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SPRING 2024

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

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University Hospital of Hartlepool awarded surgical hub status

The national accreditation will increase numbers in planned operations.

Read more on page 4

Also in this issue:

The team supporting people awaiting a cancer diagnosis

Integrating urgent care across the Tees Valley

Our £4 million investment in a robotic surgical theatre



Dear colleagues,

Welcome to your spring edition of Anthem magazine. This is my first introduction to the magazine as your chief executive, but it feels very familiar.

Prior to applying for the role across North Tees and Hartlepool and South Tees Hospitals I carried out some intensive research into 'how things worked' at each organisation. A Trust magazine gives real insight into the ambition and culture of a workplace, and both Anthem and Talking Point (South Tees' publication) gave me a positive measure.

The NHS has been loved and criticised in equal measure in recent years. We are often faced with challenging questions about our performance and how we manage topical matters like waiting lists and staffing numbers. The opportunity to pour all of our good news, our progress and our people stories into a publication like this cannot be underestimated.

I understand that staff across our group really get involved with these publications, and this is encouraging to hear. In the short time I have been here, I have met with some wonderful colleagues and services who are so proud and passionate in all that they deliver for their patients and their own colleagues.

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own colleagues.

My first ask as your chief executive regards these magazines – keep contributing, and keep sharing the publications wider. As well as showcasing our services, innovations and people, they support promoting the Tees as a place to live, learn and work.

Thank you!

Stacey Hunter

GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE



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Developing our group model

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust have formally agreed to establish a group to enable closer working across the two organisations.

This exciting and innovative development has come about following years of joint working but is now well underway following the recruitment of our new chief executive.

The group will deliver better outcomes for:

- Our patients by ensuring equal access to treatment and sharing best practice on how to deliver care
- Our staff by enabling them to work on all of the group's sites more easily and develop career opportunities
- The wider population we serve by collaborating to work on endemic health issues and having a coherent voice to represent the people of the Tees Valley and parts of County Durham and North Yorkshire

The group model means that the two organisations remain separate so they can represent their communities really effectively, but it has the flexibility to enable the trusts to work at scale to take strategic decisions which benefit the group as a whole and the patients we serve.

This is a huge and complex programme of change. To achieve our aims we will be working with a wide variety of partners such as local authorities, Healthwatch, patient involvement leads, other NHS trusts and primary care organisations and third sector organisations as well as influencing regionally through the Integrated Care System for North East and North Cumbria.

We are committed throughout to listening to staff and taking on board your views to help shape our vision for the group model and what this means to you. We will be carrying out regular engagement sessions across all sites – details of these will be published in staff bulletins.

NTH Voices — Tune in and find out...

You can tune in to our recent podcasts about news surrounding the group progress Follow the QR code and listen to the following episodes to find out more:

- **Episode 6** Developing our group model
- Episode 12 Meet our new group chief executive Stacey Hunter
- Episode 13 Transforming our digital services as a group partnership



Signing the joint partnership agreement

On Wednesday 21 February, we officially signed our partnership agreement with South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.

This is a key milestone in the formation of our new hospital group which will enable us to work together to deliver better outcomes for our patients and the wider population across the Tees Valley and beyond.



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Hospital awarded national accreditation to be surgical hub for planned operations



Pictured: Members of the surgical hub team at the University Hospital of Hartlepoo

The University Hospital of Hartlepool will increase the amount of planned operations for people across the Tees Valley – after it was awarded surgical hub status.

The NHS England recognition is aimed at helping increase surgical capacity and efficiency, offering patients quicker access to common procedures.

At Hartlepool, these will include orthopaedic operations such as hip and knee replacements as well as gynaecology, surgical and breast procedures.

Richard Jeavons, clinical director for orthopaedics, said: "This is fantastic news for Hartlepool and for our Trust, meaning more operations and quicker outcomes for so many people waiting for their planned operations.

"We are very proud to be one of just a few sites to gain this accreditation, which is a sign of the outstanding work all staff deliver on a daily basis and the additional work they have carried out during the application process.

"So much work has been dedicated over recent years to making Hartlepool hospital the Trust's elective care centre – and this latest achievement is a reflection of that."

Surgical hubs are separated from emergency services, meaning beds are kept free for patients waiting for planned operations.

Lindsey Wallace, care group director for collaborative care, said: "I want to thank the elective team, every single member of which has helped make this ambition a reality over the last few months.

"This is the start of a series of really exciting developments at the Hartlepool site."

The scheme is run by NHS England's Getting It Right First Time programme, in collaboration with the Royal College of Surgeons of England and supported by the Royal College of Anaesthetists.

The NHS England team visited the hub at the end of last year to evaluate five elements - the patient pathway, staff and training, clinical governance and outcomes, facilities and ring-fencing, and utilisation and productivity.

www.nth.nhs.uk

Helping those in need to hear

Finding a sack of more than 7,600 old hearing aids has led environmental services and sustainability officer **Natasha Cuthbert** on a journey to help some of the world's poorest people to live fuller lives by helping them to hear.

Natasha wondered if there was a use for the unused hearing aids and after a little research, she made contact with London-based charity Hearing Aid Recycling. The charity collects, cleans and distributes old hearing aids to the developing world.

Natasha said: "Hearing Aid Recycling wipes the data from old hearing aids and clears the frequency settings, before giving them a thorough clean.

"They are then sent all over the world to underprivileged kids and adults.

"It turns out that I pass a drop-off centre on my way home from work, so I dropped them off one evening."

The drop-off point, Relph Funeral Directors in Stockton-on-Tees, passed them on to Hearing Aid Recycling when their founder, Zoe Fawcett-Eustade, was visiting the region.

Zoe commented: "We really couldn't believe how many and how fantastic the hearing aids are.

"We really will be able to transform so many lives and stop so much waste. It's incredible.

"Thank you

If you have any unused hearing aids, you can email Natasha on: natasha.cuthbert@nhs.net to arrange collection.



Pictured: Natasha Cuthbert dropping off the hearing aids



Pictured: Staff from drop off point, Relph's Funeral Home, handing over the hearing aids to Zoe Fawcett-Eustade



More health research studies across the Tees Valley – thanks to new partnership

The Trust will be one of the "flagship sites" for a multi-national research company – after it opened a centre for clinical trials at the University Hospital of North Tees.

The new research centre will be run by FutureMeds, who lead health research studies and will work with health staff in the Tees Valley Research Alliance (TVRA), which oversees research activity at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

They will help the two trusts increase their involvement in the number of clinical studies and the number of people recruited.

Speaking at an official opening event at the new site, Justin Carter, clinical director for research and development at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, said: "Our patients want to be involved in research.

"They know it means they have more contact with us and improved care not only for them but for people in the future.

"NHS organisations who are actively involved in research are also able to improve and progress.

"We are really pleased to be able to launch this new partnership to further increase research activity in the alliance."

Dr Radoslaw Janiak, chief executive of FutureMeds, said: "We want this centre to be our flagship site and a real example of a successful collaboration between health organisations.

"We have very ambitious goals from the six countries and 18 locations we currently operate from.

"From this site, we aim to open more studies and enhance the studies already being carried out."

There are 160 members of staff supporting the delivery of research across the alliance, recruiting more than 6,000 patients a year into research trials across 26 clinical specialisms in two health trusts.

Community comes together for special 'Festival of Finance' hospital events

Organisations across the Tees Valley came together once again for NHS staff, as part of a project to support people with cost of living challenges.

The Trust opened its doors to a host of local businesses and groups to the latest of its 'festival of finance' events.

The festival, held in November at the Trust's two hospital sites in Hartlepool and Stockton, included a range of services for staff including free car checks, discounts and offers

It also included advice and support on subjects like pensions, gas and electric bills, finance, therapy and charity support.

Susy Cook, chief people officer, who attended the event, said: "This really is an example of a community pulling together for the benefit of all.

"Our staff are our number one asset – without them, we can't deliver outstanding care to our patients.

"As an organisation we must do everything we can to support them – now more than ever, as we face the most challenging financial times in many years.

"We also have a responsibility as one of the region largest employers to support our community – and by inviting only local businesses and groups we are doing just that.

"I was truly humbled to see so many people along to offer their help and support to all."

Among those invited were Kwikfit who offered free car checks, the regional economic crime co-ordination centre, Utilita, Hartlepower, Manfield Wealth, Miller Homes and the Stockton Learning and Skills Council.

The event is the latest of a series of financial health and wellbeing activities suggested by staff in a Trust-wide survey in 2022.

Amanda McNeany, cancer nurse specialist, who went to the event at the University Hospital of Hartlepool, said: "It's fantastic to see how these events have really gained momentum and become something so meaningful to staff like myself.

"It was fantastic to see so many organisations, offering their support to all of us. It is really appreciated at such a challenging time for many."





Pictured: Finance events held in the main concourse at Hartlepool and the back of the Tees Restaurant at North Tees.

GP practice health and wellbeing coach shares passion for role – as part of regional careers campaign



Pictured: Richard taking part in a wellness walk in Billingham with a patient.

A health and wellbeing coach in a GP practice who helps people with a range of issues like mental health and loneliness has shared his passion for the role – as part of a regional careers campaign.

Richard Adamson is a health and wellbeing coach at seven GP practices across Billingham and Norton – part of Hartlepool and Stockton Health GP federation – helping to provide holistic support to people.

As part of this, he helps patients at the practice in setting short and long-term goals – describing himself as that "middle person" between a patient and GP.

Richard, from Coulby Newham, is part of Tees Valley
Health and Social Care Careers' campaign to promote
little-known-about health and social care career roles
across the Tees Valley. The campaign is backed by 11
organisations including health trusts, local authorities and a
GP federation.

Richard said: "Myself and the team help guide our patients in the right direction. This can involve face to face appointments, phone appointments or even going to patients' own homes to offer that support.

"We see ourselves as the middle person – we can spend that extra time with the patient, show them how they can achieve their goals or signpost them into a treatment that will help them."

Richard, who has a background as a qualified personal trainer, also leads regular wellness walks for patients.

He explains: "The walks involve meeting in the community as a group with a health and wellbeing coach or social prescriber to meet and greet.

"No one should feel they need to talk or open up, it is merely a chance to get out into the community, be around people who are going through similar situations as you, get exercise and get some fresh air. From there we can help signpost these people to other areas and help them get the support they need."

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



The team supporting people awaiting a cancer diagnosis

The Trust has introduced a new role to support people through their cancer diagnosis journey. Our new cancer pathway navigators provide help and care to patients as they go through investigations for potential cancers.

The four navigators work in three slightly varying roles, but all have common goals in mind – enhancing patient experience and encouraging appointment uptake.

From the moment someone is referred onto a cancer pathway, the navigators assist with appointment arrangements, provide advice and reassurance and can also make referrals to other services – for example support to cut down alcohol intake or counselling.

They also work to ensure that people receive a cancer or non-cancer diagnosis within 28 days of referral from a GP or screening service to meet the national NHS Faster Diagnosis Standard.

Jane Richards is a cancer pathway navigator in the lung and gynaecology services at the Trust. She said: "We follow people through their journey, from referral through to investigations and imaging to diagnosis.

"We're a much-needed point of contact for people who require that bit of extra help. Waiting to find out if you

have cancer is such an anxious and stressful time – just having a dedicated person who you can ring with questions and concerns, or just get a bit of support, is so beneficial."

Statistically, 90% of people referred onto cancer diagnostic pathways will not have a diagnosis of cancer. This support service reassures people throughout the investigation process, regardless of outcome.

The navigators support patients from referral into the Trust – or, in some cases, community cancer screening – up until either a cancer or non-cancer diagnosis is made. They work closely with the Trust's cancer care coordinators who continue care if a patient receives a cancer diagnosis.

If a diagnosis of non-cancer is made but the team has identified that there's a need for wellbeing support, care doesn't end here. The patient is referred onto a social prescribing link worker – a role which connects people to community-based signposting, advice and support.



Pictured: Cancer pathway navigators Sarah Hayllar, Matthew Walton, Michelle Whittaker and Jane Richards

Volunteer dreams of returning to Trust one day as a doctor

taught me so much. Because of them. I feel so much more prepared for what is to come. !!

A young woman from Teesside is set to achieve her dream of becoming a doctor - after starting her journey as a hospital volunteer.

At the age of 16, Molly Caygill got her first opportunity in healthcare by volunteering at the Trust.

Molly, who is now 23 and from Great Ayton, started volunteering at the University Hospital of North Tees in areas like cardiology, endoscopy and pathology.

It was then a chance meeting with Nicola Grieves, who manages the Trust's urgent care service, which led to an opportunity to start working at the organisation as a healthcare assistant, including in the urgent care department.

Molly said: "In my role as a volunteer, I went along to the Trust's awards night and met Nic there.

"We got talking, she gave me so much help and advice and asked if I would like to come and work in urgent and emergency care."

Over the last few months, Molly has gained significant experience working with staff and caring for patients.

Molly, who has been accepted for a place at Warwick University, said: "Without the opportunities in the team, I wouldn't be in this position.

"All of the staff here have taught me so much. Because of them, I feel so much more prepared for what is to come.

R All of the

staff here have

North Tees and Hartlepool - I want to come back here one day as a doctor in emergency care."

Speaking to Molly, Nicola, senior clinical lead nurse, said: "Molly has become a really strong independent woman, we are all so proud of her

"You really are a different woman to the one who first started here, you understand so much about the care patients need.

"We are all excited to see where your career takes you - you are always welcome in our urgent and emergency care department."





Tees Valley urgent care services to be jointly run by health groups

People with minor injuries and illnesses will soon benefit from a jointly run NHS urgent care service across the Tees Valley.

The service will be run by an alliance of four Trust, the North East Ambulance Service and the Hartlepool and Stockton Health GP Federation.

North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB).

Kevin Moore, clinical director for emergency care at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, said: "This new alliance will bring together expertise and resources from across the region so that patients can have the highest standard of care.

"Urgent care services across the area are helping ensure people get the right help at the right time for a whole range of minor injuries and illnesses.

"We know our patients want as smooth a journey as possible when receiving treatment and urgent care services help ensure this is the case."

and the University Hospital of North Tees and the urgent treatment centre at Redcar Primary Care Hospital.

Services will be further enhanced by the creation of the Hospital, built alongside its existing emergency department,

Teesside that will integrate services, provide care closer to home and ease emergency department pressures.

Hartlepool and Stockton Health; Kevin Moore,

clinical director for emergency care at North Tees

Craig Blair, local director for the North

ast and North Cumbria ICB.

All four centres will all treat a wide range of minor

- sprains and strains
- cuts and grazes
- suspected broken limbs
- ear and throat infections



NORTH TEES + HARTLEPOOL T O G E T H E R



Pictured: Betired specialised therapy assistant Chris Lawson (centre) with the Tangent construction crev

Work gets underway on stroke and dementia therapy garden

Work has begun on building a therapy garden at the University Hospital of North Tees for our stroke and dementia patients.

It comes after our charity, 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 will provide support to stroke, dementia and elderly patients and their families as part of their hospital care. It will also be a welcoming green space where discharged patients can make use of the provisions.

The garden will feature walking rehabilitation facilities, specialist equipment for building muscle, cognitive learning activities and more. It aims to improve patient rehabilitation, provide holistic therapy and allow patients to regain their independence.

Jameel Razak, from Norton, had a stroke when he was 23-years-old. After receiving treatment in North

Tees' stroke ward in 2022, he took an interest in the development of the garden.

He said: "The care I received at North Tees was incredible, but I never got a minute to myself to process things.

"I think the new outdoor space will give patients an outlet to get away from the ward. Being around grass and trees and greenery does make a difference to your mental health. It will also give patients some time to themselves without the hectic-ness of the ward. It's important to have a space to process things."

The garden was funded through the Greener Communities Fund, which is administered by NHS Charities Together in partnership with Starbucks and environmental charity, Hubbub. Building work is being carried out by Tangent Construction and is due to open this spring.



Hartlepool fashion store makes generous donation to breast screening

A huge thank you to the team at Sorella Boutique who are raising funds to support breast screening across the Tees Valley.

The fashion store has so far raised more than £100,000 for charities, including the breast unit at our Trust – in support of their customers who are fighting breast cancer.

72-year-old Jean Walsh, a retired nurse from Hartlepool, is one such customer. In 2019, Jean found a lump in her breast. Convinced that it was nothing to worry about, it was more than a year later when she sought professional support and attended a mammogram at the University Hospital of Hartlepool – all because of the influence of her friends.

Now three years clear, Jean is encouraging others not to ignore symptoms. She regularly teaches in fitness and dance classes at a Hartlepool gym and Peterlee Pavillion and uses these sessions to encourage breast examination.

Jean said: "Sorella is amazing in their charity work. Cancer is something you have to try and live with and it has a big impact as well on husbands whose wives are diagnosed.

"The joy I get from giving back to my local community is indescribable."

2024 events calendar

North Tees and Hartlepool Together is hosting a number of fundraising events this year.

And you don't need to work for us to take part. These events are open to everyone to take on a new challenge while supporting our Trust charity.

GREAT NORTH RUN

Date: Sunday 8 September 2024

Registration fee: £62

Minimum sponsorship: £150

YORKSHIRE THREE PEAKS

Date: Sunday 19 May 2024

Registration fee: £75

Minimum sponsorship: £100

SCAFELL PIKE SUNRISE WALK

Date: Saturday 1 June 2024

Registration fee: £75

Minimum sponsorship: £100

HADRIAN'S WALL TREK

Date: Sunday 14 September

Registration fee: £65

Minimum sponsorship: £100

NATIONAL THREE PEAKS

Date: Friday 4 to Sunday 6 October 2024

Registration fee: £475

(this includes your travel and accommodation)

Minimum sponsorship: £200

For more information about these events, please scan the QR code to visit our website.

If you're interested, please email Suzi Campbell, fundraising coordinator, on suzi.campbell@nhs.net or 07517 829331.





Pictured: The cancer care coordinators support patients during their journey through cancer treatment.

Cancer care team rated by patients as being among the best in region

A team of care workers who help people affected by cancer have been rated among the best service in the region for personalised care – based on feedback from those they have supported.

Since the Trust's cancer care co-ordinators started two years ago, the team has supported patients from the moment they are diagnosed until they have completed all of their treatment. They act as a central point of contact for patients and their families.

Now the team has received an overwhelmingly positive response in the most recent National Cancer Patient Experience Survey, performing above the 'expected range' in 15 of the questions.

Kendra Powell, Macmillan lead cancer nurse, said: "The cancer care coordinators have worked tirelessly

to embed personalised care within each of the cancer teams. As a result, patient experience has improved greatly – this was backed up by the survey results.

"The cancer care coordinators have become an invaluable resource over the last couple of years. They are embedded within the clinical teams and we would be lost without them, the work they do supporting patients on a daily basis is second to none.

"As an organisation we are very proud of the role and how it has developed."

Patient praises medical teams after serious pressure ulcer heals

'Nothing is ever too much trouble' – an elderly patient has praised the specialist medical team who helped her recover from a significant pressure wound.

One September evening, 83-year-old Margaret Lowrey fell from her bed in her Billingham bungalow. Landing awkwardly with her leg trapped under her, Margaret lay there all night until the next morning when her daughter Nicole found her.

Rushed into hospital suffering a badly broken femur, which was made more complex by Margaret's earlier hip replacement and pre-existing osteoporosis, the emergency assessment unit (EAU) team at the University Hospital of North Tees also diagnosed a 'unstageable pressure ulcer' on her posterior. The ulcer was caused by Margaret laying on the floor, unable to move all night.

Essentially a large black bruise in appearance, the ulcer is considered 'unstageable' as it is not possible to assess the stage of the damage caused. Pressure ulcers can be very serious, impacting layers of skin, muscle and even bones.

The EAU team called in the Trust's tissue viability team who recommended a plan of action.



Pictured: The ward 33 team has supported Margaret through her recovery

A pressure relieving mattress was installed in the bed, along with a repositioning plan to move Margaret every two hours to prevent the wound from getting worse, the application of expert dressings and topical creams, and regular photographs taken to assess the wound as treatment continued. The team also monitored Margaret's fluid intake and diet.

Margaret said: "Everyone has been lovely. If I have to press the buzzer, they're here straight away. Nothing is too much trouble.

"Everyone is great, from the cleaners to the medical staff.

"I've had so many photos of my bottom taken, I think they're going to be displayed in the Tate Gallery! But once you've had babies, you're not embarrassed about anything."

Patient views

Each month our patient experience team receive feedback and kind comments about our services which help us to shape care, patient experience and hospital environments.

Let us know what we're doing well or give suggestions for improvements by emailing **nth-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net** or calling **01642 624719**.

Dear Hartlepool Home First hospital angels, we would just like to say a very big thank you to you all for the amazing care you gave to us. Every one of you has been so caring and friendly and we could not cope without your help these past couple of weeks. Thanks again for such wonderful care.

With the support and encouragement of the community dementia liaison service, my husband has started helping out with cooking again. Cooking has always been so important to him, and he's been reluctant to participate since his dementia diagnosis. Working together in the kitchen again has been like having my old husband back. Thank you!

Offering aspiring students chance to progress into a career in healthcare

A course that sees young people from the Tees Valley gaining experience within healthcare has gone from strength to strength – with vital help from local colleges – in its bid to develop the next generation of NHS staff.

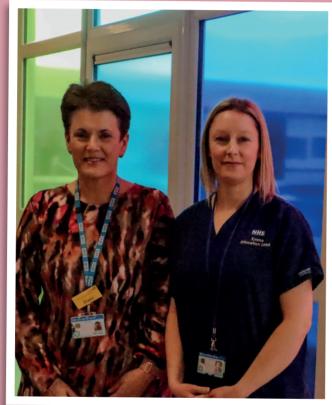
As part of the continuing development of the T-Level healthcare offer – Hartlepool Sixth Form College, Hartlepool College of Further Education and Stockton Riverside College have helped to fund a vital industry work placement administrator role, using the government's T-Level Employer Support Fund, within North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.

This new role has supported the expansion of the T-Level course by having a dedicated Trust staff member on site who can organise placement positions and offer academic and pastoral support to T-Level healthcare students.

T-Level placement administrator, Alison Parker, said: "I began my role back in September last year thanks to college funding and it's been rewarding building the course from the ground up.

"Previously, we had a limited T-Level offering within our hospitals, but I've been able to work with the colleges and their students to get them into meaningful placements, as part of three rotations with us within each academic year.

"My job is to be that important link between the Trust, the students and the colleges – ensuring I feedback on student progress so that they can work towards completing their T-Level course."



Pictured: T-Level administrator, Alison Parker and education lead. Emma Davies

The next generation of healthcare professionals

Reflecting on her decision to take on the role of T-Level administrator, Alison said: "It's been an incredible privilege to have found myself within this role – to be able to help nurture the students and to shape their course experience.

"Our students have had some really positive feedback from their rotation healthcare mentors and we're looking forward to seeing our first round of students go on to have rewarding and successful careers within the NHS and beyond."

The Trust is currently hosting 24 students as part of their T-Level Health in partnership with the three local colleges.

Emma Davies, education lead, said: "The growth and development of our T-Level offer is absolutely vital in growing our healthcare professionals of the future.

"Having Alison in role to help our students during their placements, both practically and pastorally and linking in with the colleges has had a massive impact on expanding the offer and delivery of the T-Level in Healthcare course.

"We're so proud of the brilliant working relationships we have with our local colleges and the continuing development of the T-Level course will only help strengthen the options for those who are interested in a career in healthcare."



Dictured. Claire is currently volunteering on our elderly ward to gain experience for a career in nursing

A day in the life of... an elderly care volunteer

45-year-old Claire Briggs has been volunteering at our Trust since September last year.

Having been offered a place at university to study nursing, she was a little nervous to get started and decided to take up a role as a volunteer to get some more experience in healthcare.

We recently sat down with Claire to find out a little more about her experience as a volunteer and how the role is preparing her for her career.

Q: Why did you become a volunteer?

So, I was doing farming – I was on a farm for 20 years and when I left, I said to my little boy 'what am I going to do?'. And he went 'what did you want to be when you were little?'

When I told him I wanted to be a nurse, he said 'well, just do it'.

So I did an access course in Health and Science and somehow got really, really good marks. I passed that and then I got a place at university but I was just really scared because I'd been on the farm for the last 20 years. So I applied to be a volunteer to give me some confidence.

Q: How does an average day start for you?

I'll normally come in about 9, put my coat away and say hi to everyone.

I'll just peep in the rooms. If any of the patients are asleep, I'll leave them. But if they're awake, I'll say good morning to them and ask 'do you want a cup of tea?' And then my little trick is to say 'or do you want

a hot chocolate?' and they'll have a little hot chocolate and some ginger biscuits.

Some of the patients won't be very chatty. But if they are, I'll sit and ask them questions. I always try and use their first names – what it says on their board – and I'll ask them about where they're from.

O: What's your favourite part of your day?

I always get attached to about two patients on a shift.

Today it's a lady who's dead cheeky and she was jealous when I mentioned another patient – she was like 'I thought I was your favourite.'

And there's a man in who I've clicked with as well. He's just so jolly and happy and likes to know what he's having for dinner. He loves talking about food.

When you give patients their meal, you write down what they want and then normally shot that bit of paper away. But he likes to keep it. And then when I come in, he goes 'so tell me what I've had this week', so I go 'right, on Monday you had that, then on Tuesday you had this' – and that's just our thing.

Q: How is volunteering preparing you for university?

When I first started volunteering, I was so shy. I'm 45 and I've never worked in this industry before and that was really daunting.

The best thing is the patients and the confidence it's given me. It's given me that experience and the time to think 'is this what I want?' – and it is.

Everything's just happening at the moment and I'm just riding the wave.



Pictured: Nicole Lackenby is one of our Trust's green champions

Green champions

Staff are being challenged to commit to being green champions – helping the NHS in its mission to be sustainable over the next two decades and beyond.

THE AIMS OF OUR GREEN PLAN ARE TO:

- Reduce carbon emissions and our carbon footprint
- Create sustainable procurement of goods that can be recycled and not just single use
- Encourage sustainable travel and transport for staff and visitors
- Make our clinical pathways more sustainable
- Reduce our water consumption in key areas
- Increase recycling
- Work towards climate change adaptation
- Maximise the sustainability of our building and green spaces
- Encourage our workforce to commit to a carbon free future

So we can continue to make these changes, we are inviting our workforce to drive this forward by becoming a green champion and getting involved in improvement work.

Nicole Lackenby, paediatric team lead dietitian, has been a member of the green group for over a year. She said: "I joined the green group as I think it's really important to make more sustainable choices to help look after our planet, and as a Trust, we can have a such a huge positive impact.

"Being part of the group is also really interesting. I can link in with colleagues I wouldn't usually speak to and also find out what we're doing as a Trust to help green up. Who knew you could make concrete from clinical waste?"

To become a green champion please contact Steve Bell, environmental services and sustainability manager, on: steven.bell5@nhs.net





Our NHS implant analysis service goes from strength to strength

NTH Solutions' NHS Implant Analysis Service underscores our commitment to enhancing patient safety and driving improvements in outcomes.

Working closely with an award-winning, world-class lab provider, we offer a fast and cost-effective solution for independent analysis of explanted medical devices

Sue Waller, clinical quality and data management lead, has been integral in the success of the service. She has been part of the project team since the service was launched

She said: "I'm thrilled to be part of this service. We're poised to deliver unparalleled insights into medical device performance ultimately enhancing patient care and safety."

For more information on the Implant Analysis

Introducing NTH Solutions' partnership with Blue Mental Health Support

NTH Solutions has joined forces with Blue Mental Health Support to create an e-learning course specifically designed for educators to address the pressing issue of mental health and wellbeing among young people and children.

Johnny Morton from Blue Mental Health Support shares his excitement about our partnership: "I'm thrilled to work with NTH Solutions to bring our expertise in mental health education to educators everywhere. Together, we can make a real difference in supporting the mental health of young people."

For more information on Blue Mental Health Support, scan the QR code.



Butterwick





Pictured: Judith, Corrine, Abbie, Claire, and Lucy are all part of the Butterwick team.

Butterwick Hospice reopens adult inpatient unit

After a difficult period of dormancy, the adult inpatient unit at Butterwick Hospice reopened its doors in August 2023, and working in partnership with the Trust, has been welcoming patients requiring end of life care for the last six months.

We spoke to Lucy Henderson, clinical manager for adult services, about the Hospice and what patients and their families can expect when using the service.

Q: What's different since reopening the adult inpatient unit?

Everything feels different. To go from having an empty unit to having nurses and HCAs caring for patients and their families is wonderful. I'm sometimes asked if it is depressing working in an environment where people come to die, but I don't find it so. Working somewhere that supports people to be comfortable and at peace in their last days of life is a great privilege. Our founder, Mary Butterwick once said: "It is not our Hospice, it is your Hospice, it belongs to the people of this community."

Q: What can patients and their family members expect when they receive care in the unit?

Mary Butterwick's vision for this Hospice was a place where people could come and feel at home. That's what we aim to offer today. People should expect to be comfortable, to be pain-free, but they should also be supported to access things that matter to them. We have spacious, private bedrooms, so there is plenty of space for visitors as well as a designated family room and shared kitchen.

We don't have visiting hours or a strict limit on numbers – the people who matter to you can visit whenever they like, for as long as they like.

Q: What makes the environment different from a hospital setting?

People often comment on the sense of peace they feel when entering Butterwick Hospice. Hospitals can be busy, often noisy places with a great deal going on. At Butterwick we take care of our patients in a calm, quiet environment. We have a high staff to patient ratio, meaning there is always someone on-hand to provide care, answer questions or just to sit and be with the patient.

Q: How do people access the adult inpatient service?

Butterwick Hospice works in collaboration with the North Tees and Hartlepool specialist palliative care team. The clinical nurse specialists take referrals from across the hospital and carry out daily reviews of patients on the "Care of the Dying Person Document", to identify patients for whom a hospice is their preferred place of death, and who would be suitable for Butterwick Hospice. If you have a patient who you think might be suitable, please refer them to the specialist palliative care team.

The impact of staff networks

From making small but significant changes, to planning events and supporting colleagues, our staff networks are having a real impact... and perhaps you could get involved?

Equality, diversity and inclusion engagement lead and staff network lead Kris Bell said: "Our staff networks meet regularly, discussing a variety of issues, running events and making real changes to the Trust.

"If you've seen signs advising that not all disabilities are visible, noticed the increase in gender-neutral toilets or used the new benches in staff changing rooms, would you be surprised to learn they are all improvements brought about by the staff networks?

"The networks have also led the Trust in supporting key awareness events such as Black History Month, International Women's Day and Disability History Month, to name but a few."

The networks are always open to new members and you don't have to be a member of that particular characteristic to join – allies are always welcome too.

The groups are open to everyone, clinical or non-clinical, including volunteers and NTH Solutions staff.

Kris commented: "We would love to see new people join the networks and also getting involved in the themed events that run throughout the year, all of which help to support creating a more inclusive culture.

"There are also opportunities to become network leads – we currently have two groups seeking lead support, those aimed at younger and older members of staff. It's a great opportunity for professional growth and development, so if you are interested in supporting our staff networks and becoming a network lead, or would like further information, please get in touch.

"We know everyone is busy but the Trust grants protected time for staff to attend network meetings."

As well as the regular monthly meetings, the network leads also hold a bi-monthly open meeting. Any member of staff is welcome to come along, meet the network leads, find out more about the networks, the support available and the impact the groups have on Trust life.

If you would like to find out when the next open meeting is, or to arrange for a network lead to attend your team meeting and deliver a brief or informal presentation, please contact Kris Bell on kristopher.bell@nhs.net

To find out more about joining a staff network, please email nth-tr.staffnetworks@nhs.net



Pictured: Staff network leads Sushil Munakhya, Kris Bell and Matthew Harper,









Code of conduct

The Trust has recently launched its new code of conduct. The code not only outlines the standards, professionalism and behaviours expected of all employees, but also what colleagues can expect from the Trust.

Lisa Johnson, head of people services, said:
"Like any large organisation, there are times when behaviours are not what we would expect or would like to be on the receiving end of, and we have

"The Trust adopts a Just and Learning Culture before moving to any formal disciplinary measures, but by following this code, you don't really need to be concerned with any of those. The code simply and clearly outlines what is and what is not acceptable."

THE CODE EXPLORES THREE SUBJECTS IN DETAIL:

- Value
- Standards of personal and professional behaviour
- Standards of probity

Lisa is keen to point out that the code is no a 'policing' tool – it also protects staff. She commented: "The code absolutely outlines what we can all expect from the Trust as employees and what the Trust expects of every colleague. If you feel you are being subjected to behaviours that don't match the code, you can refer to it in discussions with your manager or another senior leader within the Trust."

Managers have been invited to attend briefing sessions which outline the principles of the code of conduct and how to apply it to working life in the Trust. One participant praised the code as 'promoting the basics of behaviour, professionalism and personal conduct'.

Lisa said: "The aim of the code of conduct is to simply make our Trust an even more welcoming inclusive place to work for all of us."

The Code of Conduct is available on the human resources page of our staff SharePoint site.

Maternity leads the response to CQC report

Last year, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) visited our Trust for an unannounced inspection of our maternity service and children and young people's service.

Following this visit, we were sent a full report which included a list of actions to carry out to help the service improve.

Lindsey Robertson, chief nurse and director of patient safety and quality, said: "Over the last 18 months, the maternity service has made a number of improvements. I know staff in the service will agree with me that any future CQC visit will give us an opportunity to showcase how significant our progress has been."

Lindsey added: "This is just a small sample of the improvements the team has made.

"On behalf of the board of directors, I want to thank all of the staff behind this work and note how outstanding this has been. Everyone involved has gone above and beyond to make sure the services' achievements are front and centre of everything we showcase."



Pictured: Laura Smith is our dedicated lead bereavement midwife at the Trust

ACTING ON THE CQC'S REPORT, WE HAVE:

- Carried out two abduction simulation exercises to ensure babies are safe on our wards
- Increased staff training
- Undertaken an hourly 'fresh eyes' process
- Held staffing huddles everyday
- Employed a risk midwife to support learning from incidents
- Oversight of performance is fed back at care group level
- Increased monitoring of Duty of Candour
- Employed an infant feeding specialised midwife (who has achieved Unicef accreditation since being appointed)
- Made improvements in providing information to staff
- Supported our consultant midwife in reviewing care and treatment based on national guidance
- Appointed a bereavement midwife
- Involved the Maternity and Neonatal Voices
 Partnership more in the development of services
- Appointed a digital midwife (who has led on the implementation of BadgerNet throughout the Trust)
- Added to the senior leadership by appointing new midwifery lead roles
- Provided psychological safety training for all staff
- Discussed risks within the service at a weekly patient safety meeting, monthly healthy lives oversight, safety and quality meeting and quality assurance council



Pictured: Both our maternity ward and special care baby unit have now achieved stage 1 in UNICEF's Baby Friendly Accreditation





Pictured: (Left to right) Nurse Practitioner, Leeann Thomson; Clinical Quality and Data

Pictured: (Left to right) Nurse Practitioner, Leeann Thomson; Clinical Quality and Data

Pictured: (Left to right) Nurse Practitioner, Leeann Thomson; Clinical Quality and Data

Hospital's elective care centre given national recognition for patient safety

A hospital has been highlighted for its commitment to patient safety – after its elective surgery hub was given national recognition.

The surgical centre at the University Hospital of Hartlepool has been named as a National Joint Registry (NJR) Quality Data Provider after successfully completing a national programme of local data audits.

The NJR monitors the performance of hip, knee, ankle, elbow and shoulder joint replacement procedures to improve clinical outcomes for the benefit of patients as well as supporting and giving feedback to orthopaedic clinicians and industry manufacturers.

The registry collects high quality orthopaedic data in order to provide evidence to support patient safety, standards in quality of care, and overall value in joint replacement surgery.

The Hartlepool hospital site is the Trust's centre for planned, non-urgent surgical care.

Richard Jeavons, clinical director of orthopaedics, said: "This is fantastic recognition for the elective hub at the Hartlepool. Patients need to know that the care they are receiving is safe and of the very highest standard.

"The operating theatres here make up the Trust's centre for elective care – a place where we perform the majority of our non-urgent, planned surgery.

"We are delighted with how the centre has been progressing over recent months and this is a further sign of the outstanding work being carried out by the clinical and support teams."

The NJR Quality Data Provider certificate scheme was introduced to offer hospitals a blueprint for reaching high quality standards relating to patient safety and to reward those who have met registry targets.

In order to achieve the award, hospitals are required to meet a series of six ambitious targets during the audit period 2022/23.

One of the targets which hospitals are required to complete is compliance with a mandatory national audit aimed at assessing data completeness and quality within the registry. The audit compares the number of joint replacement procedures submitted to the registry to the number carried out and the Trust's patient records system to test data accuracy.

NJR targets also include having a high level of patients consenting for their details to be included in the registry so that they can be easily contacted in future should the need arise.

National Joint Registry Medical Director, Tim Wilton, said: "Congratulations to colleagues at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust. The Quality Data Provider Award demonstrates the high standards being met towards ensuring compliance with the NJR and is often a reflection of strong departmental efforts to achieve such status."

Four million pound surgical theatre under construction

Work is underway on our new £4.2m robotic and emergency maternity surgical theatre at the University Hospital of North Tees.

The ten-month construction project will see a new surgical theatre constructed on the hospital's first floor, spanning the space above the atrium which runs alongside the corridor with the promotional stands.

Permanent columns from the ground floor will support the new theatre.

The ambitious development will create a flexible robotic theatre space which can also be used for general surgery. During these times, the robot device will be moved to a separate training room.

The new maternity theatre is close to the delivery suite and increases the Trust's capacity to treat women in an emergency.

Project design and development manager Jordan Pearson said: "This project will take



Pictured: The construction access no

nearly a year to complete and will cause some disruption but it will be more than worth it.

"There will be very clear signage around the works area, advising of alternate routes and providing key safety information.

"We're asking everyone to take note of any signs or any advice from the construction team from Geoffrey Robinson Ltd."

Access to the construction area will require temporary remodelling of the paediatric emergency department. This will be clearly signed with safety barriers installed.

The new robotic and emergency maternity surgical theatre is expected to be complete and treating patients in December 2024.



Pictured: The Da Vinci robotic surgeon, nicknamed 'Robbie

A new **Health and Social Care Academy for** Hartlepool

Work has begun on the new Health and Social Care Academy at the University Hospital of Hartlepool.

The Hartlepool Health and Social Care Academy, which is part of our Faculty of Leadership, Learning and Improvement, is one of five of Hartlepool Borough Council's £25m Town Deal transformation projects.

The £1.25m project will see a ward developed into a state-of-the-art training facility, featuring a bespoke simulation 'at home' training suite among its realistic health care settings. This includes a four-bed training bay, an ICT suite, a trainee common room, an immersive suite and several other flexible training rooms.

The academy, which will be operated in partnership between the Trust and Hartlepool College of Further Education, will kick start the careers of the next generation of health and social care professionals sectors which currently account for an estimated 20% of the region's employment figures.

Neil Atkinson, managing director of the Trust, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for the Trust to complement the services we operate out of Hartlepool and to ensure we have the right pipeline of qualified staff working across the health and social care system in the future."

Councillor Mike Young, leader of Hartlepool Borough Council, said: "Helping people to develop the skills needed to secure high-quality jobs is a key aim of Hartlepool Town Deal, and this project represents a major investment in the future of our town, its residents and our local hospital."

Darren Hankey, chair of the Hartlepool Town Deal Board and Principal of Hartlepool College of Further Education, added: "The Health and Social Care Academy - alongside a Civil Engineering Skills Academy that is also being supported by the Hartlepool Town Deal - will bring significant benefits to the borough by addressing serious skills shortages and providing new career opportunities for local people."

The Hartlepool Health and Social Care Academy build is set to complete in summer 2024.

Pictured: Images from the start of works celebration event











Governor elections

Both North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation **Trust and South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are** appealing to local people and staff to consider standing for election as Trust governors.

Governors are elected from Trust members and perform a vital role in how we develop and improve

Group chair Professor Derek Bell, OBE, said: "Standing for election as a governor is a direct and impactful way anyone can get involved in the day-today functions and services of their local hospital.

"I'd like to see staff stand but also, if you know someone in your personal life who could make a good governor, please ask them to consider standing for election and representing their community."

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A GOVERNOR INCLUDE:

- Shaping Trust plans for the future
- Reflecting the interests of members and the general public
- Assisting in appointing non-executive directors
- Supporting the development of services
- Attending council of governors meetings
- Developing the Trust's membership strategy

If you would like to stand for governor, you must first be a member of the Trust. All employees are automatically members and therefore eligible to stand. Non-employees can become members free-of-charge and can also access exclusive NHS staff offers and discounts.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT

- North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust: www.nth.nhs.uk/about/governors or call 01642 383920
- South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: www.southtees.nhs.uk/about/governors or call 01642 854151

LE Standing for election as a governor is a direct and impactful way anyone can get involved in the day-to-day functions and services of their local hospital. ""





Pictured: Annmarie and Lourds have both made the move from volunteer to ward hostess

From volunteer to career

Two volunteers are taking their first steps into NHS roles after taking part in a new volunteer to career scheme.

49-year-old Annmarie Rushton and 43-year-old Lourds Carmaleen Ruwani de Croos are two former volunteers who have now found employment as ward hostesses.

Annmarie, a former supermarket worker, began her journey volunteering in April 2023 on both the gastroenterology ward and supporting with visiting hours on maternity.

She said: "I never thought I would ever work in a hospita and I never thought I'd even be taken on as a volunteer.

"It really gave me the confidence to step forward and think 'you know what, I can do it It made me feel like I could give more."

The Trust's 'Volunteer to Career' programme began in April 2023 and has already seen 10 clinical volunteers take the leap into paid roles at the Trust. As part of the programme, Annmarie and Lourds have received one-to-one support from staff on the wards and from the volunteer service team to help develop their skills and prepare them for job applications and interviews.

Lourds previously worked for an airline company before realising her interest in working for the NHS in 2023. She began as a volunteer at the Trust in August last year and has spent her time on various wards, learning the ropes.

when asked what advice she'd give to someone considering volunteering, Lourds said: "Do what you do with your heart and compassion – it goes a long way

about starting a new role. The more things you do as a volunteer, the faster you learn and find your own style."

Faculty launched to help develop NHS staff of today and the future

The Trust officially launched its new faculty of leadership, learning and improvement in November.

The faculty provides a central hub for staff to get advice, guidance and support in areas like quality improvement, leadership development, training and education, innovations, patient safety and equality, diversity and inclusion.

It also gives existing staff and college students opportunities to start apprenticeships to develop their careers and give them a foot in the door into healthcare. Or offer advice for those who may have never considered a career in healthcare before.

Susy Cook, chief people officer, said: "The faculty is our way of giving our staff a clear route to improving themselves, their careers and, ultimately, the care that we provide to our patients.

"Working with training providers in our local colleges and universities, as well as with staff within the organisation acting as mentors, we have already set up these clear ways that staff can begin their journey.

"We also want to help existing staff looking to progress their careers while still working here to get access to apprenticeships and other educational qualifications which will help them achieve this – adding to the 600 apprenticeship opportunities we have already given to people in the last six years.

"We also know that there are lots of people out there who may have never considered a career



Pictured: Colleagues from education manning one of the information stalls.

in healthcare before. There are roles out there for these people and the faculty is there to help them develop a really fantastic career in the NHS."

The faculty will include a state-of-the-art health and social care academy in a former clinical ward at the University Hospital of Hartlepool, which will include a simulation suite for the training of healthcare workers. (More on this on page 26.)

The Trust has also set up in-house leadership development training through an online platform and face-to-face training for all staff, covering areas like self-awareness, emotional intelligence and gaining a greater understanding of behaviours and civility.

And the organisation also has a group of quality improvement leads supporting staff to gain the skills to implement, sustain and spread change as well as creating a culture of continuous improvement.



Pictured: Dr Susy Cook opens the event at the University Hospital of North Tees.

Regional hub planned to help transform care for people with asthma

Our asthma team has transformed its service so people get treatment more quickly and closer to their homes – with plans for a regional hub.

Over the last few months, the service at the Trust has created a special asthma treatment pathway for hospital patients.

The care bundle looks at details like inhaler technique, review of medications, any triggering factors like smoking and mental health. It is being used for patients admitted to the University Hospital of North Tees

Since the asthma team started working with hospital staff on use of the bundle, patients being discharged from hospital with it in place has risen by more than 50 per cent.

The service is continuing to build on this progress – with plans for a region-wide severe asthma service with South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust.

With the nearest clinics only currently available in Newcastle, this will provide follow-up hospital care for asthma sufferers from the three health trusts in the area.

Louise Parkin, who is the service's asthma lead, said: "The asthma service has worked hard with hospital staff to improve the whole pathway and, thanks to this, the number of patients receiving a care bundle has increased.

"There are also significant health inequalities for some people – I have spoken to patients who can't travel to Newcastle for their treatment.

"This new collaboration in the Tees Valley will mean patients can get biological therapy closer to their home."

The service has also expanded, with it now including a lead nurse, two senior nurses, a physiotherapist and specialist healthcare assistant.



Pictured: Janice Hutchinson (left) with asthma purse lead Louise Dealing

And, in a further development, the service is also starting special clinics to help wean asthma patients off steroid use.

Janice Hutchinson, 60, from Hartlepool, suffered an asthma attack and was treated at the University Hospital of North

During her stay, she had a care bundle arranged and has attended a two-week follow up appointment with the

This included a breathing test to look at inflammation in the airway to help guide the asthma team on next steps for treatment.

Speaking at the appointment, she said: "The team has made several improvements to the way I treat my asthma. They have really helped me."



Pictured: Janice Hutchinson during an asthma clinic with nurse lead Louise Parkin

Making managing appointments even easier

We're increasing patient choice by extending the number of outpatient services available for management by the patient via the free NHS app.

The move follows a successful trial of allowing all outpatient gastroenterology appointments to be amended or cancelled via the app's MyHealthCall patient engagement platform.

Utilising the secure NHS app and working in partnership with NHS Health Call, our Trust now offers patients the opportunity to manage their appointments for the following outpatient services:

- Respiratory medicine
- Urology
- Gynaecology
- General surgery
- Clinical haematology
- Gynaecological oncology
- Pain management
- Diabetic medicine
- Endocrinology
- Assisted reproduction
- General medicine
- Chemical pathology

Kath Tarn, head of outpatients and place based care, said: "Incredibly, more than 7,000 outpatient gastroenterology appointments were managed via the app during our three-month trial.

"Our research shows patients find the system really easy to use and it also reduced the number of missed appointments by an average of ten per month. Each missed appointment costs around £150, so that's £1,500 saved every month.

"We know using an app isn't for everyone, so of course patients can still receive reminders via letter, text or email."

NHS Health Call managing director Ian Dove, commented: "It's fantastic to see the impact North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust has made with MyHealthCall PEP in such a small amount of time.

"The Trust's ability to scale this technology so quickly is a testament to their commitment to improving services for all and will only drive these savings, enabling more choice and flexibility in how patients manage their care."

To find out more about using the app to manage outpatient bookings at the Trust, scan the QR code.





Pictured: Kath Tarn (left), with outpatients booking team members Janet Fields and Angela Wild.



NTH Wolces

With Radio Stitch

Telling the stories of our people and community in our Trust.

Tune in now...

