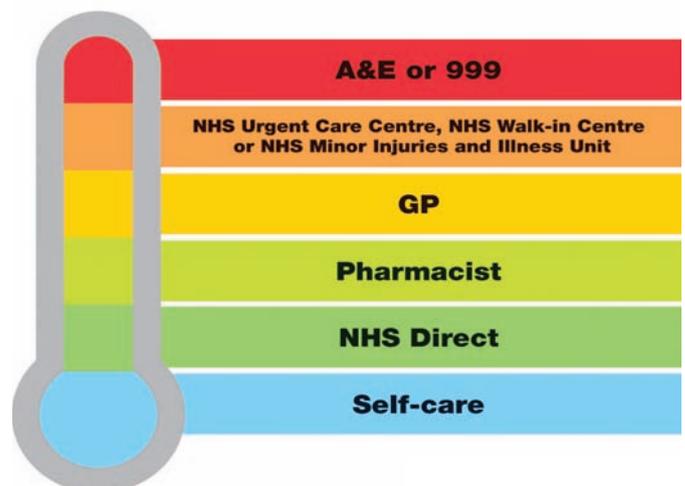
NHS South West Essex's annual guide to local health services will shortly be delivered to all households in the area, and will include the Choose Well information, to help people decide whether they should see a GP or practice nurse, asking a pharmacist for advice, visiting a walk-in centre, or calling NHS Direct.

The guide includes contact details for local and national health services. Go to [www.swessex.nhs.uk](http://www.swessex.nhs.uk) then click on Your services, then get the right treatment.

NHS South West Essex advises patients to choose:

- A well-stocked medicine cabinet for minor ailments. Make sure you have supplies of paracetamol, anti-diarrhoeal medicine, rehydration mixture, indigestion remedy, plasters and a thermometer.
- NHS Direct for confidential round-the-clock advice and information. 0845 46 47 or [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

- Your local pharmacist for coughs, colds and headaches.
- Your GP for earache, vomiting and stomach aches.
- Orsett Minor Injuries Unit for slips, trips, cuts, and strains. No appointment is necessary. Open 10am to 8pm seven days a week. X-ray facilities available Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm. Orsett Hospital, Rowley Road, Orsett, RM16 3EU. Tel: 01268 592304
- 999 or A&E for serious illnesses and major accidents.



# Kirsty's Corner

## Hear the latest from Kirsty O'Callaghan, Fundraising Manager!

- Runners grabbed their trainers and tinsel to support the first ever hospital Santa Run in aid of the 'Scope in Time' appeal, raising £1,500.

The Governor Fundraising Group came up with the idea and Helen Mattock, Staff Governor said "I'm really pleased so many of my fellow Governors came out to support the event and I am looking forward to making the event even bigger and better next year. Everyone had a good time and particular thanks should go to our porters who turn up to all our events to provide music and entertainment."

- More than 40 male and female bunnies put on their floppy ears, and Bridget Jones-style jumbo pants for the first annual Big Knicker Bunny Walk, to raise money for the 'Scope in Time' appeal.

Noele Hammett, Fundraising Co-ordinator, said: "Our bunnies didn't stop for the rain – they were fantastic and helped raise over £2,500 for the appeal."

- Mark White, 38, presented staff on Lister Ward with a cheque for £300

– the proceeds from a campaign called DrumBeatStroke. Mark, who had a major stroke in 2006, plays the drums at local events, and also promotes the FAST campaign, to help people recognise the signs of a stroke. He said: "The doctors were surprised I survived my stroke, so I decided to do what I could to give something back for the care the NHS has given me."

- The generous wives and girlfriends or 'WAGS' from the Nags Head Pub in Ramsden Heath spent a year raising £3,000 for equipment for the Symptom Control Unit.

The organiser of the Nags Wags group, Maureen, said: "We chose Basildon University Hospital as our charity this year because a few of our ladies and my immediate family had received such excellent care and support."

- For those of you who would like to show your support for your hospitals, you can now do so by purchasing a ribbon. Another Governor led initiative, the ribbons will be available throughout the year. You can buy your ribbon from Main Reception, Outpatients and the CTC. Ribbons will also be available on each ward, where all the money raised will go straight to the charitable fund for that ward. Ribbons can also be purchased from Barclays in Basildon Town Centre.

- **Calling all runners!** We have places available in the Bupa 10k which takes place on the last Bank Holiday in May 2010.

Contact the Fundraising Department on 0845 155 3111 ext 4198 or email [charity@btuh.nhs.uk](mailto:charity@btuh.nhs.uk)



Helen Mattock, Staff Governor, Noele Hammett, Fundraising Co-ordinator, Charlotte Woolf and Andrea Holloway, Deputy Service Manager for Gastroenterology

## Becoming a Governor

**Who better to explain what it is like to be a governor, than the governor's themselves? Stan Wynne and David Anderson outline why they nominated themselves for election.**



"Being a publicly elected governor has its rewards, frustrations and a significant degree of commitment. I have spent a working lifetime in healthcare and like to think that I still have a contribution to offer. Governors do have their statutory roll to play and that is well documented.

We endeavour to engage more broadly with the public and aim to increase our visibility and contact over the forthcoming year. As public representatives we have to prove our worth to the members who elected us and also to the Trust. We work together to give our public a hospital to be proud of."

**Stan Wynne, Deputy Chairman Board of Governors**



"On semi-retirement I decided to participate in some form of voluntary work for the local community. In 2005 I was elected as Brentwood Governor for our Trust, a purely voluntary post which enables one to contribute to the running of the two hospitals. I decided to concentrate my efforts on areas where I could help to improve the welfare of the hospital's patients. I have been involved with committees for the Patient Transport contract, the Governors Garden and the Art Group. I feel strongly that pleasant surroundings can help a patient's recovery from hospital treatment. Better surroundings also benefit staff and visitors. Depending on the contribution to the role by each governor, the post can be very varied and one's efforts can be extremely rewarding."

**David Anderson, Public Governor, Brentwood.**

# Notice of Election Election Dates March 2010

## For the Board of Governors of Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Notice is hereby given that the Trust will be holding elections for Members of the Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Board of Governors

### Elections are to be held for

#### Seven Public Governors:

(To qualify for nomination you must be a public member of the Foundation Trust.)

**Three from Basildon - Three from Thurrock - One from Brentwood**

#### Three Staff Governors:

Three Basildon Staff Governors

#### Nomination papers to stand for election can be obtained from:

Ali Jones Membership Officer, Level G, Basildon University Hospital, Nethermayne,  
Basildon, Essex SS16 5NL

Tel: 01268 598975 Email: [foundation@btuh.nhs.uk](mailto:foundation@btuh.nhs.uk)

Nominations must be returned by **12 noon on Friday 12 February 2010**. Any notice of withdrawal must be received by the Returning Officer by **Wednesday 17 February 2010**. Election statements of nominated candidates will be available from **Wednesday 3 March 2010** and ballot papers will be posted to qualifying members on this date. Completed ballot papers must be received by the Returning Officer no later than **12 noon on Wednesday 24 March 2010**.

The results of the election will be announced at the Trust offices at **5pm on Friday 26 March 2010**.

The regulations covering these elections can be obtained from Trust Management, Level J,  
Basildon University Hospital, Nethermayne, Basildon, Essex SS16 5NL

If you are interested in becoming a Governor and would like to find out more, come along to our prospective governors open evening on Thursday 4 February at 6.00pm in the Education Centre, Basildon University Hospital

**For further details please contact Ali Jones, Membership Officer on 01268 598975.**

