

ISSUE 62

WINTER 2023



North Tees and Hartlepool
NHS Foundation Trust

anthem



Also in this Issue:

- Meet our new CEO
- Women in Leadership
- Great North Run – we celebrate our fantastic fundraisers
- And much, much more

Our new Clinical Skills Lab opens

The Trust's New Clinical Skills Lab for Hartlepool On Page 7

Stacey Hunter



“

A united single voice that will work to represent our ambition for this region has been long sought. We are absolutely delighted that Stacey will take on that role as our CEO working to support and serve our populations.

Professor Derek Bell,
Joint Chair

Single chief executive officer appointed to hospital group

The joint partnership between North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has reached a new milestone with the appointment of a single chief executive officer.

Following an extensive recruitment process, the two trusts are proud to welcome Stacey Hunter into our most senior leadership role.

Currently the chief executive officer at Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust with a background in nursing, Stacey will commence as Group Chief Executive Officer early in 2024.

Professor Derek Bell, Joint Chair for the two trusts working within a group model, said: "This is a really important move forward for our group model. To have a single leadership supporting the challenges and opportunities across our geography will pay dividends for our patients and communities, and of course our staff.

"A united single voice that will work to represent our ambition for this region has been long sought. We are absolutely delighted that Stacey will take on that role as our CEO working to support and serve our populations."

Stacey Hunter has been at Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust since September 2020. Prior to that, she worked for Bradford and Airedale Foundation Trusts, and spent some time seconded to the Nightingale Hospital Yorkshire during the COVID-19 pandemic. Stacey commenced her career in 1990 as a nurse at Hull Hospitals and Leeds Teaching Hospital.



This newsletter has been printed on carbon balanced paper. (CBP019486) www.carbonbalancedpaper.com



Christopher Akers-Belcher (front left) in a cardio rehab class

Hartlepool man recovers from heart attack – thanks to community team

A Hartlepool man who suffered a heart attack has praised the cardiac rehab team – after staff went above and beyond to ensure he could continue the exercise classes he did before falling ill.

Christopher Akers-Belcher had a cardiac arrest in January, after waking in the middle of the night with chest pains.

Christopher, who is the chief executive of Hartlepool Healthwatch and lives in the town, was rushed into the University Hospital of North Tees and, following various tests, it was confirmed he had had a heart attack.

After being transferred to the James Cook University Hospital and following a period of treatment, Christopher was discharged back to his home and offered the opportunity to attend special cardio-rehabilitation classes, run by the Trust's cardiac rehabilitation service.

Christopher says he has found the classes "incredibly beneficial" – but it is the help he has had from the team to enable him to continue his weekly sessions at Exortus CrossFit in Hartlepool that he is equally grateful for.

He said: "I have found the classes to be absolutely fantastic in my recovery.

"On my third week our normal instructor was on holiday and the class was taken by a lady called Nikki Lilley, who is one of the cardiology nurses. Nikki, as with all the nurses, was really great but I feel she went the extra mile.

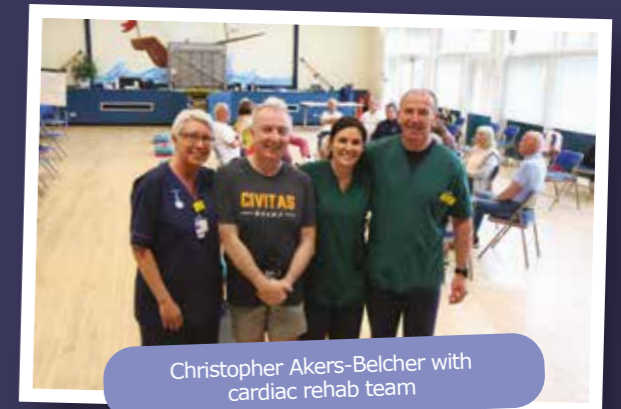
"My own heart nurse Michelle told Nikki I previously did CrossFit classes prior to my heart attack and I was keen to return as soon as possible.

"It turned out Nikki attends the same gym and – though she is in a different class – she asked my permission to speak with my coach to aid my rehabilitation and return to CrossFit when I could. I agreed to this and Nikki spoke with my coach but also agreed to do a training and awareness session with all the gym's coaches."

Nikki said: "Christopher wanted to know if there was any way he could return to it as he was feeling cautious about going back.

"CrossFit is really about getting your heartbeat consistently high. I explained to the team what we do as a cardio rehab team in our classes and the protocols we follow."

The rehab team runs five levels of classes, several times a week, from community locations in Hartlepool, Thornaby, Ingleby Barwick, Stockton and Billingham.



Christopher Akers-Belcher with cardiac rehab team

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Event empowers women in leadership

We are making strides in empowering staff with the first of our events aimed at inspiring and nurturing future leaders in the organisation.

The Trust's inaugural Women in Leadership conference was held on Friday 29 September at Stockton Town Football Club.

The conference was born out of conversations with staff who spoke candidly about their aspirations and also fears surrounding leadership in the NHS.

The first of many events focused on promoting leadership and diversity, the Women in Leadership conference aimed to take a step in the right direction to energise, develop and retain staff – with hopes of also inspiring them to progress as a leader.

Susy Cook, chief people officer, said: "Leadership is for all – everybody deserves the opportunity to be a leader and get the most out of work."

"This event was about our staff. We want to understand what they need to thrive in their environment and to get the most out of work. Their commitment and willingness to actively participate in our Women in Leadership conference has really driven not only the event – but real change in our organisation."



Thank you to our guest speakers who offered an open and honest insight into their career journeys:

- Claire-Marie Boggiano, director, coach and lecturer in leadership
- Paula McMahon, civil engineer at Sir Robert McAlpine
- Professor Tim Thompson, Dean of Health and Life Sciences at Teesside University
- Dr Susy Cook, Chief People Officer at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust





2 minutes now could save up to 9 lives

Confirm your decision to be an organ donor. **It's the best thing you'll do today.**
Visit [organdonation.nhs.uk](https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk)

Yes I donate
ORGAN DONATION

"I hope my donor would be proud of the life he's allowed me to live."
Tam Donaldson, organ recipient

How organ donation saved Tam's life

In January 2008, a road traffic accident in Manchester tragically claimed the life of a young man. Due to patient confidentiality, nothing can be revealed about him, other than in death, this 20-year-old man saved the lives of six strangers.

All because he was an organ donor.

One of the people saved is Tam Donaldson, a project manager with the Trust's digital programme team.

Diagnosed at just 21 with primary sclerosing cholangitis, a rare chronic condition which attacks the bile ducts inside and outside the liver, Tam was told she would need a liver transplant.

She was put on the waiting list in November 2007 and doctors warned Tam that the coming Christmas could well be her last should a donor not be located.

Tam said: "I froze when I got the call that a suitable donor organ had been found."

"I was taken straight to St James's University Hospital who carried out the operation quickly as at that time, we only had 17 hours to use the liver."

"I refused to look at my stomach and the surgical wound for five days, until I plucked up the courage. There was a sense of guilt as well – I was happy to be saved, but I knew the price my donor paid."

"I'm alive because of an organ donor."

Choosing not to drink alcohol out of respect to the donor and his gift, Tam also eats a moderately controlled diet she likens to a pregnant woman and some medicines are unsuitable for her.

Asked what she would say to her donor, Tam said: "I have written to his family to express my thanks for the gift their son gave me."

"If I could talk to him, I would tell him about the ripple effect he has had. Both my sister and husband were inspired to retrain and work in the NHS in clinical roles after seeing what I went through and how well the treatment went."

"I'd also tell him about the people who have decided to become organ donors after speaking with me. It's one of the most selfless things anyone can do and it's a gift that the recipient and their family will be forever grateful for."

"I hope he would be proud of the life he allowed me to live."

To find out more about organ donation and how to register your decision, scan the QR code:



The health and care roles you may not have known about – regional careers campaign launches

Health and social care organisations across the Tees Valley are teaming up as part of a new recruitment campaign to promote careers in health and social care.

The new campaign will see a range of roles put under the spotlight as part of a drive to encourage more people to enter into the health and social care sector.

As well as highlighting a range of roles within the NHS, many of which training is provided on-the-job, the campaign will also focus on areas where challenges exist in recruiting staff.

These include roles in nursing and supported living settings assisting people with a learning disability, radiology assistant, 111 call handler, social prescribing in GP practices, therapy support worker and pharmacy technician.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board are jointly leading the campaign on behalf of health and social care organisations across the Tees Valley.

Susy Cook, chief people officer at the Trust, said: "For some time now the health service in this region has faced real challenges recruiting staff to health and social care roles.

"As health organisations in the region, we all have a role to play to step away from our day-to-day work and help showcase what it is like to work in healthcare and the incredible difference we make.



"No matter what your role is, if you work in the health service you make a real difference to their lives of patients and their loved ones."

Martin Short, director of place (Darlington) at the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, added: "We are delighted to be linking up with both social care and health organisations across Tees Valley on such an important campaign.

"Over the course of this campaign, we will be shining a light on some of the careers people may not be as familiar with – but ones which make a real difference to the lives of so many people."

For more information visit www.nth.nhs.uk/careers/tees-valley-careers/



Clinical Educators Clare Palmer, Lisa Blom, Karen Hampshire and Laura Dring - skeleton is nicknamed Muriel



The Trust's New Clinical Skills Lab For Hartlepool

Generations of healthcare staff and trainees will benefit from a new training facility, named the Clinical Skills Lab, at the University Hospital of Hartlepool

Using state-of-the-art medical manikins, simulation devices and high-tech equipment, trainees and qualified healthcare professionals can upgrade their skills including basic life support, venepuncture (withdrawing blood from a vein) and catheterisation (draining the bladder through a tube).

Karen Hampshire, clinical educator, said: "We wanted to create a new training space, in a hospital setting that looks and feels like a ward to create a realistic scenario to learn in. It's a much more life-like training simulation."

One new training development is the choking simulation vest which provides a safe method of practising abdominal thrusts (sometimes referred to as the 'Heimlich Manoeuvre'). Previously, the

potential damage that the procedure could cause meant training was limited to a verbal explanation. The new vest allows the manoeuvre to be practiced without the risk of harm.

The Clinical Skills Lab will also be used to train 'T Level' students – usually 16-18 year olds studying technical qualifications equivalent to A Levels.

Laura Dring, clinical educator, said: "Investing in the future of our training is essential if we're going to continue to meet the needs of our patients.

"What better way to guarantee the future of our region's healthcare than drawing our future colleagues from our local community?"



Karen Hampshire, clinical educator



Clinical Educators Lisa Blom and Clare Palmer - Demonstrating Choke Vest

Research team join search for new test for type 1 diabetes

A study investigating a test for children who may be at risk of developing diabetes in the future is among two new trials the research team is involved in.

The team is one of only two research services in the region involved in the ELSA study (early surveillance for autoimmune diabetes).

The trial is testing children aged between three and 13 using a finger stick blood test to find markers in the blood that are a sign of a child's risk of getting type 1 diabetes in the future.

Dawn Egginton, paediatric research nurse, said: "Three out of 1,000 children will test positive for antibodies but we have no way of knowing who this will be.

"We now have the chance to be part of the largest antibody screening programme for type 1 diabetes in the UK."

Vicky Collins, research assistant practitioner, said: "It is straightforward to take part – parents can watch a video, consent online and – if they do so – they can come along to clinics at a range of hours or request a kit to receive at home."

The team is also taking part in neoGASTRIC, a national study looking at babies born more than six weeks early and needing a feeding tube.

All babies will be involved in the study unless parents decide they do not want their baby to take part.

Small studies have suggested it could be better to not routinely measure gastric residual volumes in babies – but these studies were not able to test whether doing so could make detecting necrotising enterocolitis (an illness causing tissues in the gut to become inflamed and start to die) harder.



Members of the research team involved in both studies



Research midwife Sharon Gowans

Research midwife top performing study lead in region

A research midwife has become the top performing study lead in the region.

Sharon Gowans has recruited more participants to research studies she is leading than any of her peers in the North East and Cumbria.

Sharon, who has more than eight years' experience in research, is one of a growing number of health professionals in the country acting as a principal investigator for studies who is not a doctor.

Over the last 16 months, Sharon and her team have recruited more than 3,000 participants to the research trials she is leading at the Trust.

She said: "I am really proud of this achievement – but it really is down to the teams we work with in maternity.

"The fact that we are midwives ourselves means we understand the challenges that midwives face and this enables us to work as part of the team and we have really good relationships with the maternity teams in all areas.

"The clinical midwives are all invested in research and the importance of it. The team are extremely positive about it and are ready to have those conversations with women about the benefits of being involved in research trials."

Last year Sharon became one of the first health professionals who is not a doctor to become a principal investigator for research studies.

Two of the five studies Sharon is currently leading on include INGR1D2, looking at the early detection of type 1 diabetes in babies and the iGBS3 which is looking at developing a vaccine to prevent Group B Strep infection in newborn babies.



Andrew Milburn at his graduation

From construction to nursing – the journey a Thornaby man took to his dream job

It wasn't until Andrew Milburn lost his construction job 15 years ago at the start of a financial recession that he ever thought about a career in healthcare.

Finding a temporary job as admin support at his local GP practice, 37-year-old Andrew got his first chance to experience the positive impact he could have on people's health.

After a journey in healthcare that has spanned a decade and a half, Andrew has finally achieved his dream of qualifying as a registered nurse – celebrating with colleagues, family and friends at a ceremony at Teesside University this summer.

Andrew, who now works in the emergency care department at the University Hospital of North Tees, said: "When I was laid off and then started my job at the GP practice, it all snowballed from there.

"It's when I realised I wanted to help people. The job satisfaction I get from it is like nothing else."

Andrew then retrained as a healthcare assistant, working in this role in a GP practice before applying to work in the urgent care service at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust in 2018. He had the support from the service to complete a funded course to be an assistant practitioner.

After moving into the emergency care department at North Tees, he was then given further support to enrol on an additional course to allow him to qualify as a registered nurse – something he had aspired to do since 2010.

He has thanked his managers and colleagues, as well as the other students on the course, mentors and assessors as well his family – wife Sarah, six-year-old twins Jake and Ellie, and mother Catherine.



Students and staff watching a live event



Consultant in trauma and orthopaedics Nick Cooke

Healthcare students see through the eyes of a surgeon as Trust deploys surgery livestreaming technology

We're taking teaching to the next level by using RealWear technology to livestream surgery to healthcare students.

With a point-of-view camera and precision zoom, students not only see exactly what the surgeon sees but the headset also offers scope for two-way communication. Students can ask questions and the surgeon can answer in real-time as they perform surgery.

Previously, the Trust could accommodate a limited number of students in theatre at any one time and they were often on the side lines with a limited view of the surgery in progress. Since the new technology was employed in January 2023, the Trust has seen nearly 200 students take part – the equivalent of around five years' worth of students who would previously take on theatre experience training.

The training is led by consultant in trauma and orthopaedics Nick Cooke and head of nursing education Jean Angus and currently covers orthopaedic surgery – specifically hip and knee replacements, Nick's speciality.

Nick said: "One of the things we find with surgery is it's difficult to give the students the same experience that they would hopefully gain if they were in my place. This whole project has opened up a massive opportunity and it's a really good learning experience – getting everyone to appreciate their role in the patient journey."

Together Nick and Jean facilitate the training – with Nick wearing the headset in theatre and Jean leading students in live discussion while the operation is livestreamed to the dedicated learning space.

Jean said: "Entering a theatre can be intimidating for students, but this technology removes that barrier. We can show them the theatre environment and the instruments used.

"It's amazing how this technology and our teaching brings the students out of their shells – there are no barriers."

Currently implemented in orthopaedic surgery, the Trust is looking to roll out the headsets to other areas such as trauma and maternity surgeries – with a caesarean section livestream planned in the coming weeks.

Patient views



Here is just a small sample of some of the lovely comments our patients have made about our staff and services online!

brombyc You couldn't get a nicer person in nick as a surgeon to teach and perform surgery.

Samantha Hill
My daughter knew exactly how to put someone in the recovery position and do chest compressions after this, brilliant idea to teach this to the kids!

Charlotte Kell
Have the pleasure of both working with Rahim and having been anaesthetised by him. Absolutely amazing gentleman 🌟

John Potter
I am at present one of this gentleman's patient having had the misfortune in falling down a flight of steps whilst on holiday in Lanzarote and badly smashed my right shoulder. He has given me an upper arm joint with much success, his physio Aisha is doing a marvellous job with my recuperation, I cannot thank Mr Nanda and his team enough for what they have done for me.

Patricia Froot
I had quite a few colonoscopies there years ago. There were a great team of people working in that unit

Jenny Cowell
Fantastic news lovely gentleman 🌟🌟🌟

nataliemathieson Laura Smith was the kindest person during one of the hardest times of our lives, she gave us hope when we had none. And because of that hope our baby is here with us today ❤️

Joan Clarke
There's my nurse Anna. Made my life 100% better I now have a loop recorder in monitoring my heart. Fantastic people and Thank you xx

gemmag0985 Congratulations! Mr Nanda did the surgery on my badly broken arm 4 years ago. He is lovely.

JaynieBramley Well deserved! Helped me to breast feed while on the unit couldn't have done it without the girls ❤️

Elicia Cook
Hi I would like to pass on my thanks to a Dr named Jay who works in Eau. I think he is an FY2 - he looked after my mum on Tuesday. It was a very difficult time for the family and the way he helped my mum and cared for us all was amazing. He had to have a difficult conversation with my mum and he handled it sensitively and explained everything so well. I just want to pass on my thanks to him for taking such good care of her. After being transferred to JCUH for further treatment she is now home 🙏

June Hamilton
Well done my late husband Harold Hamilton spent a lot of time on ward 24 and 25 every one was lovely would like to say thanks so much

Melissa Mckie
How lovely that staff are being acknowledged for their long service in the NHS. Well done 🌟 everyone x

Claire Hancock
Sharon you are an amazing lady, the way you supported Mam when we were there on Monday was outstanding. You put her at ease straightaway and relieved her of a lot of anxiety, after a very difficult weekend. A beautiful lady with a beautiful soul, the hospital are very lucky to have you ❤️ xx

Donna Horner
As a support worker, for a client I support I can vouch for Bryony, she is amazing at what she does. So caring and a lovely person, very easy to talk to. Always happy to help. Thank you Bryony 🙏

Alice Frankland
I had the unfortunate experience of turning septic for the first time last August, the care I received from the outreach critical care team was phenomenal, special shout-out to Faye who sat with me during what was quite possibly the scariest time of my life! ❤️

Anil Tuladhar
Excellent! Congratulations to ever so hardworking selfless neonatal nursing team. 🌟🌟🌟

aunty_jard @northteesandhartlepoolnhsft ... I unexpectedly ended up at North Tees yesterday and was lucky to have Andrew caring for me. His patient care was exemplary. He explained every part of the process and made sure I understood what was happening. We also discussed how important it is to encourage those around you to constantly improve their skills etc. He was absolutely fantastic and a credit to the NHS!!

Pam Smith
Congratulations Andy well deserved, you're in the right job in the ED! You cared for my mam when she was brought into the dept very ill. Thank you for your care 🙏

court_1604 Nicola was lovely from start to finish when I was booked in with the department. She was very caring and reassuring. She was able to have a laugh with you whilst remaining professional. I was so nervous going for my first smear and then having to have a colposcopy done but a few minutes of being uncomfortable could save your life! GO FOR YOUR CERVICAL CHECKS LADIES ☐☐

We'd love to hear your comments on our services and hospitals as we strive to continually improve the services we provide.

You can share feedback and let us know about things we are doing well or give suggestions for improvements through our patient experience team by emailing: nth-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net or contacting the team on: 01642 624719.

Alternatively, join us online at:

- NorthTeesHpoolNHS**
- @NTeesHpoolNHSFT**
- northteesandhartlepoolnhsft**
- @nteeshpoolnhsft**

Great North Run success

Congratulations to all of our fantastic staff and amazing community who took on the Great North Run by completing the 13.1 miles from Newcastle to South Shields while raising more than £11,000 for our hospitals and community services.

A huge thank you also to the local businesses, including NTH Solutions for their support by supplying post-race refreshments for our runners, to Sharon Pounder and Angela Campbell for volunteering their time and looking after our runners and to Curtis Metcalfe from Personal Wellbeing in Darlington for providing well-earned massages to our runners.

If you're interested in being part of a very special NHS Great North Run, Boxing Day Dip, or other upcoming charity events please contact Suzi Campbell at suzi.campbell@nhs.net or 07517 829331 to express your interest.



Gifts in wills – make your mark on the world

Choosing to leave a gift in your will is a very special way to support a charity.

For the rest of 2023 we are working with Guardian Angel to offer you the opportunity to claim your free will today so you can make your mark on the world with no hassle. Please note, you are under no obligation to leave a donation to any charity, including our own Trust charity, North Tees and Hartlepool Together.

Our partnership with Guardian Angel offers an easy step-by-step process to write your will, advice and support from legal experts, and the option to write your will in a way that suits you – whether that's online, face-to-face or over the phone.



To take up this time limited offer, please use the code NTHSTAFF

For more information or to write your will for free, scan the QR code or call Guardian Angel on 0800 773 4014.



We're excited to announce that we've partnered with Miller Homes as the Teesside team mark 75 years of the NHS with a pledge to our Trust charity

The company is donating £75 for every home sold at their Pearwood Gardens development in Eaglescliffe to North Tees and Hartlepool Together. With 100 homes being developed, that means a fantastic £7,500 will be donated to our charity to further support our patients and community.

Mark Bayliss, regional managing director at Miller Homes Teesside, said: "The £75 reflects the seventy-fifth anniversary of the NHS in 2023 and is our way of supporting these vital services in our communities that also provide considerable employment to people in our area."

"Several of our developments are located close to the buildings within the Trust and they will bring vital new homes for people to choose to live close to where they work."

Fundraising coordinator Suzi Campbell and ICU senior clinical matron Tom Bingham recently visited the Teesside team to set up our partnership and discuss a little more about what the donations mean for our organisation.

Suzi commented: "Our thanks go to Miller Homes for their generous commitment to supporting the work that we do."

"As a charitable Trust, donations support us to fund key projects such as supplying dementia touch screen tablets to help our patients with memory based games and activities, and this type of backing from a local business is greatly appreciated."



£90,000 investment allows quicker treatment for gallstones patients

Our Trust is the first in the region to invest £90,000 in a laparoscopic ultrasound machine – reducing the need for an additional invasive procedure in many gallstones patients and saving them up to a week in waiting time.

This is one of the biggest pieces of equipment North Tees and Hartlepool Together has funded so far.

Surgeons use the innovative probe to scan the common bile duct in gallstones patients suspected to have common bile duct stones. It quickly and efficiently identifies whether there are stones present.

If bile duct stones are found, these can be surgically removed in the same procedure.

This new one-stage procedure significantly reduces the need for further tests and explorations in many patients. For example, MRI scans and invasive endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) procedures where a tube is inserted down the throat and into the bile duct.

Consultants in upper gastrointestinal surgery Palanivelraju Gopalakrishnan and Ish Ahmed have spearheaded the project and secured funds from the Trust's charity to drive it forward. Their colleagues at the Trust have supported them throughout.

Mr Gopalakrishnan said: "We're thrilled to have this innovative piece of equipment in our Trust and we've already started training our staff up on how to use it. This new technique will dramatically shorten patients' stay in hospital and will also remove the need for extra investigation and procedures."

"We can't thank enough all the people who have helped in this process as we strive to radically improve our patient pathways."

Coffee cups fund hospital therapy garden for stroke and dementia patients

The University Hospital of North Tees is set to build a therapy garden to benefit stroke and dementia patients. It comes after North Tees and Hartlepool Together was successful in a grant application for £150,000 – funded by a 5p cup charge at Starbucks.

The North Tees Kaleidostroke Therapy Garden, forming part of the hospital's stroke unit, will provide support to stroke, dementia and elderly patients and their families as part of their hospital care.

25-year-old Jameel Razak had a stroke last year and stayed at the University Hospital of North Tees for around a month. We recently spoke with him about his time at the hospital and how he thinks the therapy garden will help our stroke and dementia patients going forward.

He said: "I struggled so much. I was never off the ward and when I was, it was only as far as the hospital reception. The nursing team is what made the three week stay on the ward bearable to be honest – someone was always around for a chat and for anything I needed. I felt that they genuinely cared about me."

"But the new outdoor space will allow patients to have an outlet and much-needed freedom from the hecticness of the ward that I didn't have. Being around grass and trees and greenery does impact your mental health, and no doubt your recovery."

Featuring walking rehabilitation facilities, specialist equipment for building muscle, cognitive learning activities and more, the garden has been designed to actively engage patients in rehabilitation and therapy sessions.



Happy Birthday NHS!

The NHS turned 75 this year.

75 years of serving the ever-changing needs to the country, from performing Europe's first liver transplant to delivering the world's first IVF baby, from offering large scale vaccination programmes to genome sequencing for seriously ill babies and children.



Pat Poinen pictured right with former North Tees colleague Julie Verity

trip from her homeland in Trinidad in July 1970. Pat would go on to work at the then North Tees General Hospital as a midwife, calling her time with us: "... the best days of my working life."

Pat returned to the Trust and met with former colleague Julie Verity.

Himalayan charity challenge

Eleven health professionals from the NHS foundation trusts of North Tees and Hartlepool, South Tees Hospitals and County Durham and Darlington, as well as a GP from Gateshead and two friends in India, chose the 75th anniversary of the NHS to raise funds by cycling 350 miles in 12 days across the Himalayas.



Himalayan Bike Ride

The intrepid cyclists raised £5,134 for their Trust's charities and as a diabetes charity.

Westminster Abbey

Colleagues Deepak Dwarakanath, Millie Magadlela, Amy Todd-Davies and volunteers Paul Musson and Liz Hughes represented the Trust at a special NHS 75th celebration at Westminster Abbey.



Westminster Abbey

Here at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, we marked the special occasion.

The Windrush generation and the NHS

2023 also saw the 75th anniversary of the HMT Empire Windrush carrying passengers from the Caribbean to fill labour shortages in the UK.

Among what would become known as Windrush Generation was Pat Poinen, who made the

Number 10 Downing Street

Specialist midwife Anita Scott and porter Jeff Dixon visited the UK's most famous address when they attended a special event at Number 10 Downing Street for NHS Champions

Jeff, who has 29 years' of NHS service said: "I'm proud to have been part of the NHS for 29 years – been through good times and been through rough times. Long may it live on!"



Staff outside Westminster Abbey



Staff recognised in series of long service events this summer

Over the summer, the Trust held a series of long service events to recognise and thank some of our longest serving staff members – from 30 all the way to a whopping 50 years of service.

The events were hosted by our former Chief Executive Julie Gillon to personally thank just some of our many dedicated colleagues across the organisation – before she stepped down from her position in September.

Staff from across the Trust were invited and showcased just some of the variety of roles that are vital in the NHS. This includes nurses, midwives, service managers, doctors, administrative assistants, laboratory staff and estates colleagues.

Julie said: "It's been an honour and a pleasure to take the time to host these events and to celebrate our longest service staff members.

"It's a huge achievement to have dedicated your careers to working in the NHS. You have seen many changes and medical advancements and have had to continually adapt throughout your career to ensure patient care remains at the heart of everything you do.

"From myself and the board, thank you for everything you have delivered for the NHS."

The Trust is planning to continue to celebrate its longest serving staff with further events to follow. Watch this space...

Tackling nicotine addiction and alcohol misuse

Our alcohol care team and tobacco dependency team have both celebrated one year of helping our community tackle the blights of excessive drinking and nicotine addiction.

Alcohol Care Team – One Year On

Our alcohol care team celebrated their first anniversary with a special event featuring a range of expert speakers.

Hayley Tranter, the Trust's alcohol lead nurse, said: "The event was our opportunity to bring health professionals together to discuss the challenges and the way forward when it comes to caring for those affected by alcohol and tackling the health inequalities we have in our region."

One speaker at the event was a woman who attends a Trust-hosted alcoholics anonymous group – she outlined her battle with alcohol. She said: "Since starting the meetings a few months ago, we have had a wonderful response. We have 12 ambassadors – we visit patients on the wards and work with the alcohol care team.

"To work with patients and get them on the right track has been so powerful."

Helping people to stub it out

Also celebrating their first anniversary in 2023 is our tobacco dependency team.

The team, which offers bespoke quit smoking support to in-patients, has now helped more than 90 people quit for at least four weeks.

One success for the team is 66-year-old John Kenny. The retired builder from Hartlepool has quit a 45-year, 20-a-day habit with the help of the team. John, who was inspired to quit after learning his son needs a lung transplant, said: "I had to quit. I just had to. How can you smoke when you know your son needs a lung transplant?"

"I've managed to buy myself a new mobility scooter [with the money saved from not smoking] and me and some friends love going for a ride down Seaton Carew beach. We went to the Hartlepool Tall Ships and had a great time.

"I love the fresh air when I'm out and about."



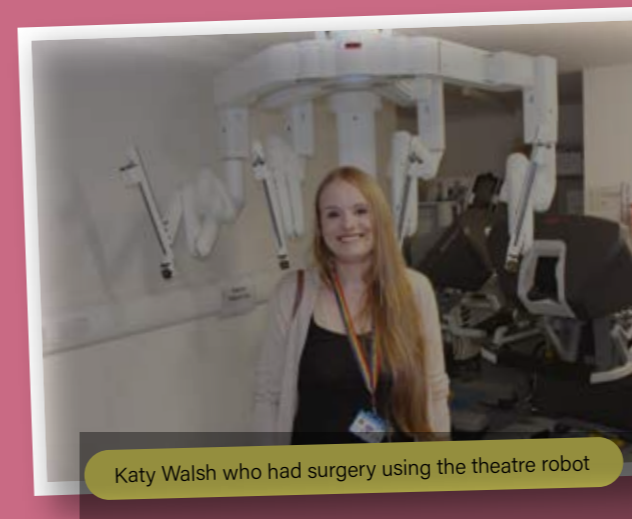
Gill Hoban (left) and Lindsey Mabon (right) from the clinical alcohol team at Change Grow Live recovery service in Stockton with Hayley Tranter alcohol lead nurse

Julie Bardsley, tobacco dependency specialist lead, said: "Well done to John! He's worked really hard to quit and I'm so proud of him and the team who have supported him.

"How John found the strength to do this while dealing with his son's illness and his own condition is just incredible. He's been so brave and strong and he's such a character that the team have really enjoyed working with him."



Staff in the operating theatres at the University Hospital of North Tees celebrate the 100th surgery procedure using the robot



Katy Walsh who had surgery using the theatre robot

NHS theatre robot reaches new milestone with 100th patient

A state-of-the-art robot helping health staff transform the way they carry out surgery has reached a new milestone after helping its 100th patient.

The Da Vinci robot, controlled remotely by surgeons, improves the accuracy and efficiency of surgery in complex operations – leading to improved outcomes for patients.

Nicola Maguire, colorectal consultant who has performed 25 of the operations using the robot, said: "The robot has transformed the way we work and the outcomes for our patients.

"It allows surgeons to be more accurate, reducing blood loss, operative time and pain after surgery. And because patients experience less pain, they can leave hospital and get back to the comfort of their own homes sooner."

The robot, located in the operating theatres at the University Hospital of North Tees, allows surgeons to perform delicate and complex operations through a few small incisions with robotic-assisted surgery.

The console adjusts in various ways to help surgeons get a good fit for their height and reach and gives them total control of the wristed instrument on each of the four arms, with live images produced in 3DHD.

Katy Walsh, 34 and from Stockton, has suffered from acid reflux since she was in her teens, leading to acid in her stomach flowing back into her food pipe. To help with the issue, Katy had surgery (a Nissen fundoplication) in June to treat the issue using the robot.

Katy, who also works as a theatre support worker in the department, said: "I have had acid reflux for years and it has been so difficult. I sometimes just can't keep food down – it affects all of my life, including my quality of sleep.

"When I got told I was able to have surgery using the robot, I already knew the benefits it would bring and wanted to do it.

"It has been life changing for me – I can't thank Mr Gopinath and the team enough."



Edward Gorringe, chief executive of Butterwick Hospice Care

Hospice unit opens after partnership with Trust

Butterwick Hospice Care is working with the Trust in opening its adult in-patient unit in Stockton.

The hospice's partnership with the Trust means it will be able to open beds, offering specialist care for patients.

The unit, staffed by a team of health professionals and volunteers, will also include support from staff from the Trust.

Edward Gorringe, chief executive of Butterwick Hospice Care, said: "I am delighted that Butterwick Hospice Care will once again be admitting patients to our adult in-patient unit in Stockton.

"Choice in end-of-life care, and the kind of treatment and support that a hospice can provide, is essential and was the driving force behind the creation of our hospice by Mary Butterwick almost forty years ago.

"The involvement of our colleagues at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust has been key to achieving this, both in planning and preparation, and in supporting the delivery of our services going forward."

Lindsey Robertson, chief nurse and director of patient safety and quality at the Trust, added: "We are delighted to be partnering with Butterwick Hospice Care in the re-opening of the in-patient unit.

"As part of this, patients who are already known to us and have been under our care will be able to be cared for in the hospice in-patient unit. Our staff will share their knowledge and expertise about these patients.

"We look forward to working with Butterwick Hospice Care and helping our patients get the best possible experience under our care."



Lindsey Robertson, chief nurse and director of patient safety and quality

Once again, we shone a spotlight on some of the extraordinary work carried out every day in our Trust at our Celebrating Excellence event

Attendees were treated to a fascinating keynote address by Marina Cantacuzino, founder of The Forgiveness Project. Marina discussed the often underestimated power of apology and forgiveness, commenting: "Forgiveness can prevent the pain of the past impacting the path of the future."

Throughout the morning, colleagues from across the Trust delivered talks about their improvement projects and in the afternoon, dozens more colleagues hosted informal interactive stands where they explained how their projects bring lasting, positive change to Trust life.



Hartlepool going green after securing multi-million pound investment

The Trust has been granted more than £13 million to make a wide range of improvements to the University Hospital of Hartlepool.

The works will help the Trust achieve its goal of net zero for carbon emissions by 2040 – in line with national NHS targets.

The government funding will help improve the heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and lighting across site.

Neil Atkinson, managing director, said: "This work will mean our Hartlepool site remains at the forefront of healthcare for many years to come.

"It is fantastic news for staff, patients and our whole community as we continue to strive to provide the very best care to all. Healthcare continues to evolve at a rapid rate and it is vital that we make these improvements so that we continue to lead the way.

"It is also important as a key community partner and one of the largest employers in the region to play our part in helping reduce our carbon emissions and the effects of climate change on the environment.



Managing director
Neil Atkinson

"This is reflected in improvements we have made across our buildings and in the way we work and care for patients."

The works will include upgrading the hospital's air handling unit, LED lighting and solar panels. Other improvements will include a site-wide low temperature hot water heating ring main, upgrades to plant rooms, chilled water upgrades and additional metering.

It will also include a new heat pump system which gets energy from groundwater stored in an aquifer – works which will involve drilling six boreholes to a depth of around 150 metres into the ground.

The works will be led by NTH Solutions over the course of two years. Funding has been approved by Salix, an organisation that administers funds on behalf of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.



University Hospital of Hartlepool



Ferrari Kwan, GP

A GP who has worked closely with the Trust on new innovation helping patients be cared for in their own homes has been appointed into a new role

Ferrari Kwan will be the out of hospital care clinical lead at the Trust.

Ferrari, who is a GP for Queens Park Medical Practice in Stockton, will work on improving patient treatment in the community.

In his role as a clinical lead for Hartlepool and Stockton Health GP federation, he has already worked in collaboration with the Trust to set up a new 'hospital at home' service. This is for frail and elderly patients who are given specialised hospital-level treatment in their own homes.

Ferrari's new role, which he will carry out one day a week for an initial year-long period, will strengthen links between primary and secondary care.

He said: "I have already worked very closely with the Trust on our hospital at home for frail and elderly patients.

"Over this time, we have created an effective system where patients are being referred by GPs directly into the programme. It means these patients can avoid a hospital admission where they can avoid complications and where they are more comfortable.

"This new role will help me work in a closer capacity with colleagues at the Trust, and increase engagement between primary and secondary care. The collaboration model of a GP working within the Trust to lead community services is innovative and will hopefully create many opportunities for future projects.

"I am really excited to see how we can develop this further and provide the best possible experience for our patients."



Susan Parr, a diagnostic patient, puts the first spade in the ground on the diagnostic centre, surrounded by others involved in the project

First spade in ground in building of new NHS town centre diagnostic facility

A special groundbreaking event was held on the site of a new NHS health centre in the Tees Valley, offering health checks, tests and scans.

The event marked the first spade in the ground in the construction of the centre on the site of the former Castlegate Shopping Centre in Stockton Town Centre.

The event included representatives from organisations leading the scheme including North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board and NTH Solutions. It also involved figures from building contractor Kier, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and local MPs Matt Vickers, Alex Cunningham and Jill Mortimer.

Local Stockton woman Susan Parr was also invited along to put the first spade in the ground – she was one of the first patients to be treated as a diagnostic patient when a service started at Lawson Street Health Centre in Stockton.

Susan, who is 63 and lives in Fairfield, said: "I remember being surprised to be told that I could receive a scan at the health centre rather than in a hospital. I was in and out in no time at all, it was so convenient and quick."

"This diagnostic facility is fantastic news for Stockton – I am a local woman and a real champion of the town centre."

"This will not only help people like me get the answers they need to any health issues but also help in the regeneration of the area."

The site will provide a number of diagnostic functions including MRI scans, CT scans, ultrasound scans, cardiology, x-rays, blood tests and respiratory checks. It will form part of the Stockton Waterfront site, as part of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's plans to reshape its town centres.

Phil Woolfall, clinical director for radiology at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, said at the event: "This is the latest milestone in our ambition to provide a diagnostic centre for our population across the Tees Valley."

"It will help make healthcare available for all – offering rapid access to scans, tests and health checks."

"It is also exciting in that it's a joint programme run by the area's two health trusts and a multi-professional team of health experts from both."



Phil Woolfall, clinical director for radiology at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and Richard Hartley, consultant radiologist at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Are you tuning in?

Are you tuning in to Radio Stitch?

Run by a fantastic team of volunteers, Radio Stitch isn't your usual hospital radio service.

Not only 'stitching' together the University Hospital of North Tees and the University Hospital of Hartlepool, the team now broadcasts to all South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's sites.

As well as offering a traditional patient radio service, Radio Stitch can be listened to live in hospital corridors. It's also online and has a well-received podcast service, with listeners around the world.

Radio Stitch's Andy Tingle said: "We love what we do here."

"We're all volunteers but we get to play a real role in Trust life. We don't just entertain patients by playing music, we interview staff and have welcomed lots of special guests to talk about their life and work."

"If you're not tuning in, you're missing out."

Future plans for Radio Stitch include broadcasting into patient waiting areas and a full rebrand to celebrate the station's 50th anniversary in 2025.

Scan the QR code to access Radio Stitch online:





Elderly care wards get a new lease of life

The elderly care wards at the University Hospital of North Tees has undergone a full transformation after fantastic ward refurbishments has been completed in both wards 41 and 42.

Our team of skilled estates staff, painters and domestics worked alongside contractor Geoffrey Robinson Limited to complete two eight week projects to get the wards to the highest possible standards.

Overseen by our design, development and project teams, ward 42 now mirrors its adjacent ward which was refurbished only a few months prior. As well as having a full decant and deep clean, the ward has had new flooring throughout, complete redecoration, LED lighting installed, a new staff base, new storeroom and a new doctors room.

Ward 42 now also has its own oasis suite – a room used to care for patients who are in the last stages of their life. The room allows patients' families to stay with their loved ones in a calming, peaceful environment. The colourful decoration in patient bays and rooms not only lifts the spirits of the patients and staff but also make it easier for dementia patients to navigate around the ward more easily.

The wards have now been handed back over to the clinical staff and we hope they enjoy working in their fabulous new environment.



Celebrating apprentice success

Three of our NTH Solutions apprentices have been recognised at the Northern and Yorkshire NHS Assessment Centre's annual awards ceremony.

Engineering apprentice Connor Dickinson was awarded the Special Award Cup 2023. Connor started his apprenticeship with us in 2019 and is usually based at the University Hospital of Hartlepool. Connor has since passed his apprenticeship End Point Assessments, achieving the highest grades in the region with a distinction overall.

Ben Gowland, electrical apprentice, was awarded Third Year Apprentice of the Year. Ben is in the third year of his electrical apprenticeship with our estates team. Ben said he enjoys learning new things every day and is looking forward to completing his apprenticeship to have the experience and qualifications to gain a rewarding career.

And last but certainly not least, apprentice medical engineer Olivia Hawke was awarded the Apprenticeship Cup 2023. It comes after she was awarded Apprentice of the Year for the last two years running.

To add to her success, Olivia has also won the IHEEM (Institute of Healthcare Engineering and Estate Management) – Apprentice of the Year Award 2023. This award recognises excellence in the latest innovations from leading names in the healthcare engineering and EFM sector.

Olivia previously worked for us as a ward hostess before starting her apprenticeship in medical engineering in August 2019. Described as a 'natural in her field', Olivia has since consistently achieved high marks and recognition for her work.



We marked Volunteers' Week with a special event to thank our brilliant volunteers

Holding our first volunteer 'Thank You Dinner' since the pandemic, we welcomed volunteers in various roles, including clinical volunteers, drivers, hospital radio Radio Stitch, and the League of Friends to a slap up meal at the Tees Restaurant.

The event was attended by almost 150 volunteers who also enjoyed the presentation of long service awards and entertainment including bingo and music. It was opened by Trust joint chair Derek Bell, who said: "I want to thank each and every one of you for all that you do."

"You make a real difference to this organisation and the care we give to our patients across our hospitals and the community."

Volunteer Colin Ogden said: "We have all had a fabulous evening! Though we don't volunteer for this reason, it was wonderful to be recognised for the work we do."



Aspiring doctors from new medical school set to start roles on hospital wards

Students from a medical school set up to help support people from a range of different backgrounds to achieve their dreams of becoming doctors start their final year at the Trust.

The fifth and final year medical students from the University of Sunderland – the first group to get to this stage since the medical school launched in 2019 – have now started their placements at the Trust.

The group of five have completed the national Medical Licensing Assessment (pilot) applied knowledge test (AKT) needed to work in a clinical environment. They will spend their first ten weeks in the wards and with clinical teams, starting in surgery, anaesthetics and emergency medicine across the organisation's two hospital sites.

The students will be supported by teaching fellow Dr Umar Shafiq, and consultants Mr Anil Agarwal, Dr John Francis and Dr Nicky Desira as they learn and gain experience of specialisms throughout the Trust.

Umar said: "We are pleased to welcome our first cohort of University of Sunderland final-year medical students to the Trust, guiding and supporting them as they prepare to take their first

steps as doctors, in what can be an intense and challenging time for any trainee.

"This will be a very practical and hands-on year for the students. Our clinical colleagues are all here to support them through this process.

"Our students will get hands on experience, which will see them paired up with a foundation doctor and fully integrated into the clinical team. This will have them taking part in huddles and handovers, much like qualified doctors are in the first year of their foundation programme."

Professor Scott Wilkes is head of school of medicine and professor of general practice and primary care at Sunderland. He added: "I'm delighted to see our fifth year medical students embark upon their clinical assistantships at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.

"I have no doubt that their experience will lead to some students selecting their F1 rotation in North Tees and Hartlepool."

Control your hospital appointments with the NHS app



The free NHS App is now even better.

You can book, rearrange or cancel your gastroenterology outpatient appointments with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.

Other outpatient services will follow soon.

Scan the QR code for more information:

