A warm welcome to community services staff

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A Christmas message

As we approach the festive season and look forward to the New Year chief executive Alan Foster (right) shares some thoughts of the year which is coming to an end

We started off the year with a meeting of our newly formed council of governors because of the new arrangements we have as an NHS foundation trust. It was exciting to be actually getting on with the business of being an NHS foundation trust after so many months of planning and the rigorous application process. Now after a handful of meetings, sub committees, governor visits and other activities were were seeing our governors make a difference. They are there to represent our members and to help us improve care for patients. They have been involved in looking at patient flow round the new hospital. After a successful first year I am looking forward to working even more closely with the governors and making services for patients the best they can possibly be.

Challenging target
We were set a very challenging target on MRSA and Clostridium Difficile. As I write to you we are below target and this is a reflection of both the hard work and diligence of everyone across the trust and the investment we have made in additional screening and new equipment to support this vital work. I will not rest until we have eliminated all avoidable infection because at the end of every statistic is a patient and their family who may suffer from additional distress.

Birthday celebrations
In July we celebrated the 60th birthday of the NHS. It was wonderful to mark the occasion with thank you events for our volunteers who give freely of their time to enhance the environment for patients, visitors and staff. We were also pleased to see retired members at the thank you events and I know they enjoyed the opportunity to join in the celebrations.

Lean programme
This year we made great strides in our lean programme. Staff who have been involved in the rapid process improvement workshops and the productive ward and theatre have seen real differences which have freed up more time to spend with patients. We are using a range of techniques which put patient safety, good outcomes and patient experience at the top of the agenda. We can’t take our eye off the need to keep financially healthy and meet our targets but I’m sure we all agree that quality is what everyone wants – patients and staff alike. Everything we’re doing in our lean programme supports this and I know we will go from strength to strength.

A new healthcare system for our area
We spent the summer consulting the public about momentum: pathways to healthcare. I have been through a number of consultations and I have never seen such a large and comprehensive response. Following the NHS joint committee – which consisted of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, Hartlepool Primary Care Trust and Stockton on Tees Teaching Primary Care Trust - meeting in October I was delighted with final decisions made. We now have a clear way forward on the location of the new hospital and additional community facilities. We’re the first health community to move in this direction and if we continue to work together in the positive and constructive way we have so far, we will create a healthcare system which will be the envy of the world.

Investing in buildings and services
Improving care for families
Our birthing centre opened at the end of June and well over 200 babies have already been delivered there. Our assisted reproduction unit opened in September and the team is already making a difference with improved results in a fantastic environment.

World class surgery
During the year our surgeons pushed the barriers of surgery by performing world class keyhole surgery on a number of patients. Keyhole – or laparoscopic surgery – is good news for patients because the recovery time and length of stay in hospital is shorter. We look forward to more developments in the coming months. I’d like to thank and congratulate the surgical team on its achievements.

Annual health check
I was delighted to hear we had been rated good for quality of services and excellent for use of resources in the Healthcare Commission’s annual health check. While we’re not complacent and we want to be excellent in everything we do, this significant improvement on last year’s rating shows how hard everyone across the trust is working to make things better for patients.

Welcome to community services staff
On 1 November we welcomed 856 community services staff to the trust. I am delighted to move the purpose of our trust from only providing hospital based services to providing healthcare services. I believe patients want good quality healthcare and they’re less concerned with which organisation provides it. The important thing is that we provide seamless services which continue to improve in the interests of the people we serve.

I know many of you will be working over Christmas and New Year but I hope you can find time to spend with friends and family to celebrate, to reflect on 2008 but also to look forward to what I’m sure will be a wonderful 2009. My very warmest wishes for Christmas and a happy and healthy 2009.

Looking back this has been yet another busy and very productive year. But none of this would have happened without your hard work, commitment and dedication.

We receive reports at each board meeting and, though we always asked for our thanks and appreciation to be passed on to you, I wanted to use this issue of Anthem to thank you publicly for the work you do, caring for patients, relentlessly tackling infection and keeping patients safe, continuing to meet and often exceed challenging targets and developing services.

I was very sorry to report that our chairman Russell Hart had been taken ill and is expected to be away from the trust for some time. On behalf of everyone at the trust I wish him well. I am proud and privileged to be standing in for Russell. Our thoughts are with him and his family and we wish him a speedy recovery.

On behalf of the board of directors I’d like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Paul Garvin
Vice chairman
Christmas services

Patients, visitors and staff are invited to the carol services which will be held in the chapels on
Tuesday 16 December, 1.30pm, University Hospital of Hartlepool
Wednesday 17 December, 1.30pm, University Hospital of North Tees

Have a happy and safe Christmas

A few simple fire precautions will make your festivities a happy and memorable occasion and not a tragic one you would rather forget. The following hints will help but if you need further advice the fire safety practitioner will be pleased to help.

Make sure you use non-flammable decorations, aluminium ones are best. They should be kept away from electric fittings as they conduct electricity.

Ensure your decorations are securely fixed and not placed near or above heating and cooking appliances. Be careful to keep them away from fire alarm call points and detectors.

Remove all packaging material and wrapping paper as soon as presents have been opened. Keep the place tidy generally. Good housekeeping prevents fires.

Remember that polystyrene tiles might make good cut out figures but they burn rapidly giving off poisonous fumes and should never be used for decorations.

You should never use cotton wool for decorations of any kind unless it has been treated. It is highly flammable and will spread fire quickly.

Candles are often associated with Christmas and used for decorating but someone is bound to light one. Don’t use them at all.

Have your fairy lights checked by the estates department before you use them.

Real Christmas trees look nice but their needles dry out and the tree will burn at an alarming speed. Artificial fire resistant trees are safer for indoor use.

Insist your gangways, corridors and most importantly your fire exits are kept clear at all times. You never know when you may need them in an emergency.

Site your trees in a corner to avoid the flex for the lights being trodden on. Never put an electric flex under the carpet or through a doorway.

Television sets will be in use for more than normal but they need air to prevent over heating. Never put decorations too close or on top of them.

Make sure the smoking policy is strictly enforced within your area. As soon as activities have finished for the day, tidy up and check that all electrical appliances have been switched off and where necessary, remove plugs.

See that you visit day areas half an hour after the last person has left and close all the doors.

Have a safe and happy Christmas.
Clinical educators help to improve care for very sick patients

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust is six months into a two year programme to educate all frontline staff about caring for patients whose condition suddenly gets worse. Team leader for the clinical educators John Lewandowski said: “Care of the sickest patients in hospital requires excellent teamwork, good communication and a real understanding of where you as a health care worker fit into the process when a patient’s condition deteriorates.

“The need to improve care for this very vulnerable group of patients was brought to the fore when the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) introduced guideline 50 which deals specifically with care of very sick patients.

“At the same time the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) has also produced a wealth of guidance in and around identification and management of the acutely ill.

“The work of NICE and the NPSA has helped to provide extra support for the existing critical care outreach teams and the use of early warning score, known by some as the track and trigger observations chart.

“As a trust we have responded to all the guidance very quickly.” The trust set up a team of clinical educators headed up by John Lewandowski, a charge nurse from critical care. The team has seven full and part time members who work closely with the critical care outreach team.

“While the critical care outreach team is there to respond to wards when a patient’s condition worsens the clinical educator team is there to ensure all the lessons are learned and staff understand their role in this type of emergency.”

John added: “The outreach team responds to crises or where staff have specific concerns. They’re there to deal with the immediate situation, but that’s a bit like the analogy of giving a man a fish to take away his hunger. We’re there to teach people to fish – in other words learn, understand, be able to recognise signs and act appropriately.

“We can do this by observing people as they work and offering feedback either during or after dealing with the acutely ill or running through some scenarios or set questions to assess people’s understanding. We also have link people on the wards who we train so in turn can train their colleagues.

“The team has worked with eight wards across the trust so far and plans to work with the remainder in the near future.

“Put simply The NICE guidance requires different health care workers to know what they should be doing when a patient suddenly becomes worse. For healthcare assistants it’s recording information such as blood pressure, temperature and fluid balance correctly and flagging up anything which goes outside what they’d expect to see immediately. For nurses it’s knowing who to call and setting out everyone’s responsibilities very clearly. There is a role for everyone, including physiotherapists, occupational therapists and other health workers. Team work is the key to success.

“We’re on track, “added John. “And, I believe, ahead of the health community generally with the approach we have taken. It speaks volumes about the trust’s emphasis on patient safety that this has been given priority and resources and we’re delighted to be getting on with the work to make things even better for patients.”
Better Health, Fairer Health aims to transform the health of people living in the North East from the worst in the country to the best within a generation.

Led by regional director of public health Professor Stephen Singleton, it was launched by North East Minister Nick Brown earlier this year.

Professor Singleton said: “I am extremely grateful to Sir Liam, a great friend of the North East, for helping us out in this way. As a former regional director of public health here himself, he is only too aware of the enormous challenges ahead.

“We have set ourselves what, on the face of it, is an incredibly difficult task. But with dynamic partnerships, innovative thinking, lots of hard work and the spirit and goodwill which we thrive on in the North East, we genuinely believe we can do it. Sir Liam’s job is to harness all this – and if anyone can do it, he can.”

The strategy - highlights ten key themes:
- economy, culture and environment
- mental health, happiness and well-being
- tobacco
- obesity, diet and physical activity
- alcohol
- prevention, fair and early treatment
- early life
- mature and working life
- later life
- a good death

Advisory groups for each of them have already been established and started work. A regional alcohol office designed to reduce the harm caused by excessive drinking has also been set up.

Professor Sir Liam Donaldson, the Chief Medical Officer, is to chair the North East Public Health Board. The board, which met for the first time in October, has been given the responsibility for taking forward the region’s ambitious health strategy.

Camera donation adds more history to exhibition

A women whose husband had a love of old cameras has donated his collection to the medical photography unit in his memory. David Pirnie died earlier this year of a malignant melanoma which had spread to his brain. Because of this North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust now carries out head scans for malignant melanoma spread in all patients.

Consultant physician Jean MacLeod added: “The good news is we have never been better at testing and detecting diabetes in patients. “In many people there is a genetic predisposition to the disease but people can also help prevent it by making sure they eat healthy food and stay fit.”

There are several warning signs for diabetes which include increased hunger and thirst, weight loss, tiredness, low concentration, blurred vision, vomiting and stomach pain.

You can find out more at www.worlddiabetesday.org or www.diabetes.org.uk

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust used this year’s World Diabetes Day to make people aware of a rise in the disease nationally and locally.

The day has been running for the last four years and aims to raise awareness of the disease so it can be detected earlier when it can be more easily treated.

Consultant physician Jean MacLeod, said: “The rate of type 2 diabetes has not only risen across the world but also locally too. We have 250 children in our area with diabetes and a rising proportion of them have Type 2 diabetes which is normally associated with older people.”

Type 2 diabetes is when the body can’t effectively use the insulin it produces and is more commonly found in adults over 45.

Type 1 is more common and occurs when the body’s defence system attacks energy hormone insulin producing cells. It usually occurs in children and young adults.

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Consultant physician Jean MacLeod

December 08/January 09
Awareness week shows there’s more to pathology than Silent Witness

Pathology staff at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust took part in a special awareness week designed to show people what really goes on in the department and encourage young people to take up healthcare sciences as a career.

Workforce co-ordinator Paula Shirley from the department said: “When the people at the Royal College of Pathologists said they were organising National Pathology Week at the beginning of November we decided early on we wanted to take an active part in it.

“Most people take their view about what happens in pathology from programmes like Quincy and Silent Witness. While some of that is true there’s a great deal more to pathology than that.”

During the week the department held guided tours for governors and other invited guests. They also had stands in the main malls of the University Hospital of North Tees and the University Hospital of Hartlepool giving information about the work of the department.

Local school children were invited to enter a competition to either colour in or - for older children - design a poster to describe the work of the pathology department. Each winner received £150 for their school. Paula said: “I was very impressed with the level of knowledge and interest from the students. The children from Preston Primary School had some very pertinent questions and kept us all on our toes.”

Clinical director for pathology John Frater said: “We wanted...
to illustrate the work of the department by giving people examples of patients going through the health service and the kind of tests they have at various stages of their care.

“When we give a sample of blood or urine at the doctors’ or when we come into hospital we don’t give much thought to what happens to it, but the idea is to show people what happens and the kinds of things we can test for.

“Pathology is a vital piece in the jigsaw to help doctors diagnose disease, and it’s a fascinating area to work in. However it’s one of the less visible services in healthcare so we were keen to use the week to stimulate interest and get young people thinking about pathology as a career.

I’d like to put my thanks on record to everyone in the department but particularly to Paula Shirley and Helen Verrill who pulled out all the stops to make this an excellent event.”

Consultant clinical scientist
Helen Verrill
We all have different ways of celebrating our wedding anniversaries. But human resources manager Alison Wilson could have never imagined on her wedding day nine years ago that she’d be spending her wedding anniversary with husband Neil on the C2C (sea to sea) from Whitehaven to Sunderland.

Alison said: “I used to be a complete couch potato and would never have even thought about doing something like this. We had two wet days but no wind thankfully – cyclists and windy weather don’t go together!

“For the remaining two days the sun shone down on us and we were both pleased, proud and tired when we reached Sunderland after 135 miles and four days cycling.”

Alison’s love of two wheeled travel began five years ago when she and husband Neil bought new bikes. They cycled bits of the National Cycle Network in the local area and liked the idea of a longer trip.

She recommends the route. It’s well signposted, lots of B&Bs and eating places along the way where they don’t mind if you’re covered in mud, the choice of whether you do fewer or more miles in a day and of course full English breakfasts. “We needed the energy,” said Alison. “That and chocolate kept us going!”

You can find out more about C2C at www.c2c-guide.co.uk

Couch potato Alison turns into cycling enthusiast

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust is one of the first trusts in the country to complete its display energy certificates. New European legislation requires all public buildings over 1000m² to be assessed for their energy efficiency and given an energy grading A to G similar to electrical goods.

Hospital engineer Stuart Watkin has undergone training to become an accredited energy assessor and be able to produce the certificates for the trust and primary care trusts. These are now on display at the main entrances to the qualifying buildings.

Stuart said: “It has been a challenge to collect all the data required for the certificates, but the results show that the trust is quite energy efficient considering the age and varied use of the hospital buildings.

“However, there are still significant improvements that can be made, hence the reminder to all staff about the need to use energy wisely.

Switch off and save it

“With soaring energy prices we’re all thinking twice at home before putting the heating on. Obviously we need to keep warm and safe but there are plenty of things we can do to keep costs down."

We can all do our bit by

• switching off lights, monitors, printers etc that are not being used.
• not using unauthorised heaters or fans. Remember approved temperatures for wards is 23°C and offices is 19°C.

He continued: “You might not think your own individual action makes a difference to a multi million pound energy bill but it does. Every little helps and if we all do something in our work areas it will have a dramatic effect on the energy bills.

“Twenty per cent of our electricity bill is for lighting and 40 per cent for air conditioning. If we can make an impact in those two areas it will bring down our bill significantly.

“We’ve done well as an organisation with window replacements which have made a huge difference on wards to less obvious things like replacing old and worn out heating plant. We’ve also installed a great deal of energy efficient lighting. We’re playing our part and we need everyone working in the trust to do the same.”

Director of operations Kevin Oxley added: “Money wasted on energy is money that could have gone into direct patient care. We owe it to ourselves and our patients to be responsible custodians and cut out all energy waste.”
Key fobs help in infection control

Staff on wards 32 and 33 at the University Hospital of North Tees are sporting the latest in infection free fob watch holders. Available in a wide range of colours the watch holders can be wiped clean once the round watch in the centre is popped out.

Healthcare assistants Noreen Wood and Tracey Ward were photographed with their watches, which they said they much preferred from the older type.

Sister Gillian Garner said: “All the staff are wearing them because they’re easy to keep clean. It’s nice that they come in different colours too then staff can change them when they feel like wearing a different colour.”

Healthcare assistants Noreen Ward and Tracey Ward with their fobs

EAU location for anti-biotic ad

When primary care trusts in the North East were looking for a backdrop for their anti-biotic ad they needed to look no further than the celebrated emergency assessment unit at the University Hospital of North Tees.

Head of communications for the Tees primary care trusts Mary Bewley said: “We were delighted to be offered a corridor in the unit as a location.

“Obviously we had to be mindful of infection control and make sure we didn’t get in the way of patients, visitors and staff.

However the film crew under the guidance of ward manager Gail Johnson got the filming done in a short time. The finished product is excellent. “We’re very grateful to the trust and to Gail and her team in particular for accommodating us on the day.”

The advert, which shows a doctor talking about not using anti-biotics for colds and other viruses, is now being shown.

EAU highly commended in national awards

The emergency assessment unit (EAU) at the University Hospital of North Tees has been highly commended in the best healthcare construction product section of the Building Better Health 08 awards.

The scheme was a partnership between the North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, Interserve and Yorkon. Construction company Yorkon built the bulk of the 42 bedded unit off site to cut down on construction time on site.

Design and development manager Steve Taylor travelled to the ceremony with EAU ward manager Gail Johnson.

Steve said: “It would have been great to win but we were pleased to be highly commended when we saw how stiff the competition was. “It says something for the standard of the building that it was highly commended.”

General manager for medicine Sue Piggott said: “We’re absolutely delighted with the unit. It’s well designed, calm and spacious, and an ideal environment for patient care. “Its success is because of the level of input we had from doctors and nurses who worked brilliantly with the estates staff and construction engineers to produce a first class product.”
Life line appeal aims to raise funds for specialist ventilator

The family of a woman who was cared for at the University Hospital of Hartlepool is working with the Hartlepool Mail to raise funds for some specialist equipment. The Lifeline Appeal came about after the death of Dorothy Hargreaves in the critical care unit earlier this year. Her family wanted to find a way to say thank you and highlight the work of staff in the unit.

After talking to staff in the unit to see what they needed they decided to raise £15,000 for an additional special ventilator which will benefit patients with very serious chest and breathing difficulties. They also want to raise money to buy home comforts for the relatives’ room such as toiletries, coffee and tea and tissues.

Daughters Pam, Louise and Dorothy’s husband Allan made an emotional return to the unit with the Hartlepool Mail’s health reporter Chris Cordner to launch the appeal. They met staff nurse Emma McCann, ward matron Lynne Williams, patient services manager Fiona Bage who was working on the unit when Mrs Hargreaves was a patient and consultant anaesthetist Peter Royle.

Peter Royle said: “Our legacy of heavy industry had resulted in a population affected by serious breathing problems. This area has a high proportion of people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease which is a lung disease you get when you are exposed to smoking or dust.

“This ventilator is non invasive; in other words we can help the patient breathe without having to put a tube down their throat, which can be a frightening experience. “We’re very grateful to Pam, Louise and Allan and to the Hartlepool Mail for this appeal. We have one of these ventilators already but we often need a second which can mean difficult decisions have to be made in the unit. “It must have been very difficult for them to come back to the unit but I hope they’re gaining some comfort from the support they are getting for their campaign.”

So far more than £4,000 has been raised through raffles, sponsored runs and even a sponsored netball match.

Extra push on tidying up as trust holds a de-clutter day

We all know when the newspapers have piled up and that old TV is still standing in the garage that we really need to make that trip to the recycling centre. But at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust operations and infection control staff gave wards a helping hand to get rid of their clutter.

Head of operations Sue Shannon said: “When you’re working in a busy ward it’s not always possible to keep up with the job of keeping it tidy and free from clutter. For example a new piece of equipment comes but to save time we put the old equipment in the corridor or an unused room. The plan was to remove as much unnecessary clutter from the wards and to dispose of it there and then.”

A team of staff descended on the wards, collecting old, damaged and unused equipment. Sue added: “We also did simple things like putting up brackets to put matslides on.”

It was a job well done, said Sue. “As well as improving the look of the ward it helped clear the floors and reduce the risk of patients, visitors or staff tripping over equipment. It’s also easier to keep the wards clean if there is less equipment around.”
Food for thought as trust improves dining facilities

Staff, patients and visitors using the dining rooms at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust’s two main hospitals will have noticed a difference recently. A new salad bar, fresh fruit and a wide range of locally sourced bread and delicious sandwich filling are now on the menu. The trust has brought in catering expert Billy Cunningham to advise and support the catering team. Winner of Public Sector Catering’s Healthcare Award 2007 and Hospital Caterer of the Year in 2008 Billy also works in Hull and previously in his home town of Ayrshire where he led on improving catering in hospital.

Making the most of staff’s precious break time are the watchwords for Billy Cunningham, head of catering Colin Chapman and the whole catering team at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.

Billy told Anthem that he’d been brought in to build on the good work of existing catering staff because the trust is very keen to learn from other organisations to improve the facilities that staff can expect when they are having a break from their busy work schedules. He explained: "We want to place a greater emphasis on healthier eating, including promotion of the five-a-day fruit and vegetable initiative."

"With this in mind, we now have very prominent displays of fresh fruit and have also introduced a new self-serve salad bar whereby customers can fill their own salad pots by selecting from a wide range of freshly prepared salad items most of which have no added dressing. People can then add salad dressing if they want to and we’ve provided a variety of flavoured salad oils, dressings and yoghurt.

"For those who’d prefer a sandwich we have a wide selection of locally sourced breads with a mouth watering range of hot and cold fillings. We now offer a colossal range of pre-packed sandwiches, baguettes, wraps, snacks, yoghurts and fruit smoothies in new multi-deck dairy cabinets.” And it’s not just the food that’s improved. There are more catering staff at busy times so people don’t get held up in queues and more information about the food is also on offer.

Billy added: “This is all about creating a relaxed environment, with good food at a reasonable price. We’ve seen a recent increase in price but this is because, like everyone at home, we’re being hit by higher costs for the food and ingredients we purchase. “The important thing is we maintain a high quality not for profit service without taking any money away from direct patient care.” And there are more improvements on the way – a new and improved menu featuring a combination of traditional favourites as well as popular contemporary dishes. The catering team wants your views about the service. If you have any comments or ideas for further improvements please contact head of catering Colin Chapman at colin.chapman@nth.nhs.uk or phone him on 01642 624771."
Steve Cram, the former Olympic medallist and world record holder, continued his links with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust by officially opening its new MRI scanner.

Steve recently worked with a group of staff and led the training which allowed them to successfully complete this year's Great North Run. He was at the trust again, this time at the University Hospital of Hartlepool officially open the new state of the art MRI scanner, operated for North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust by Alliance Medical.

Steve said: "It's not that many years ago when scanners were rare. Now you hear all the time, the footballer is having a scan. It's this type of technology which is now readily available to so many more people, and it's great that the latest technology is in our area."

When asked by BBC Tees if scanners had helped him during his running career he said recent scans had shown up the injuries he sustained years ago so if they had been more widespread he may have had a longer running career.

Clinical director of radiology at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust Matthew Trewhella said: "It was a pleasure to meet Steve and a great privilege to have him officially open the scanner for us. We are delighted to continue our excellent relationship with Alliance Medical. They run our scanners at Hartlepool and at its sister hospital in Stockton. The new scanner is faster and can carry out more scans each day. It's also much quieter so patients prefer it. The picture is also sharper and it's much easier to see abnormalities."

"It is excellent for use in patients with suspected cancer, especially breast cancer, where it can not only identify abnormalities but help to sample them to get a diagnosis."

Deputy operations director at Alliance Medical Andy Spellman added: "Alliance Medical is delighted to upgrade the MRI machine at the University Hospital of Hartlepool. The new 1.5 Tesla machine has the latest technology, and provides very high quality images to enable a swift and accurate diagnosis of a range of conditions such as cancer, neurological and orthopaedic conditions. We are particularly proud of its special features for the detection of breast cancer."

"This development follows a number we have introduced with the trust. Working together in this way means we can ensure a very high quality service for patients using the latest technology available. "We see ourselves very much as part of the team which is why our relationship continues to be so successful."
**Local PCT investment helps reduce waiting times**

Major investment from North Tees, Hartlepool and County Durham PCTs in graduate physiotherapy posts at the trust has meant that we have been able to employ more physiotherapists and significantly reduce our waiting times.

The investment of around £1m in musculoskeletal physiotherapy services has enabled the recruitment of 29 new physiotherapists across the trust and has seen the waiting times fall from 12 weeks to between two and four, helping the trust meet new performance targets.

Therapy and wheelchair services operational lead Steve Pett said: "What we are particularly proud of as a department is that we now operate in an open market and our local PCTs have chosen to invest in this trust. They could have given this business to another local NHS trust or to the private sector, but they chose us.

"This is a sign of the excellent relationship we have with our commissioners."

The investment came about primarily because of the work led by Nic McDonough on behalf of the PCTs and head of therapies and wheelchair services Julie Parkes and musculoskeletal physiotherapist Atle Karstad on behalf of the trust.

Steve said: “Many of the new recruit have only joined us recently and have been completing pre employment checks, so we can expect the waiting times to fall even further once they are all working to full capacity."
In December 2007 an innocuous looking email went out asking for volunteers to take part in the Great North Run. This was to start a chain of events which changed the lives of 20 members of trust staff for the better.

Consultant in accident and emergency Dougal Southward had the original idea which was sparked by a talk by Olympic gold medal winner Steve Cram at the Teesside Symposium for sports related injuries.

Dougal said: “Steve had taken a team of 13 novice runners and trained them to compete in the London Marathon. I thought at the time that it would be fantastic to try the same thing with trust staff, but I was a little doubtful as to whether we would be able to carry it through.”

Spark
He mentioned this to the then acting deputy director for clinical governance Yvonne Evans, who never one to be daunted, threw down the gauntlet and bet him that he could. The spark was ignited! Dougal said: “ We wanted to get a group of staff with a range of ages, from varying staff groups and with different levels of fitness and I think we achieved that.”

Steve Cram and his partner Alison Curbishley volunteered to supervise the training and pass on their experience in return for the group running on behalf of Steve’s charity, Comrades of Children Overseas (COCO).

Together with senior physiotherapist Mike Geritz, Dougal worked out an exercise programme which would gradually build the fitness levels of the runners up to the level where they could expect to complete the half marathon.

Mike said: “We wanted to keep the training interesting and as varied as possible but at the same time build up the runners fitness and stamina, so as well as running, we also did things like netball, boxercise and baseball.

Competitive spirit
“At one session by the time they had finished running up and down the sand dunes most of the runners were finished too. However, as soon as we got a bat and ball out and suggested a game of rounders, the old competitive spirit came out and they were soon all running around again without even realising it.”

All of this paid off as their times for covering a mile on the track began to fall, however some of them were a little disappointed they were not losing as much weight as they expected.

Dougal explained: “We didn’t really expect them to lose much weight as even though they were exercising regularly they were also using muscles that they didn’t normally use. Most of them, however, did see a marked difference in body shape.

“They also reported an increase in self confidence and alertness, improved memory and were better at meeting personal goals.

“Colleagues also noted an increase in personal energy of the runners, something that they had not noticed themselves.”

Finally on a sunny, but cold Sunday morning in October they all lined up on the Tyne Bridge in their orange COCO vests, and in some cases, pink tutus. A little over three hours later they had all successfully crossed the finishing line.

Chief executive Alan Foster said:
Hospital chaplain Lynn Purvis held her hand up and admitted she didn’t think she would be able to complete the race. She said: “I hated the training, I lacked the confidence and had doubts that I would be able to complete the race. Then two weeks before the race itself I hit a brick wall mentally, what little confidence I had disappeared and I couldn’t even run a mile.

“The whole team were brilliant, they all rallied round and gave me the boost that I needed to go on and complete the run. I am very glad I did, I enjoyed every minute of the race itself, and yes, I would do it all over again.”

Clinical governance administrator Tracey Blackford said that the challenge was just what she needed to help her quit smoking. She said: “I had tried a few times in the past but had always gone back to it. This year also saw my 40th birthday so that was a bit of a milestone and I figured now was the time.

“I was fairly active to start with having played netball, but I wasn’t prepared for how great being fit makes you feel. There is definitely a feel good factor involved in the training, and we also got to make a lot of new friends in the trust.

“There was a great team spirit all the time, we all inspired each other to greater heights.” And the cigarettes? “Well it is almost a year now, and no signs of going back,” she added.

**Finishing times**

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sandra Lancaster</td>
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<td>Diana Poles</td>
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<td>Rita Siberry</td>
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<td>Jo Luck</td>
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<td>Bill Fraser</td>
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<td>Mark O’dwyer-Lunn</td>
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<td>Tracey Blackford</td>
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<td>Lynn Purvis</td>
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<td>Gina Atkinson</td>
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<td>Julie Brown</td>
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<td>Elaine Criddle</td>
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<td>Sally Jackson</td>
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<td>Joanne Dobson</td>
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The winning time was 59 mins 45 sec.
The NHS joint committee* set up to oversee the consultation in momentum: pathways to healthcare met to consider the feedback from the consultation and make the final decisions about a way forward.

The following decisions were made

On the service model – having health services in or as near to your home as possible, with only things which need to be done in hospital taking place there

After considering the feedback to NHS joint committee concluded there was very wide ranging support for this principle. The committee concluded this was very much welcomed by those consulted.

On community based facilities – where you think Hartlepool and Stockton's community facilities should be

Additional health facilities will be built in Stockton, Hartlepool (this in already under construction), Billingham and Yarm.

On new hospital location – on which site do you feel the new hospital for Stockton, Hartlepool and parts of Easington and Sedgefield should be built.

The new hospital will be built on site A – the Wynyard site north of the A689 and west of the A19.

The committee also received a paper about what the next steps would be, outlining the work on further developing where and how services would be provided, transport, raising the money and paying for the new investments, looking at the impact on staff and how best to prepare the workforce for the changes ahead.

Steve Wallace, who chairs the NHS joint committee, said: "This has been a thorough process with a great deal of discussion, comment and input. There has been a considerable amount of interest and I'd like to thank anyone who has been involved in any way because it made the process richer and more meaningful."

"After inconclusive reviews and years of uncertainty these decisions give us a clear way forward. We aim to make healthcare in this area the envy of the country if not the world and this takes us one more important step towards that aim."

Chief executive of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust Alan Foster added: “These decisions are good news for the people of this area. It means we can now get on with the work of creating a healthcare system which is second to none. The formal consultation is over but there is still plenty of talking to do and we refine our ideas to make sure the health system and the new hospital meet the needs of the people who will use and work in them.”

* By law if more than one NHS organisation is consulting the public about making changes to health services they have to form an NHS joint committee for these purposes. The NHS joint committee formed for this consultation is made up of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, Stockton on Tees Teaching Primary Care Trust (formerly North Tees Primary Care Trust) and Hartlepool Primary Care Trust.
Swap sending a card for supporting end of life care

Staff at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust are carrying on their tradition of supporting charity rather than sending Christmas cards.

This year the money raised will go to the palliative care team. Consultant in palliative care Edwin Pugh said: “Christmas is a very happy and eagerly awaited time for many. Unfortunately for some patients and their families it may be a time of sadness, particularly if loved ones are dying.

“Although the health service seeks to treat and cure patients it also has a vital role in helping people who are dying do so in comfort and with dignity.

“Staff donating money rather than sending cards can be assured we will use any money to support dying patients and their families throughout the hospitals during this difficult time for them and their families.”

You can donate money at either of the cashiers’ offices.

Trust’s performance improves significantly in annual health check

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust has been rated as making significant improvements in the Healthcare Commission’s annual health check.

The trust has been rated good for quality of services (compared to fair last year) and excellent for use of resources (compared to fair last year).

Chief executive Alan Foster said: “I am absolutely delighted with the ratings because they are a true reflection of the amount of effort which has been put in by each and every member of staff at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.

“While we can’t ever be complacent and, of course, we are aiming for our quality of services and our use of resources to be excellent, I am proud of this achievement and, quite rightly, I know staff will be too.

“These results show how committed we are to managing ourselves and our resources effectively and providing high quality patient care.”

New shirts give the team a smart new look

Portering services at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust are now sporting some very smart blue shirts.

Gone are the old light blue polo shirts and in have come the new smart looking dark blue shirts with ties for those who like to wear one.

Porter Dave Fleet said: “I asked for the new shirts because I felt it would be good if we looked smarter and projected a more professional image. The shirts arrived a couple of weeks ago and I’m enjoying wearing a shirt and tie now.”

Mail room porters at the University Hospital of North Tees stopped for a quick photo of their smart new uniform. Mail room porter Peter Mallaby (right) said: “We like the shirts. They’re comfortable and easy to wash. They’re a great improvement on the old ones which were looking very tired!”
The transfer has come about because under new arrangements set out by the government primary care trusts can no longer both commission (or buy) and provide services. The staff from Hartlepool Primary Care Trust and Stockton on Tees Teaching Primary Care Trust transferred to the trust on 1 November and formed a new department of community services under the director for strategic services Carole Langrick. The trust will be their home for 17 months while the two primary care trusts look at their future plans at which time they will invite tenders to run community health services. At that time North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust intends to bid to run the service in the longer term.

Chief executive for Hartlepool Primary Care Trust and Stockton on Tees Teaching Primary Care Trust Chris Willis said: “There were a number of ways we could have split our commissioning and provider arms but in the end our boards decided that this was the best way forward. “We have a constructive and positive relationship with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and we know if community services staff could no longer work for the primary care trusts this is where they would prefer to be.”

In what’s believed to be the first of its kind in the country 856 community staff including district nurses, school nurses, podiatrists and dentists from two local primary care trusts have transferred to the North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.

School nurse assistants Julie Mallinson and Claire Andrew, school nurses Chris Sim and Jane Pearson and community nurses Gemma Sharp and Marie Lothhouse (seated).

Diabetic retinal screener Sue Westwood and service manager Amanda Grange with receptionists Leighann Baker and Sharon Peacock.

The CASH team at Lawson Street; lead associate specialist Lynda Turner, administrator Susan Hirst and clerical officers Susan Evans, Aileen Alderson and Ann McCue.

The contraceptive and sexual health (CASH) team at Caroline Street Health Centre; clerical officer Sarah Dring, community sexual health advisor Jane Collins, nurse specialist Gail Woodhouse, care assistant Lindsay Whittingham and lead nurse Judy Raine.

Community matrons Alison Hume, Margaret Thompson, Linda Hewitson, Guy Tucker and Anne Bagley.

Community staff nurses Jackie Hoggart and Caroline Shannon, community auxiliary nurse Carol Owen, district nurse Emma Campbell, community matron Alison Hume, and district nurse Sandra Alder (seated).
Welcome to our new community

Community staff including district nurses, school nurses, podiatrists and dentists from two local primary care trusts have transferred to the North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.

Chief executive for North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust Alan Foster said: “We’re delighted with this move and we firmly believe it will improve care for patients by removing organisational boundaries and making services seamless.

“It also makes sense in view of the recent decisions made following the consultation into momentum: pathways to healthcare which supported the principle of more care being provided in or near people’s homes with only the things which need to be done in hospital done there.

“While this is a temporary arrangement we fully intend to bid for these services because we feel a whole healthcare system provides the best services for people who both use it and work in it.

“At the end of the day patients want a service they can rely on and I see this as the way of ensuring that’s what we provide. For staff it means more opportunities for movement and development and, for the organisation, the ability to retain and recruit staff.”

Senior clerical officer at Lawson Street Health Centre in Stockton Hazel Rose said: “We are delighted to be transferring over to North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, and are very much looking forward to working with our new colleagues.”

December 08/January 09
North Tees and Hartlepool apprentice wins top award

An apprentice from North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust has won a top award for NHS estates apprentices.

Scott Ruddock won the Management Review Group Trophy for the fourth year apprentice of the year. The event was designed to recognise the achievement of estates apprentices from right across the NHS in the Northern and Yorkshire region.

Bill Murray, who was chief executive of South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust until 2003, was instrumental in starting the apprentice scheme in 1974. A hospital engineer by background, Bill has always been passionate about the contribution of estates to the built environment and patient care.

He said: “Buildings and environment generally are a crucial component of good patient care. However much of the work is unseen. It might be in planning heating systems or working unsocial hours to keep the site in good condition.

“In many ways it’s easy to take people like engineers for granted. People don’t think of engineers and estates staff when they think about who works in an NHS building. This is why it’s so good to have events like this where we can celebrate. It’s great for the young people themselves but it’s also good for the NHS in this area because we are providing great career opportunities and investing in a skilled workforce both for now and the future.”

Manager for the assessment centre Eileen Bayles added: “I am really proud of Scott and all the apprentices and I know and understand how hard they have to work. The standard is high which made it difficult to choose the winners. They are all good and in fact they are all winners in their own right!”

Kevin Oxley, director of operations at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, who chairs HEFMA (the Health Estates and Facilities Managers Association) presented the HEFMA prize. He said: “Estates staff manage complex systems which are vital to patient care and much of patient safety is down to them. In recent years people have begun to realise the importance of estates so we should accept that responsibility and step up to the plate. You are the elite and this evening is about showing how much you are valued.”

Malcolm Aiston, who is the associate director of estates at Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust, and an ex apprentice of the scheme added: “This is a tough apprenticeship. Are we sure we have apprentices to be proud of? You’re damn right we are.”

Awards

Adam Curry – Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

The J R (Jack) Fletcher award for the first year apprentice of the year, presented by associate director of operations Peter Mitchell, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

Christopher Glass – Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

The Bill Murray OBE award for the second year apprentice of the year, presented by Bill Murray

Scott Ruddock – North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

Health Estates and Facilities Management Association estates apprenticeship award, presented by Kevin Oxley. This award covers the four years of the apprenticeship

Note - There was no presentation for the third year cup this year.

Each winner received a cup, an engraved silver salver to keep and a voucher to buy tools for their trade.

About the apprentice scheme...

The scheme recruits young people into a Northern and Yorkshire NHS assessment centre for an advanced apprenticeship and the potential of a career in estates whether that is multi-skilled engineering, medical engineering, carpentry and joinery or plumbing.

It is hosted by North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust where a team of staff run the estates apprentice training on behalf of all NHS organisations in the North East and Yorkshire.

Competition for places is tough with at least 100 applicants for each available place. So far 330 young people have gone through the scheme and many have gone on to senior positions in estates.
Pandemic flu?
– We are ready

No one likes to think of what would happen if the country were to be hit by a pandemic flu outbreak, however we can all rest a bit easier to know that the trust has a policy in place for just such an event. The policy has been developed over a period of two and a half years by the pandemic flu group, until recently headed by Stephen Groves and now in the capable hands of consultant physician Katie Elmer. The group has a representative from every directorate and is also represented on many regional groups. Leading improvement in patient safety manager Barbara Carr and senior clinical matron for infection prevention and control Lesley Wharton are members of the regional social care group while head of pharmacy Philip Dean represents the trust on the regional pharmacy network and consultant microbiologist Chris Dyson links in with colleagues from other trusts.

Katie said: “The policy has been developed and updated following guidance from the Department of Health and includes a communications strategy which is led by the Strategic Health Authority. “The trust has invested £110,000 on non invasive ventilators and is currently in the process of investing in face masks to protect front line staff in the event of an outbreak. The Department of Health is planning a publicity campaign in the near future, but in the meantime there are a couple of things that it would be worthwhile making a note of. During an influenza pandemic antiviral medication will only be given out from recognised distribution centres and on production of your own personal NHS number. This is the number that was given to you when you were first registered with a GP practice. We would welcome any queries or thoughts you may have as this will help us to develop our emergency and business continuity plans. Please send any comments by email to Barbara Carr or Lesley Wharton (barbara.carr@nth.nhs.uk or lesley.wharton@nth.nhs.uk)

New director goes back to the floor

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust’s new director of nursing and patient safety has been keen to see for herself what patients feel about the care they receive. Sue Smith, who joined the trust from Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, has donned her uniform and - with her senior nursing team - gone back to the wards to talk to patients and staff. She said: “When I joined the trust I was very impressed with the standard of care, but as a new director I wanted to see for myself what people thought. First and foremost I am a nurse and as such I realise that the best way of finding out if patients are satisfied with their care is to get out on the wards and talk to them first hand. “These visits are very much designed to support the ward staff in their work and I have been very impressed with the standards of care I’ve observed. My senior nursing team has been able to take away some excellent examples of good practice to share more widely.” “Patients were very pleased to see us and were generally happy to chat about their experiences in hospital. “We feed back anything they tell us to the ward manager at the time which gives us the opportunity to sort out anything that they are not happy with straightaway while the patient is still in hospital instead of after they have gone home.”
Salon makes hair-raising total for carers’ centre

Hairstylists from a local salon volunteered to offer their services to patients and staff to raise money for the George Hardwick carers’ centre at the University Hospital of North Tees.

Staff from Poppy’s Hairdressers in Stockton came into the hospital for a day to cut people’s hair to help raise money for The George Hardwick Foundation Carers and Patients Centre. Patients, staff and visitors also took advantage of a tombola with prizes provided by the salon. Donations for hair cuts ranged from £5-20 and over £250 was raised in total. George Hardwick’s fundraising executive Ingrid Brough-Williams said: “It’s not every day you get to decide how much you pay for a hair cut. We’re very grateful to all the stylists from Poppy’s. It certainly was an unusual way to raise money and it attracted lots of interest at the carers’ centre.”

Stockton councillor is new non executive director

The council of governors of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust has used its new powers to appoint a non-executive director for the first time since the NHS foundation trust was established in December 2007. The nomination committee, a sub-committee of the council of governors which is made up of appointments sub committee, made up of public, and staff and stakeholder governors, interviewed the candidates and made a recommendation which was approved by the full council of governors at its meeting on 25 September. This means that Alex Cunningham has now been appointed non executive director of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.

A journalist by background Mr Cunningham, 53, is a communications and public relations consultant. He is a Stockton Borough councillor and cabinet member for children and young people and will stand for the Stockton North seat at the next general election. He lives in Norton and is married with two grown up sons.

Acting chairman Paul Garvin said: “Since becoming an NHS Foundation Trust this is the first time we have had to fill a non executive director post. It has been a very different process but one which I believe is richer because our governors were involved. The decision of the interview panel must be approved by the full council of governors and I’m delighted this happened at the meeting.

“I look forward to welcoming Alex when he joins the board of directors. His knowledge, expertise and commitment to the people of our area will be invaluable as the trust moves to the next exciting phase of its history.”

Alex Cunningham added: “I feel privileged to be a member of the board of directors of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust. I wanted to become a board member not only because I believe the trust is very good but also because I know the trust wants to be the best in the area, if not the country.

“I am looking forward to contributing to this and helping the trust, through everything I do as a non executive director, to continue on its journey of improvement for everyone living in our area.”
Physiotherapists are breaking barriers at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust. Among the team of physiotherapists who do acupuncture are Carl Clarkson and Lawrence Mayhew.

Senior physiotherapist Carl did a foundation course in acupuncture and is now studying for an MSc in acupuncture which will enable him to teach acupuncture both in the trust and at university. Carl said: “We use acupuncture, which involves placing needles the thickness of human hair into specific points on the body, to relieve lower back, neck, shoulder and other joint pain. It’s part of a holistic treatment plan which includes exercises and stretches to help movement. We get very good results and it’s not something patients expect when they come into the department, though they undoubtedly benefit from it.

“I’m delighted to practise acupuncture with physiotherapy myself but I’m also really looking forward to teaching and spreading the word about how powerful acupuncture and physiotherapy are when used together.”

Junior physiotherapist Lawrence has just completed his foundation course. His case study of using acupuncture for elbow pain was outstanding and is now to be published in an acupuncture and manual therapy book.

Lawrence said: “I saw the effects acupuncture was having and decided to do the foundation course. The first time I used a needle on someone it was pretty scary though. You have to know your anatomy because you’re working near nerves and blood vessels. The anatomy sessions we had during the course were the best I’d ever had. I was really pleased when my tutor asked permission for my case study on using acupuncture for elbow pain to be published in a text book.”

Physiotherapy clinical team leader Fiona Hardie said: “We have a number of physiotherapists doing acupuncture and we can see this is the way forward because it is a major benefit to patients.

“I’m proud of the work Carl and Lawrence have done. It shows we’re working at the leading edge with staff who are continually developing and improving to provide the best service possible to our patients.”

Reminder system means far fewer missed appointments

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust’s telephone appointment reminder system is making a significant difference to the number of patients missing their appointments.

Patients receive a phone call from NHS Direct, who are working on behalf of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, about a week before they are due to have their outpatient appointment. The idea is to ensure patients aren’t risking their health by missing an appointment and the trust can make the best use of the appointments it has available.

The system, which has been in place since January, has brought missed new outpatient appointments down from 7.5 to 6 per cent.

Head of health records Jan Atkinson said: “We’ve seen a general fall in missed appointments but this average hides some spectacular reductions in areas like rheumatology where we’ve seen a 48 per cent reduction and general surgery where we’ve seen a 31 per cent reduction.”

During the call NHS Direct asked patient if they were aware their appointment was due. They also asked if patients wished to cancel or rearrange their appointment.

Jan added: “Interestingly more than half the patients phoned no longer wanted an appointment and a sizeable number didn’t know why they’d been referred to hospital.

“Clearly it’s vital that people see their GP if they feel they don’t need an appointment or they aren’t clear why they have been referred because they could be putting their health at risk if they don’t come in for their outpatient appointment.

“Another fascinating discovery was that some people phoned didn’t know if they were going to come in for their appointment or not but they didn’t want us to cancel it. This does beg the question of whether people really understand just how much they might be putting their health at risk.”
The North East’s scrub up campaign has won the NHS’s award for the best campaign.

The North East Strategic Health Authority, supported by trusts and primary care trusts, designed the campaign to raise awareness of the role everyone can play in reducing the risk of infection. And North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust had a big part to play with two members of staff featured heavily in it. Acting matron for surgery Debbie Blackwood and domestic Susan Jeffries were chosen from NHS staff across the region to model for the campaign. Communications manager for the North East Strategic Health Authority Julie Marsh accepted the award which was sited as an excellent example of collaborative working. Julie said: “This award is all about team work and I’m delighted to accept it on behalf of the North East region.”

If people have seen four men walking the corridors looking a bit worse for wear with scruffy looking moustaches they needn’t fear. Assistant engineer Richie Speight, plumber Philip Hartshorn and electricians Barry Piggott and Ray Evans have been growing facial hair to help raise money for male cancer charity Everyman. The four friends have raised over £250 and one of them, Ray Evans, liked his beard so much he decided to keep it. Richie said all the staff had been very generous with donations, and especially thanked trust chaplain Lynn Purvis. He said: “All the money raised will go towards helping research into cancer. “Some of the guys liked growing the beards a bit more than others. “The important thing is that it’s for a great cause and we’d all like to thank the colleagues who donated so generously.”
The University Hospital of Hartlepool has been undergoing some radical changes for the better in 2008. In addition to the replacement of all of the windows, the new birthing centre, new assisted reproduction unit and the relocating of physiotherapy and occupational therapy, recent months have seen some other major improvements.

The main building has been brightened up externally with all of the old brown nondescript fascias replaced with new bright blue ones complete with new illuminated signage. It is not just the outside, however, that has been receiving the makeover treatment.

As part of the promise to relocate staff who have been working in old damp and draughty Victorian buildings, the former mental health wing has been totally refurbished and given a new name. The first to move into the newly renamed Hart building were the postgraduate department who, with the training department, now occupy the ground floor under the mantle of the education and learning centre.

Resuscitation officer Keith Robinson said: “We have waited for these facilities for a long time. We used to do the best that we could in the old buildings, but they were old, dilapidated and draughty. The new facilities are brand new, comfortable and state of the art and more conducive to learning.”

The first floor of the Hart building is now home to infection control, clinical governance, estates and facilities and IM&T, all of who used to be housed in the old main headquarters.

The executive wing, which is also on the first floor houses the chairman, chief executive and communications and has hot desks for executive and non-executive directors and general managers. In addition there is the new board room complete with video conferencing facilities and an extra meeting room.

Chief executive Alan Foster said: “Demolishing the old Victorian buildings was one of former chief executive Ian Dalton’s primary aims and when I took over the reins I vowed to continue where he left off. I am very pleased to say that we are now very close to achieving that aim.

“Our patients deserve a good environment and so do staff.”
Head of clinical engineering and decontamination Barry Johnson ran the half marathon with his daughter Emma who was running it for the first time.

Barry’s wife Ann – a keen runner herself – entered the London Marathon in 2007. Barry admits she was a faster runner than he is, typically a minute a mile faster. However after her tragic death from leukaemia earlier this year, Barry and his daughter Emma decided to enter this year’s Great North Run. They wanted to raise funds for Cancerbackup, a charity which provides information to cancer patients. Barry, Ann and the family had received some of this information while Ann was being cared for on the haematology unit at the University Hospital of North Tees.

Two hours 14 minutes and £700 later Barry and his daughter were pleased they had achieved their goal.

“It was a very emotional day,” said Barry. “Emma hadn’t done a run before but said if her mum could do it then so could she.

“Of course the person we’d really like to share this achievement with isn’t with us any more. We miss her but we know she would have been proud if she’d seen us on the day.

“We also wanted to say thank you to everyone on the haematology unit. They are a fantastic team and supported us all throughout Ann’s illness and afterwards.”

A member of staff from North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust has paid tribute to his late wife by entering the Great North Run.
Who’s who with a difference

It takes a 12 year old boy to teach his parent about new technology. And it was exactly this which prompted porter Dave Fleet to make a who’s who with a difference.

Trust porter Dave Fleet has put up photos of all the department staff on the wall, but with a twist. He has used a programme on his mobile phone to stretch and enlarge people’s faces making them look weird, wacky and in some cases completely terrifying. Dave got the idea after his 12 year old son and his wife Jackie showed him how to use the programme. He said: “People seem to find the photos very amusing, especially the other porters. “I like taking photos and it seemed like a good fun way of making other staff aware of who the porters were at the trust. “The staff at the canteen have even asked me to make a similar photo collection for them so I’m planning to do that next.”
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