It starts with me...
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It starts with me....

SNOW and freezing temperatures did not dampen the spirit or enthusiasm of the hundreds of people who attended NHS QUEST – the third patient safety conference in Teesside.

The two-day event, held jointly between the trust and Teesside University, was aptly entitled ‘It starts with me’.

Chief executive Professor Tricia Hart, who welcomed professionals, academics and students, said: “It was an inspirational two days and we’ve had some excellent feedback.

“It starts with me is such a powerful statement – if we all reflect on what we do about putting the patient at the centre of everything we do, can you imagine the sustained improvements we might make in every ward, community hospital and department?”

High profile speakers included Sir Robert Francis QC, who earlier this year published his final report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust public inquiry.

Tricia added: “Patient safety has to be at the heart of the NHS. We need to build on the evidence and the learning in driving patient safety improvement. It was a huge privilege to work alongside Robert Francis for three years and I was personally delighted he shared his reflections so soon following the publication of the inquiry.

“This excellent conference, developed in partnership with our university colleagues, is a perfect medium that underpins our vision that we can demonstrate we provide the safest care to our patients.”

Professor Paul Keane OBE, dean of the school of health and social care, said: “We were delighted to host this year’s conference in collaboration with South Tees. The keynote speakers addressed some of the major issues around patient safety and I am sure the conference was extremely beneficial for everybody who attended.

“The school of health and social care prides itself on its collaborative working and this conference was another example of our excellence in ensuring our students and health care professionals have access to relevant, thought-provoking and innovative events.”

Also speaking was Dr Ron Daniels, chief executive officer for the Global Sepsis Alliance, which helps people understand and combat what many experts believe to be the leading cause of death worldwide – sepsis.
FOLLOWING the publication of the Francis report staff were asked to hold up a mirror and ask themselves – are we truly putting patient first?

In response to the inquiry, secretary of state for health Jeremy Hunt has announced radical new measures to overhaul health and care to ‘put quality of patient care at the heart of the NHS’.

These include Ofsted-style ratings for hospitals and care homes, a statutory duty of candour for organisations which provide care and are registered with the Care Quality Commission, and a pilot programme which will see nurses working for up to a year as a healthcare assistant as a prerequisite for receiving funding for their degree.

Under the new regulatory model, an independent chief inspector of hospitals will develop ratings of hospital performance at department level, which means cancer patients will be told of the quality of cancer services, and prospective mothers the quality of maternity services.

While the full Francis report is still being worked through in detail, some local issues already identified for action at the trust include:

- Strengthening the way in which we use the information from complaints to improve services and ensure that lessons are learned
- Publication of upheld complaints and provision of detailed complaints information to commissioners, regulators, overview and scrutiny committees and the local Healthwatch (previously LINKS)
- Need for effective risk assessments when changes to numbers and skills of staff are under consideration
- A number of recommendations relate to nursing training, education and professional development and a proposal for the registration of healthcare workers
- A number of specific recommendations relating to caring for the elderly
- Better use and sharing of information and quality metrics

A REVIEW of NHS complaints handling is also underway which aims to ensure all hospitals listen to and act on the concerns of patients.

The review team, led by our chief executive and Ann Clwyd, MP for Cynon Valley, will engage with patients, their carers and representatives, staff and managers and other organisations involved in handling patient complaints to hear how trusts currently act when concerns and issues are raised.

Chief executive Professor Tricia Hart said: “I have the privilege to sign many thank you letters to patients and their relatives where they have commented on the positive care they have received but the flip side to that is I sign the complaint letters, where we have not provided that level of care you or your families would expect. This is an important review which will identify existing best practice for handling complaints, and make recommendations for a set of common standards by which all NHS hospitals will be assessed and held to account.”

The review will consider:

- What common standards can be applied to the handling of complaints
- How intelligence from concerns and complaints can be used to improve service delivery, and how this information can be made available to service users and commissioners
- The role of the trust board and senior managers in developing a culture that takes the concerns of individuals seriously and acts on them
- The skills and behaviours that staff need to ensure that the concerns of individuals are at the heart of their work
- How complainants might more appropriately be supported during the complaints process through, for example, advice, mediation and advocacy
- The handling of concerns raised by staff, including support for whistle-blowers

The team is expected to report to the secretary of state by the Parliamentary summer recess.

Front page photo: Professor Tricia Hart (centre) with Robert Francis QC (left) and Professor Paul Keane OBE, dean of Teesside University’s school of health and social care
AN exciting catering retail outlet, Café Bar Plus, has opened its doors to staff, patients and visitors at the Friarage Hospital. The new catering facilities replace services offered from the former dining room in the academic / recreation hall buildings. After nearly 70 years of providing services, the existing staff dining room, servery and kitchen areas were of a condition in terms of fabric, essential supplies and services that rendered the building beyond economic improvement for catering services.

The new outlet is on the hospital main corridor and offers a full cooked breakfast service, lunch and lighter snacks available from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. It is in an excellent location providing a ‘high street’ quality experience at very competitive prices and excellent value.

The planning, construction and installation was project managed by the trust’s planning department supported by manufacturers, PKL, and Interserve.

Mark Larking, hotel services manager, said: “We are pleased to be able to provide modern catering facilities at the Friarage. The new café bar is already proving very popular and lots of people are using it.”

Well done: Friarage catering team in Café Bar Plus

“A big thank you to all the catering team who completed the back of house work. Everyone concerned worked incredibly hard, not just on the weekend of the move, but for months before the opening.”

Garden transformation

GREEN-FINGERED volunteers from the Prince’s Trust have helped to extend the garden area of the holistic cancer care centre.

The transformation took place in just two weeks with a little help from the trust’s gardeners.

Centre manager Lynne Gray said: “They have worked out here in the freezing cold for a fortnight and produced this amazing area and we would like to say a massive thank you.”

The team of volunteers also created a mosaic table and spent hours cutting back all the hedges and plants ready for the spring.

Natalie Walsh, Prince’s Trust team leader at Stockton Riverside College, added: “It’s a really good opportunity for young people to come and work with members of the community and it just shows what can be done in a couple of weeks. They have all gained lots of transferable skills they can carry forward into their next ventures.”

Lynne Gray, Natalie Walsh and gardener David Harrison in the new garden area with the Prince’s Trust volunteers
A UK first for spinal cord stimulation patients

ANAESTHETIST and pain specialist, Dr Sam Eldabe, has carried out the first implant of a new spinal cord stimulation system that is magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) compatible.

Dr Eldabe performed this UK first at James Cook by using a SureScan technology system developed by Medtronic.

In the past, patients who have had a spinal cord stimulator fitted have been unable to have an MRI scan due to the high magnetic forces used in the scan and concerns about device safety.

Medtronic has developed a system which is compatible with MRI scanners and allows patients with the device to have an MRI scan safely. This is done by turning the device into a SureScan mode, similar to turning a mobile phone to ‘airplane mode’.

The procedure needs to be undertaken in two stages. Firstly the leads are implanted and then about a fortnight later the neurostimulator is implanted.

Dr Eldabe says there are significant benefits for the patient. He said:

“MRI scans are becoming the imaging investigation of choice in many illnesses; the fact that patients had to choose between long term pain relief or having MRI scans made spinal stimulators an imperfect solution for many patients. With the SureScan system patients no longer have to compromise particularly those with long term conditions requiring MRI scan surveillance.”

Patient, Heather Gelder from Thirsk, is the first patient in the UK to receive the MRI compatible stimulator and she’s very impressed.

The 54 year-old said: “I have suffered with chronic back pain for years, had four previous back operations so I can really feel the difference. I’m really impressed with the relief this procedure has given me. Dr Eldabe and the staff have been brilliant and very supportive and it has made me a much happier and brighter person.

“It’s fantastic and what an honour it is to be the first patient in the UK to have this MRI safe stimulator implanted but the best thing about the system is that with my small hand-held electronic stimulator, which I place against the implanted sensor in my lower back, I am in control of my pain level.”
SOUTH Tees has rolled out the ‘friends and family test’ which aims to improve patient care and identify the country’s best performing hospital.

The trust launched the scheme a month before the national initiative (April 2013) asking patients a simple question – whether they would recommend hospital wards, accident and emergency units to a friend or relative based on their treatment.

All answers will be published, allowing the public to compare healthcare services and clearly identify the best performers in the eyes of patients, driving others to take steps to raise their standards.

Initially the project is aimed at:

- Adult acute inpatients (including maternity patients), who have stayed at least one night in the James Cook or Friarage hospitals
- Adult patients who have attended accident and emergency and left without being admitted to hospital, or were transferred to a medical assessment unit and then discharged

Questionnaires can be completed on the ward and posted in a ballot box as patients leave the ward/department or alternatively they can give their feedback online through the trust’s website at http://www.southtees.nhs.uk/patients-visitors/patient-experience/friends-and-family-test/

Patient experience co-ordinator Linda Oliver said: “We’re hoping to receive at least a 15% feedback rate. Trusts will be required to report nationally on the total numbers of patients within the target group, the numbers given the opportunity to respond, the number of responses and the breakdown of the response categories.

“These will be made available to the public so that patients can use the information to make choices about their care, champion their local trusts that excel and challenge others to improve.”

Forms take only a couple of minutes to complete and there is an opportunity for patients to write in extra comments under a second question which asks them what was good about their care and what could be improved.

It is expected the test will also be available to women using maternity services from October and the trust is keen to see it rolled out across other NHS services including community services. Results will be published on NHS Choices starting in July.

We are also using social media to promote ‘friends and family test’ and will use this feedback, alongside other information, to identify and tackle concerns at an early stage, improve the quality of care we provide, and celebrate our successes.

A UNIQUE patient video project is already having a huge impact on patient care right across the trust.

The real time patient experience project team have been out and about in acute and community hospitals and in patients’ homes filming feedback from patients, relatives and carers.

Interviewees were asked to share their experiences on camera – good and bad – and suggest any areas that they thought could be improved.

The footage, which covered everything from neonatal care to dementia, was then edited by the public relations team and is now being shown at various staff meetings and conferences.

“The videos are having a huge impact,” said project lead Karen Harwood. “Seeing and hearing patients tell their story is so much more powerful than receiving a complaint letter. Some of the stories are really emotive and have already spurred people on to make changes in their departments.

“Some improvements will require investment but many are simple steps that can be easily be implemented such as the need to improve upon communication and information giving.

“Any proposed changes are recorded as improvement actions so we can make sure they are implemented. It is great to be able to go back to the interviewees and let them know that by sharing their stories they really have helped to make a difference.”

The patient video project was launched by South Tees in partnership...
Video stories have huge impact

with Kings College Hospital and the University Hospital of South Manchester.

It was funded by the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement as part of the NHS Patient Feedback Challenge Programme which was designed to support the spread of great approaches which use feedback from patients to improve services.

Karen said: “It gives staff the opportunity to sit down, reflect, discuss and identify how they impact on the patient experience and what improvements they can make.

“We have filmed 11 stories at South Tees which we are showing to clinical and non-clinical staff and to staff at board level because everyone in the trust – regardless of their role or grade – has an important role to play when it comes to improving patient experience.”

Following its success in all three trusts the patient video project is now being shared with other NHS organisations who can request a digital copy of the project toolkit which includes everything they need to get started such as consent forms, filming tips and action plans.

Karen said: “We hope departments across the trust will continue with the project as this has proven to be a fantastic way to engage with patients.”

Alison Smith, assistant director of nursing, added: “We are meeting with senior nurses to discuss the ongoing legacy of the project and take forward how we can embed this within the organisation so it becomes part of the routine way we obtain patient feedback.”

Real time feedback:

- “Each ward operates differently which is a nightmare for relatives. Some are keen for your involvement and are happy for you to stay others won’t let you in other than at visiting times.”
- “The waiting area was not very child friendly. It would have been better if they had a wider range of magazines.”
- “People with dementia need a different approach and more highly trained staff, and families should be given a set of pointers on how to cope with it.”
- “I know there’s not enough staff available to sit with everybody all day but if a carer is willing to do that why can’t they?”
- “I would have liked to have had a trolley service (at Redcar Primary Care Hospital) for sundry items like tissues, chocolate and sweets.”
- “He said he had met some lovely people who had really cared for him.”

Real time changes:

- Information leaflets have been reviewed in one outpatient area
- Health promotional leaflets and appropriate magazines have been ordered
- Review of the de-briefing process for parents of newborn babies
- Dementia team purchasing various pieces of equipment including more high-low beds, foot stools and recliner chairs and looking at increasing dementia training
- Reviewing visiting hours and carer involvement (on going)

”Some of the stories are really emotive and have already spurred people on to make changes in their departments.”
THE tenth annual staff survey results have now been published – giving us a snapshot of staff’s experiences of working at South Tees.

This time, a full census was carried out and 4,397 people completed the questionnaire, the results of which have a heightened significance for all NHS organisations following the Francis report.

Overall the trust was in the top 20% of acute trusts for eight key findings, better than average for six key findings, average for six and worse than average for eight findings (although not in the bottom 20%).

Director of human resources Chris Harrison said: “Overall this is a good set of results, particularly at a time when there are considerable challenges in the NHS. We know staff are working very hard, often under pressure, to make a real difference to patient care.

“There are always areas where we can improve and it’s important that we do try to make changes – and feed these back to staff – which can have a positive impact on our workforce.”

When benchmarked with similar NHS organisations the five key findings where the trust compares most favourably with other acute trusts in England are:

- The percentage of staff experiencing discrimination at work in the last 12 months
- The percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse at work in the last 12 months
- The percentage of staff working extra hours
- The percentage of staff believing that the Trust provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion
- The percentage of staff able to contribute towards improvements at work

Initial areas identified for improvement include:

- The percentage of staff receiving health and safety training at work in the last 12 months
- The work pressure being felt by staff and the impact this is having on feeling under pressure to attend work when feeling unwell
- Staff motivation at work
- The percentage of staff reporting errors, near misses or incidents witnessed in the last month

The results will now be fed back to divisions and directorates through managers and IWL leads to develop action plans but there are emerging themes the trust will focus on:

- Continually developing strategies corporately for areas such as staff engagement and motivation
- Sustain developments which have been made in key areas like appraisals and health and wellbeing
- Monitoring areas which have showed slight decreases such as staff reporting errors, near misses or incidents
- Reviewing the organisation’s frameworks and structures that support the corporate themes
- Further developments in equality and diversity
- Continuous monitoring of these key areas through the performance review framework

You’ve given us your views – what next?

“The there are always areas where we can improve and it's important that we do try to make changes.”

“Overall this is a good set of results, particularly at a time when there are considerable challenges in the NHS.”
Gift of life - kidney donation

KIDNEY disease affects a huge number of people in the UK. It can affect people at any age and has many different causes.

A small number of people with kidney disease develop kidney failure and need dialysis or kidney transplantation. Medical evidence shows people survive longer and feel better if they have a kidney transplant sooner rather than later.

There are two ways a kidney becomes available for transplant. The most common is when someone dies and their kidneys are healthy they can be donated to someone in need of a transplant. The other is when a living person chooses to donate a kidney to a relative or friend, or as a gift of life to someone they do not know (altruistic kidney donation).

The trust's living kidney donor team of dedicated doctors and nurses help prepare patients for donation and transplantation.

People needing a kidney transplant are asked to talk to their friends and relatives about living kidney donation and anyone considering donation talks to a specialist transplant nurse.

Not everyone can be a kidney donor, some people are unable to donate due to incompatibility at blood group and tissue matching or medical contraindications. Ernie and June’s story is brought to you to demonstrate that age alone is not necessarily a barrier to donation.

If you have a friend or relative affected by kidney disease and would like to know more about living kidney donation please contact Alison Callaway, transplant specialist nurse on 01642 854732, extension 54732 JCUH.

The NHS website www.organdonation.nhs.uk gives more information and patient stories.

Ernie’s story

DECISION day for 72 year-old Ernie Kirkbridge from Castleton, Whitby was 4 August 2009. His kidney function had been deteriorating for a number of years and dialysis or transplant would be needed during the next year.

His wife, June, accompanied Ernie to his appointment with his consultant, listened to the options and offered to donate a kidney. Donation had been on June's mind for a long while, unknown by Ernie, her only concern being at 70, she would be too old.

This was not the case and the couple’s interesting experience of organ donation began. June tells Talking Point all about it.

“I was happy initial tests carried out by the transplant co-ordinator showed we were a match and I was healthy enough to proceed to the next stage - referral to a nephrology consultant.

“This happened in December 2009 and, over the next few months, a series of kidney scans and x-rays were carried out to ensure one of my kidneys was suitable for donation.

“Much to people's surprise I looked forward to each scan or x-ray. After all each one took me closer to donation, but, in spite of a deep seated belief that the transplant would go ahead, I was always nervous when going to see the consultant for the results of tests.

“My concern was misplaced and the testing continued to the point where my consultant was happy, I was able to donate, and Ernie and I were referred to the Freeman Hospital, and we started the process leading to transplant day. We had hoped Ernie would have a transplant before he needed dialysis but that was not to be the case and Ernie started kidney dialysis.

“We were interviewed by an independent assessor from the Human Tissue Authority to establish the reasons I had for donating, to make sure we were both happy to go ahead with the transplant and to ensure that I was donating knowing the risks associated with the surgery. All went well and finally 8 December 2010 was set as the transplant date.

“The transplanted kidney worked well from the start. Ernie was discharged 12 days after the transplant and I was discharged two days after surgery. We were both very pleasantly surprised at the low level of discomfort experienced after the surgery.

“From our point of view the transplant has been an amazing success. Six months after the surgery we were walking in the Scottish hills, not climbing quite as high or walking quite as fast as previously, but, nevertheless life appeared to be normal after a year of feeling we were on a roller coaster.

“Ernie’s return to health has been a joy to witness. However, we are not complacent and are immensely grateful for each day. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the skill and care of all the NHS staff involved in our transplant experience.”
WHEN pains woke pregnant Amy O’Riordan during the night she had no idea about the drama that was about to unfold.

Amy, from Middlesbrough, hadn’t been feeling well when she suddenly woke in the middle of the night feeling a need to push just 27-weeks into her pregnancy. Amy said: “I couldn’t believe that I felt the need to push and ended up delivering Jessie so fast. Me and my partner Mark were in shock but he called 999 for help. The call handler was amazing and advised Mark what to do. They advised him to open the amniotic sac but he was in such shock that I did this, then got Jess and started giving her mouth to mouth. I don’t know how I knew what to do.”

The rapid response paramedic team leader Colin Gibson from Redcar Station arrived at the house very quickly and was surprised at what he saw. “I saw a young girl with this tiny baby in her hands, she handed me the baby and said ‘please save her’, and my heart sank.”

Colin began chest compressions and gave tiny Jessie some oxygen. Then the ambulance crew arrived with paramedics Michelle Trafford and Alan Barnby also from Redcar Station. Colin had brought in his maternity kit and immediately asked Michelle to cut Jess’s cord.

Michelle and Colin looked after Jess and Alan saw to Amy making sure she was fit enough to go in the ambulance and pre-alerted the A&E department at James Cook.

The entire time baby Jess was making more tiny breaths. Colin said: “We got Amy on the stretcher and placed Jess on her tummy for warmth and so Michelle and I could keep giving compressions and assist respirations.”

They got Jess into A&E where a team were waiting for their arrival. Amy said: “Just as we arrived at the hospital Jess gave out a tiny whimper, it was looking more positive. I was just so grateful to the amazing paramedics; they saved my baby daughter’s life.” Jess was moved to the neonatal unit where she was closely monitored by specialist staff until she was well enough to go home.

Michelle said: “It was so emotional as we didn’t know whether Jess would survive after all our efforts to save her but we were so pleased when we handed her over to the staff on A&E and she was improving all the time. We were so concerned and desperate to know how Jess was.”

“I am astounded, they both look so well. Amy was so calm when we got to her house that cold winter morning, she was brilliant.”

Neonatal consultant Professor Sunil Sinha said Jessie’s chances of survival were extremely low but Amy’s fast actions together with help from the paramedics and the subsequent help of the hospital had saved her life.

“Another five minutes would have meant the difference between life and death,” he said. “It was a miracle.”
TEENAGER Emily Crosby is back on the dance floor after surgeons carried out an operation to straighten a double curve in her spine.

The 13-year-old came to Waleed Hekal’s paediatric spine clinic at James Cook with such a severe case of scoliosis that her only option was to undergo extensive surgery to straighten the rigid curve.

Emily of Hartlepool had cobalt chrome rods inserted into her spine with 18 titanium screws during the five-and-a-half-hour operation. With the anaesthetic preparation and recovery afterwards, Emily was in theatre all day.

But within two weeks the brave Dyke House student was starting her dance moves again and it was not long before she was playing in her school netball team.

It was Emily’s dance teacher who first spotted that something was wrong with her back. Her spine curved one way and then the other so it was not obvious that there was a problem.

She was referred to spinal experts at James Cook and her mum Jackie could not believe it when she first saw the x-rays. “They showed us an x-ray of a spine and I thought that’s a worst case scenario. Then they told me it was my daughter’s.”

Emily had to be operated on immediately as the curve in her spine was so severe it might have restricted her breathing if it got any worse. The procedure was performed by orthopaedic consultants Mr Waleed Hekal and Mr Raman Kalyan.

Emily had monitoring of her spinal cord function throughout her surgery. At one point the monitors showed a potential problem, so Dr Ahmed Aziz, consultant anaesthetist, performed a ‘wake-up test’. This involved reducing the anaesthesia for a few minutes so Emily was awake enough to be asked to move her arms and legs, which she did but cannot remember.

Just six months after the surgery Emily took part in the Boxing Day dip, raising £450 for the children’s trust fund at James Cook as a thank you for the fantastic care she received from the whole team.

“I felt like I had ice in my shoes but it was worth it,” said Emily, who was joined by Jackie and brother Jack for the fundraiser.

“We wanted to give something back to the hospital,” said dad Glen.

“I can’t praise them enough,” added Jackie. “Especially the consultants and specialist nurse Cheryl Honeyman and the team.”

Mr Hekal said: “I’m really pleased Emily is doing so well. Before her operation Emily had a 90 degree curvature of the spine, which has been brought down to four degrees. She’s a really brave girl and wish her all the very best for the future.”
Trust have a ball
staff a ball
CONGRATULATIONS to the trust’s NHS Heroes, Dr Jurgen Berens, Mr Graham Phillips and his team and Jenny Butcher.

NHS Heroes 2013 is a recognition scheme designed to celebrate the unsung heroes in the NHS family who go the extra mile or give that little bit extra every day to make sure that each and every patient receives the very best care.

If you would like to nominate your NHS Hero for 2013, this only take a few minutes on the website, www.nhsheroes.com.

**When Jenny Butcher set off for work one icy morning in January, little did she know that she’d end up rewarded for her professional dedication and nursing skills in a crisis.**

Jenny left her home near Thirsk in North Yorkshire and as she was driving to work at James Cook (along the A19) she witnessed the aftermath of a road traffic accident involving a car, a tractor and two lorries.

The 30 year-old case manager parked her car and raced to assist the drivers. The driver of the car was a young man who was in a worse state than the lorry drivers, so Jenny stayed with the young man until the paramedics arrived at the scene. Once Jenny was happy that she could contribute no further and was able to leave the scene, she continued on to work. When she arrived, apologising for being over two hours late, she stayed on duty for a further 12 hours.

This level of dedication to duty and care led her colleague Amanda Cormican to nominate her for a ‘My NHS Hero’ award, which she has now received.

Modest Jenny said: “I was travelling to work northbound on the A19 from my home near Thirsk to James Cook at around 6.30am. Just before I got to the Grathorne turn off, the traffic slowed. There had been a collision between two lorries, a car and a tractor. There were no emergency services at the scene and other cars were just passing by. I saw two men staggering in the road and decided to pull over to see if I could help.”

Jenny left him with one of the workmen while I went to see if there were any further casualties. I only had a thin jumper on so I was frozen myself! I ran about a quarter of a mile down the A19 to an articulated wagon that had shed his load all over the road. It was an assault course of potatoes, turnip, carrots, along with car and lorry debris. After realising the lorry driver was alright I ran back to the casualty.

“His friend by this time was complaining of chest pain, I provided him with reassurance that it was due to the effect of the impact on his sternum and from the symptoms he described it was unlikely to be anything sinister. The casualty was losing consciousness so I focused my attention on him. I sat behind his head supporting his spine and as he was beginning to intermittently obstruct his airway, I performed a jaw thrust to keep his airway clear.”

“Due to the terrible weather conditions it took more than half an hour for the ambulance to arrive. So I focused on talking to the young man to try and keep him conscious. When the ambulance did arrive, I assisted the emergency services to log roll, head block and put him on the spinal board.”

“I arrived at work over two and a half hours later to a very concerned case management team. I was covered in blood, very cold and a little shaky to say the least.”

The casualty was taken by ambulance to James Cook for further treatment.

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**Dedicated nurse Jenny rewarded for assisting freezing road-crash victim**

**Mr Graham Phillips, gynaecologist and team, James Cook**

A Patient nominated Mr Phillips and his team. She said: “For years I had suffered in pain and felt that there would never be an end to it. After a long time struggling I was referred to this team. Immediately I felt listened to and after a few appointments I was given surgery.

“Now, a year on, I feel they have given me my life back. I can’t thank everyone involved enough to be listened to and treated with respect and empathy. It means so much. The whole team was wonderful, especially Mr Phillips and the registrar at the time. She was really amazing. For the first time I felt listened to. Thank you once more.”

**NHS heroes: Mr Graham Phillips (back left) and team**

**A Patient nominated Mr Phillips and his team.**

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**Trust’s NHS heroes**

**CONGRATULATIONS to the trust’s NHS Heroes, Dr Jurgen Berens, Mr Graham Phillips and his team and Jenny Butcher.**

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**NHS hero: Dr Berens (right) with Dr Malik at Friarage theatres**

**Dr Jurgen Berens, consultant anaesthetist, Friarage**

Dr Ahamed Malik, consultant anaesthetist, nominated Dr Berens. He said: ‘I nominated Dr Berens as an NHS hero for his care and dedication to his patients and his commitment to his colleagues, medical, nursing and allied professionals at the Friarage. He goes above and beyond the call of duty and is always available, even when not on-call, for help and advice.

“Dr Berens is a hands on person who is always happy to put in the extra hours, no matter if it is in the middle of the night or the weekend. He is an unassuming, well liked and respected member of the anaesthetic team at the Friarage - an unsung hero to his colleagues and patients.”

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**NHS hero: Jenny Butcher (right) at work with colleague and nominator Amanda Cormican**

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A Patient nominated Mr Phillips and his team. She said: “For years I had suffered in pain and felt that there would never be an end to it. After a long time struggling I was referred to this team. Immediately I felt listened to and after a few appointments I was given surgery.

“Now, a year on, I feel they have given me my life back. I can’t thank everyone involved enough to be listened to and treated with respect and empathy. It means so much. The whole team was wonderful, especially Mr Phillips and the registrar at the time. She was really amazing. For the first time I felt listened to. Thank you once more.”
HOSPITAL and community staff are being urged to help ensure patients with motor neurone disease (MND) receive fast access to specialist support following the official launch of the Middlesbrough MND Care Centre.

The centre marked its launch with a large-scale education event for professionals at Middlesbrough Teaching and Learning Centre to promote best practice and early diagnosis.

“We should always be contacted whenever a patient with MND comes into hospital or uses our community services,” said MND nurse and centre coordinator Anthony Hanratty. “Then we can support the patient and our staff to ensure we are meeting the individual’s care needs.”

The trust currently looks after around 80 MND patients but this number is steadily increasing.

“Our aim is to promote how to manage these patients, give them the best quality of life and the best care possible whether they are in the community or in hospital,” said Anthony. “Our role is to make sure patients are in the right environment, getting the right support.

“MND is very specialised and very different from other diseases because people tend to deteriorate very rapidly. Doctors and nurses often don’t get time to sit and talk to a patient. But we can sit with a patient and explain what’s going on and hold their hand. We see this day in and day out. We can predict what is going to happen and tell their families what to expect.

“It’s about knowing the signs and knowing the people to contact.”

The centre is based on ward 25 at James Cook but its team of six professionals, two regional care development advisors and volunteers from the MND Association provide support across County Durham, Teesside and North Yorkshire.

The team are happy to provide advice or education on any aspect of MND and can be contacted on 01642 854318, extension 54318 James Cook.

What is MND?

Motor neurone disease is a progressive disease that attacks the motor neurones, or nerves, in the brain and spinal cord. This means messages gradually stop reaching muscles, which leads to weakness and wasting. MND can affect how you walk, talk, eat, drink and breathe. However, not all symptoms necessarily happen to everyone and it is unlikely they will all develop at the same time, or in any specific order. Although there is currently no cure for MND, symptoms can be managed to help patients achieve the best possible quality of life.

MND symptoms

• Muscle cramps and spasms
• Stiff joints
• Speech and communication issues
• Eating and drinking difficulties
• Saliva and mucus
• Coughing and a feeling of choking
• Respiratory muscle weakness
• Cognitive changes

For more information visit www.mndassociation.org

Map of medicine

The MND care team also developed pathways of care on the map of medicine evidence based pathway system. These pathways are to guide and advise health care professionals with suspected and management of MND. These pathways are locally developed to reflect the care and treatment the MND care centre provide. For further information contact judy.butler@stees.nhs.uk
TWO Middlesbrough mums are very grateful to the local NHS Stop Smoking Service for helping them quit smoking not only for their benefit but also for their newborn children.

Jenni Pearson had been smoking for half her life. She began as a teenager and for the next nine years was a casual/social smoker, only smoking on nights out with friends who also smoked.

By the age of 25, Jenni found herself a habitual smoker, joining work colleagues on ‘fag breaks’. During this time she had tried to give up the habit on her own using patches, inhalers and chewing gum but was unsuccessful in the long run.

2012 turned out to be a milestone year for Jenni. She and her partner John Butterfield were to become parents and Jenni left work on maternity leave in the autumn, which also coincided with the national Stoptober stop smoking campaign.

Jenni, 32, and John, 43, who also smoked at that time, visited the drop-in clinic in the Life Store in the Cleveland Centre, Middlesbrough.

Jenni said: “That's where we met Jill, our stop smoking advisor. She's great. She never patronises us, or speaks in a condescending way.

“Jill just sat us down and put into perspective how our smoking was affecting both ours and our unborn baby's health. She said ‘You wouldn't sit your baby in a smoke-filled room would you?’ I replied ‘Certainly not’, but Jill said that by smoking during pregnancy that's exactly what we are exposing the baby to. That was a big wake-up call to me and John and we quit the very next day.”

Baby Daniel arrived four weeks later and now, a further five months on, Jenni is seeing the benefits.

She said: “I feel so much better. I'm no longer breathless when out walking; I can taste food a lot more; my skin is so much better and the house smells fresher. I'm overall a happier and much more contented person than I was before I gave up the cigarettes.”

Jacqueline Macdonald empathises with Jenni. Jacqueline has also given up smoking for the benefit of her six-week old baby Erin Rose Brown and the rest of her family, including fiancé Mark.

The 43 year-old new mum had been smoking for over 30 years and had reached a stage where she was smoking at least 20 cigarettes a day and that again if on a night out. She would get “very stressed and demanding” when she needed a cigarette.

Jacqueline was told by her GP that her age and the fact she was smoking could be negative factors in her chances of falling pregnant.

Jacqueline said: “I thought I can’t change my age but I can stop smoking, so I came to a drop-in centre and met Jill. The support I got was fantastic. It was never ‘in your face’ and they are there...”
Changes ahead for busy haematology team

WITH more than £1million set to be invested in a new haematology ward and day unit at James Cook in 2014 Talking Point met clinical director Dr Dianne Plews to find out more about this dedicated team and why the move to bigger premises is needed...

When a patient comes into hospital with a disorder of the blood the haematology team are involved in every aspect of their care from diagnosis to treatment.

Laboratory work has to fit around a hectic schedule of patient clinics and ward rounds as the team analyse all their own blood and bone marrow samples.

“The nice thing is we look at the samples and make our own diagnosis and then go and see the patient and tell them what we have found,” said Dianne, who has worked at the trust for over 10 years.

“We look at each sample through a microscope and can really see what’s going on. We rarely see the same thing so every day brings a new challenge.”

South Tees offers a full range of modern diagnostic and therapeutic services treating all diseases of the blood including acute and chronic leukaemias, myeloma, lymphoma, aftercare of bone marrow transplant patients, anaemias, bleeding disorders and blood clotting abnormalities.

Every week up to 500 patients attend for clinics or day case chemotherapy at James Cook and the Friarage. The team also have up to 30 inpatients to care for at any one time and demand is increasing as more advanced treatments become available.

“We are lucky because we are supported by a fantastic team of nursing and laboratory staff,” said Dianne.

Plans are currently underway to relocate the day unit at James Cook to bigger premises within the hospital in 2014 which will provide more space and privacy for treatment. Funding has also been secured from the Kay Kendal Leukaemia Fund to create a garden area.

Dianne said: “The current environment is far from ideal for patients and their visitors, who often have to spend a lot of time sitting around due to the nature of their treatment.

“We want to provide a first class facility designed with the patient in mind.”

The £1million revamp will also see the haematology ward move from ward 18 to ward 33 to give the team more beds and the creation of a three-bedded teenage and young adult unit and a recreation room.

Over the next 12 months the team are trying to raise as much money as they can for the new unit to ensure future patients can access their treatment in a state-of-the-art facility.

*To make a donation/organise a fundraising event contact the charities team 01642 835783.
TEENAGE pregnancy rates have dropped by almost 20% in Middlesbrough, according to new figures from the Office for National Statistics.

And the fall has been attributed to more integrated partnership working across health and social care, including our health improvement and children’s service teams working in the community.

In Middlesbrough, the number of under-16 conceptions from 2009-2011 were 19.5% lower than in 2008-2010.

Jeff Watson, risk reduction manager of children’s safeguarding services at Middlesbrough Council, said the trend follows a change in the way the council works, plus reductions in other risk-taking behaviours.

“Teenage conception rates (under-16 and under-18) have fallen to their lowest in 14 years,” said Mr Watson.

“For the first time since the introduction of the national teenage pregnancy strategy in 1998 the data published by ONS shows that conception rates for 15 to 17-year-old girls in Middlesbrough has fallen below 50 per 1,000.”

He added that the success follows changes made in Middlesbrough in September 2010 when a ‘more targeted approach’ was introduced in relation to interlinked risk-taking behaviour by young people which has shown:

- A 31% fall in alcohol admission rates for under-18s
- Reduced numbers entering the youth offending service

“Overall, young people in Middlesbrough are to be congratulated for choosing a healthier and less risk taking behaviour lifestyle,” added Mr Watson.

A major factor which has helped bring about these reductions is stronger and more co-ordinated partnership work between children’s services, schools, academies, midwives, sexual health services, and many of the town’s voluntary organisations.

The trust’s health improvement manager Carol McArdle, who is part of the East Middlesbrough steering group, said: “I do think by health, schools and the council’s youth services working together we’re starting to make a difference.

“Clearly some good prevention work is being undertaken across all partner organisations and I’d like to thank all of our teams who have helped contribute towards this.”

Doors open at 5.30pm. Tickets are £5 each and are available from www.ticketsource.co.uk/tbgno/Here come the girls

FASHION students will be strutting their stuff on the catwalk to help future cancer patients at James Cook.

Emma Cross of Effigy Beauty Salon and fashion designer Anna Corcoran are hosting the ultimate girls night out on Sunday 9 June 2013 to help raise funds for one of the hospital’s general cancer funds on ward 18.

The Big Girls Night Out at The Hub, Teesside Student Union, will feature a charity fashion show, beauty lessons and live music from Jamie Tinkler and Jamie Graham.

Those attending will also be able to shop ‘til they drop with a range of fashion, accessories, flowers, cakes, balloons, cards and designer inspired handbags up for grabs. A percentage of sales will be donated to the hospital fund.

The fashion show will include the latest range from the Anna Corcoran Boutique modelled by students from Cleveland College of Art and Design.

Emma said: “We all unfortunately know someone who has been cared for in this ward and feel it’s nice to be able to give something back.

“I personally know over the past few years people who have suffered with different types of cancer and have been looked after by James Cook and feel supporting the ward was the right choice to help make a difference to future patients.”

Doors open at 5.30pm. Tickets are £5 each and are available from www.ticketsource.co.uk/tbgno/
Top job for spinal expert

PROFESSOR Charles Greenough has been appointed to the NHS commissioning board as national clinical director for spinal disorders.

He will continue in his role of clinical director of spinal injuries and work part-time at the board giving expert advice in his field. He was given the post by Professor Sir Bruce Keogh and joins the board along with a core team of other appointed medical experts.

The commissioning board will focus on how to restructure the NHS - driven by a new clinically-led commissioning system and a new network of clinical leaders - to improve quality outcomes for patients and transform the NHS.

Professor Greenough’s new role is to:

- Provide national clinical leadership for the commissioning of the care of adults and children with spinal disorders from primary care through to scheduled care and surgery
- Lead on the development of guidance to support local commissioners and assist in the commissioning of specialised complex spinal surgery
- “I’m very excited to be taking on this role. I can see a huge amount of things that can be done and I really hope it’s going to improve things for patients,” he said.
- “This is an opportunity to get years of research and clinical expertise into the commissioning structure so that the commissioners are going to buy treatments for our patients that we think are going to be the most effective.”

Professor Keogh said: “We have appointed high-calibre clinicians to all these posts, and they will play a key role in the development of clinically-led, patient-focused care across all areas of the NHS. Our national clinical directors will provide the expert insight, knowledge and research we need in order to understand and address the challenges we face in all different aspects of the NHS.”

Farewell Kay

KAY Hutchinson, labour ward manager at the Friarage, celebrated her retirement with a farewell lunch.

“I have loved working at the Friarage maternity unit and prior to that the ‘Mount’ for the past 30 years,” she said. “I am very proud to have worked in the NHS since 1974. When I came to work at Northallerton I knew I had found the place which had the culture in which I wished to practise until my retirement.”

Clinical matron Anne Wall said Kay will be truly missed by all who have worked with her over the years.

Rebecca lands first publishing deal

IT WAS third time lucky for Rebecca Muddiman when she secured her first publishing deal.

The data quality coding assistant at James Cook has always loved writing. She won the Northern writer award in 2010 and the Northern crime-writing competition in 2012 which helped land her a book deal with Moth Publishing for her psychological thriller ‘Stolen’.

The book tells the story of a woman whose daughter is abducted but when police start to investigate they soon discover lives built on secrets and betrayal.

“This will be the third novel I have finished, but the first I have had published,” said Rebecca, who has been described as an exciting new talent in crime writing. “It’s really exciting but quite nerve-wracking as well because you wonder if people will like it!”

Released this month (May) the paperback is available from all major bookstores and can be ordered online from Amazon priced £6.99. It is also available as an e-book. For more details visit rebeccamuddiman.wordpress.com
Darren’s delight at top award

DARREN Ruddy, a receptionist with medical physics, has scooped a top regional apprentice award.

The region’s NHS recently recognised the outstanding dedication, hard work and enthusiasm of its near 300 apprentices at the third NHS North East Apprenticeships Awards ceremony, and Darren picked up advanced apprentice of the year.

Darren carried out his apprenticeship at James Cook’s nursery and during a difficult and challenging situation worked extremely hard to support his team, managers and the trust. Using his knowledge and skills he designed, developed and implemented a management information system, training all staff on it, which has improved efficiency and contributed to quality and continuous improvement for the nursery.

Darren said: “I had just completed my NVQ level 3 in business administration when I heard about my nomination. When my name was called out as winner, I still didn’t really believe it, but needless to say I am really pleased. To even be nominated for an award like this shows your hard work has been recognised on a wider level and it motivates you to do your best.

“I’d like to thank the vocational training department and in particular my trainer, Nicky Spencer, for the support and guidance over the last couple of years. I would definitely recommend an apprenticeship at the trust - it’s a great way of getting into a working environment and gives you qualifications at the same time.

“Now that I have finished my apprenticeship, I am employed in a permanent post at medical physics where I deal with the daily administration of the department and assist with preparing overnight study kits for patients with suspected sleeping disorders, which I am really enjoying so far.”

Dementia friendly

SOUTH Tees has formally committed itself to becoming a dementia friendly organisation.

The trust has pledged to take five steps to becoming dementia friendly after being accepted by the Dementia Action Alliance (DAA).

South Tees is the largest trust and one of the first to have formally signed up to the DAA’s ‘call to action’.

Simple environmental improvements to signage, placement of orientation clocks, contrasting colours between seating, flooring and toilet seats have been shown to reduce anxiety, wandering, incontinence, falls and improve patient experience.

With this in mind, the trust has completed an environmental audit in three areas (wards 11 and 12 at James Cook and Ainderby ward at the Friarage). This showed the areas of greatest need are signage, toilet seat colouring and access to stimulation for patients with dementia in all areas.

Funding was secured from the North East Strategic Health Authority to address these issues on the three wards and an audit of anti-psychotic use in patients with dementia was undertaken.

South Tees Clinical Commissioning Group has awarded the trust a further £216,000 for environmental improvements, educational resources and distraction therapies.

Dr Henry Waters, chairman of NHS South Tees Clinical Commissioning Group said: “We see this as a significant move forward in delivering our local dementia strategy and it helps us to ensure people with dementia have a positive experience and achieve the best possible outcomes from treatment when admitted to the hospital.”

Beth Swanson, dementia strategy project manager, said: “This money offers us a fantastic opportunity to make the improvements we know make a difference to older people and patients with dementia and learning disabilities.

“As a trust, we are committed to improving the care and experience of patients with dementia and frailty in our hospitals.”
Explosive fundraiser

SAYERS Road Tankers raised a handy £900 with a bonfire party rounded off with a colourful fireworks display.

The money will be shared between the Northallerton Lioness and the Friarage’s Alastair Bullen complementary therapy service, which provides a range of therapies for cancer patients to support them through their care.

Helping all creatures great and small

CARING members of the Northallerton branch of the NHS Retirement Fellowship have raised £287 for the Sister Lilly animal foundation trust.

Remarkable centenarian, Ann Lilly, was one of the first female radiographers in the north and is known to many as Sister Lilly. She was sister at the Friarage's x-ray department from 1953 until retirement, and is still actively involved in helping rescue stray and unwanted animals.

Pictured with his dog Bonny, rescued from death row by Sister Lilly and now a dog to be proud of is Dave Gilbey, who handed over the cheque. The group meets monthly and is made up from previous members of staff at the Friarage Hospital and other NHS staff who have now retired.

Calendar girls raise £3,500

MARSKE’S very own calendar girls bared all to raise more than £3,500 to help future cancer patients.

The 15 women, who all attend the jump fitness fit, fabulous and 50 plus class, stripped off to raise cash for the star fund at James Cook in memory of their friend Margaret Dewey, who died of cancer last November.

Thanks go to the local businesses who sponsored each month and sold the ‘Extreme Pursuits’ calendars and to photographer Richie Andrew who gave up his time for free.

Pub-goers dig deep for neuro ward

WHEN John Harrington’s late wife Tracy, passed away from a rare brain tumour, the regulars in the two pubs she owned were more than happy to help her wish to support ward 24 at James Cook come true.

Regulars and friends at the Red Lion in Norton raised £1,330, while those at the Moorcock in Peterlee donated a further £1,060, which has now been put aside for equipment such as shower seats in ward 24.

John, pictured handing over the cheques to Janine Evans and Gill Perry from the trust’s charity team, said: “The care she received during her eight weeks on the ward was excellent and thanks to all who helped raise these vital funds.”

Pantomime fun

A PUB panto has helped raise £500 for the special care baby unit at the Friarage.

Funds from the hot dog stall at The Fauconberg Arms Real Theatre Society’s production of Cinderfella were presented to staff nurse Vicki Hobday by Archie and Louisa Chadwick and mum Harriet from the family-run pub.
Our grateful thanks

JOHN Pollitt and his wife Di were so thankful for the outstanding care John received as a patient on ward 24 at James Cook, they handed his consultant Mr Manjunath Prasad a personal cheque for £100 to be used to benefit more of Mr Prasad’s patients on ward 24.

John, from Yafforth near Northallerton, who is pictured with Mr Prasad, was on the ward for six weeks and said “nothing was too much trouble for the staff. Everyone was fantastic.”

Crane firm gives patients a lift

TEESIDE-based crane rental company Sarens has handed almost £5,000 to help heart and renal patients at James Cook.

Clare Sunter from the company helped organise a charity golf day at Wynyard - each hole was sponsored and there were spot prizes.

The day continued with a dinner and race night for 100 guests and concluded with an auction. The event raised £7,350 which was divided equally between South Cleveland Heart Fund, the renal and the national charity Cystic Fibrosis – each receiving £2,450.

Clare, pictured with heart fund chairman Adrian Davies and Dr Jim Hall, (below left) and with her colleague Colin Leonard, renal consultant Dr Stephen Kardasz and sister Faye Brown, (below right) - said: “Several members of staff have had to use the heart and renal units and this is our way of saying thanks. I also want to thank everyone who gave so generously on the day to make the event such a success.”

Music therapy

PEOPLE flock from all over the country to enjoy the Northern Soul events at the Friarage.

The popular music nights include a spot of fundraising and Northallerton Soul Club recently split £900 between the complementary therapy service at the Friarage and the Ova the Rainbow gynaecological cancer support group.

Kathryn Almond, who runs the complementary therapy service is pictured here collecting a cheque from club members. She said: “We rely on donations like this to keep the service going.”

Anglers reel in £2,600 to help cancer patients

LOCAL anglers reeled in £2,600 through various tournaments to go towards the redevelopment of the haematology unit for treating patients with blood cancers and other blood disorders.

The Lower Tees Angling Association holds an annual blue ribbon event at the start of the fishing season – The James Cook Hospital cup donated by SG Petch – which attracted more than 90 competitors.

Support was also given by the Environment Agency and other angling clubs. For the full story visit http://www.southtees.nhs.uk/news/
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