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TALKING POINT

Summer 2024



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We are University Hospitals Tees

WE recently formed the region's first hospital group with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and were delighted to reveal our new hospital group identity in May.

Our two trusts are not merging and will remain as separate organisations - keeping their existing identities and names - but going forward, when we work together, we can now collectively be known as University Hospitals Tees.

This exciting development comes after years of joint working to ensure the best care for our patients and communities across the Tees Valley and parts of County Durham and North Yorkshire.

Over the last few months, our two organisations have been engaging with staff, patients, partners and foundation trust members to agree on the group name, branding, and strapline – Caring Better Together all delivered by our trusts' in-house communication teams.

University Hospitals Tees will be used to identify both organisations' shared ambitions for delivering better



outcomes for our patients, staff and service users.

The joint partnership will enable closer working and deliver better outcomes for:

- **Patients** – by ensuring equal access to treatment and sharing best practice on how to deliver care.
- **Staff** – by enabling them to work on all of the group's sites more easily and develop career opportunities.
- **The wider population** – by collaborating to work on health issues and having a coherent voice to represent local communities.

Group chief executive Stacey Hunter said: "It is important to note that both trusts remain as statutory organisations. This is not a merger, it's a collaboration to ensure the best possible outcomes for our patients, our staff and our communities.

"The group will give the Tees Valley, North Yorkshire and County Durham a voice that represents the real needs of our communities. It will also ensure that as the first group model for our region, we are able to offer opportunities for our staff across a wider landscape."

Second CIAB officially opens!

ORIGINALLY set up to help urgent services, the CIAB (cancer institute assessment bay) provides nurse-led care for elective patients and follow-up care from the urgent bay.

The second CIAB is already having a huge impact on patients by helping to reduce their length of stay, avoid admission to hospital where possible and improve utilisation for outpatient appointments.

The CIAB, which is located at the entrance of ward 14, currently operates from Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm – with further plans to extend the timings.



The CIAB team

First bricks laid for the Friarage's new surgical centre

THE Friarage's new surgical centre is starting to take shape with the first bricks now firmly in place.

Sarah Baker, head of clinical services for peri-operative medicine, theatres and critical care medicine, and James Dunbar, clinical collaborative chair for the Friarage and community services, both had the opportunity to put their brick laying skills to the test back in March.

The new £35.5million surgical centre, which is due to open in April 2025, will enable the Northallerton hospital to more than double the number of planned operations it carries out each year.

It will replace the hospital's five existing operating theatres with a

modern surgical hub that will include six main operating theatres, two minor operating theatres and a surgical admissions unit and day hub.

The structural steel framework of the new building and concrete floor slabs are now complete, with façade brickwork, steel framing and cladding systems to all elevations currently in progress.

James said: "It is fantastic to see the first brick being laid in our surgical centre which will provide world-class facilities for our patients for decades to come."

Sarah added: "The new surgical centre will be an exciting place to work, in a fantastic new environment."

"It's an opportunity for the local population to have their operations closer to home and benefit from state-of-the-art facilities with market-leading technologies."

"The new surgical centre will be an exciting place to work, in a fantastic new environment."



Sarah Baker had the honour of adding one of the first bricks

Trust celebrates success of first nursing degree apprenticeship programme with Northumbria University

FIFTEEN apprentices from James Cook have qualified as registered nurses with a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing and gone on to secure staff nurse roles within the trust.

The 18-month nursing degree apprenticeship programme designed by Northumbria University has been approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Council and combines a mixture of work-based placements and academic learning.

It provides healthcare professionals who already work within the trust with the opportunity to graduate as registered nurses within a compressed time frame.

Robbie Ross, clinical educator for the Registered Nurse Degree Apprentice (RNDA) programme at South Tees said: "Our first partnership with Northumbria University is a great example of regional collaboration and has been a huge success for our nursing apprentices."

"The programme combines practical training with academic study and enables our staff to adapt to the

evolving education of nursing whilst successfully collaborating with professionals from various sectors and disciplines."

Debi McKeown, nursing workforce lead at the trust said: "As an organisation, we want to nurture our future workforce from within our local communities and the programme provides us with a platform to do that."

"It promotes the multidisciplinary approach needed to support patient care and embeds the digital abilities required to nurse in the future."

Nicola Hill works in the same day emergency care unit at James Cook and was among those to qualify. She said: "The RNDA programme has helped me to become the person and professional that I am today and has been invaluable to my academic learning and clinical practice."

"It has given me a variety of new skills and knowledge and opened the doors to learning opportunities within multiple areas of nursing."

Emma Carne joined South Tees in 2007 and has praised the programme for helping to reach her life goal of becoming a registered nurse:

"The apprenticeship programme has provided several avenues for personal and professional growth and allowed me to enhance my clinical skills under the guidance of experienced registered nurses whilst gaining vital hands-on experience in various clinical settings across the trust."

Rachel Thomas, who currently works for the urgent community response team in Redcar urges others to apply for the programme:

"I would say you have nothing to lose and a great deal to gain and I honestly feel so lucky to have had the support from the trust and Northumbria University to be in the position I am now."



Nursing degree apprentices – Rachel Thomas, Emma Carne and Nicola Hill (left to right)



Urgent care services in your area

Urgent care services are now run jointly in the Tees Valley, offering treatment for minor injuries and illnesses.



University Hospital of Hartlepool
Hartlepool
TS24 9AH



Redcar Primary Care Hospital
Redcar
TS10 4NW

Urgent care treatment includes:



Sprains and strains



Cuts and grazes



Suspected broken limbs



Ear and throat infections



University Hospital of North Tees
Stockton-on-Tees
TS19 8PE



The James Cook University Hospital
Middlesbrough
TS4 3BW



Think 111 first

Call 111 or visit 111.nhs.uk for urgent medical advice.

An appointment will be booked for you at your nearest urgent care centre if required.

Hospital group going green thanks to multi-million pound investment

WE are delighted to announce that we have secured multi-million pound funding to invest in green-friendly improvements across our hospital group sites.

The latest announcements include £18.95million of national funding for the James Cook site and £9.5million for the Friarage.

This significant investment will see work at both sites over the next two years to replace gas burning equipment, install photovoltaic panels to generate electricity and replace windows, reducing our reliance on fossil fuels and enhancing the environment for patients and staff.

Across the hospital group we are striving to reduce our impact on the environment and carbon emissions in the way in which we work and the use of resources.

A significant proportion of our carbon emissions relate to the burning of fossil fuels in the form of gas as our primary source of heat generation.

Our estates and facilities teams have been actively planning to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels as part of our decarbonisation journey and securing this latest government funding is a big step towards achieving this.

It follows on from the University Hospital of Hartlepool's successful £13.4million bid last year for funding to improve heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and lighting.

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

Reducing our reliance on fossil fuels and finding ways to work with increased efficiency will also enable more funds to be invested in patient care.

Phil Sturdy, director of estates, facilities and capital at South Tees said: "It's fantastic news that we've been successful in securing this grant funding. We are committed to reducing our reliance on fossil fuels and our impact on the environment. This project, together with others being led by Laura Hallett, the trust's sustainability manager, make a significant contribution to this goal."

The funding will be delivered by Salix, an organisation which administers funds on behalf of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

Director of programmes at Salix, Ian Rodger said: "We are delighted to work with South Tees Hospitals on this ambitious project.

"Together we will work towards achieving the trust's net zero targets but also creating healthier environments for staff, patients, visitors and of course the community around these sites."



The South Tees estates and facilities team celebrate their successful funding bid



Sam Davison with trust and Serco colleagues

First hospital in the North East to install sanitary bins in male toilets

SOUTH Tees has become the first hospital trust in the region to install sanitary bins in its male toilets.

The initiative, in partnership with Prostate Cancer UK's Boys Need Bins campaign, aims to raise awareness for men suffering with incontinence.

According to the charity, one in three men over 65 in the UK are estimated to experience urinary incontinence with 95% of these men feeling anxiety around the lack of sanitary bins in toilets.

The bins can be found in areas within James Cook and have already received positive feedback from staff and patients.

Sam Davison, clinical procurement specialist nurse, who was part of a wider team behind the rollout said: "The aim of the Boys Need Bins campaign really struck a chord that, as a hospital who performs prostate, bladder and colorectal surgery and

radiotherapy procedures daily, we had never considered the lack of available resources for our patients.

"Female hygiene sanitary bins are a legal requirement, but we had never thought about the lack of provision in place in our male toilets.

"The installation of the bins and accompanying information posters have been life-changing for our patients. They can now attend their hospital appointments comfortably knowing they have somewhere to safely dispose of their sanitary waste."

Following the success of the pilot rollout, the trust plans to install more sanitary bins in male toilets across the organisation.

Nick Ridgman, head of health information and clinical support at Prostate Cancer UK, said:

"When a man living with incontinence needs to go into hospital, he should only be thinking about getting better — not worrying about whether he'll be able to get rid of his used pads privately and hygienically.

"It is really important to us that South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has now introduced sanitary bins for patients and staff in its hospitals. As part of our Boys Need Bins campaign, we're doing everything we can to get the law changed so that every man in the UK always has access to a proper bin, but in the meantime it's exciting that real progress is happening in Teesside."

For more information on how to get involved in the campaign or to use the 30 second Risk Checker, visit the Prostate Cancer UK website: prostatecanceruk.org/get-involved/campaigning/incontinence/boys-need-bins

SOUTH TEES STARS

THE STARS Awards present an opportunity to recognise the individuals, teams and services that go above and beyond their role in delivering excellent patient care.

Congratulations to the winners and to the hundreds of staff who were nominated.

You can also nominate your colleagues or teams that have made your day by the going the extra mile. Search STARS Award on the intranet to make a nomination.

Dawn Cochrane – Attention to Detail

Dawn won a STARS Award for her attention to detail. She has received fantastic feedback from third year medical students around timetabling and organisation of placements.

The nomination said: "The team (Dawn Cochrane in particular) has been fantastic in knowing where we are best placed and having sessions arranged well ahead of time. Any problems that appear on the day have been dealt with very quickly."

Congratulations.



South Tees STARS shine brightly

Alastair Grant – Helping Others

Student occupational therapist Alastair Grant was honoured with a STARS Award for helping an individual during a stressful time.

You are a gem Alastair.



Ellise Lamb – Communication

Ellise Lamb, who won a STARS Award for communication, was recognised for creating a bespoke plan to help a patient.

The patient's family was grateful for Ellise's help and support.

A big thank you for all you do Ellise.



Bethany Doherty – Going the Extra Mile

Bethany Doherty won a STARS Award for going the extra mile!

Thank you for going the extra mile Bethany!





Sue Ellis – Going the Extra Mile

Sue won a STARS Award for going the extra mile by facilitating a support group for brain tumour patients.

Establishing this group required a lot of leg work – from form-filling duties to general responsibilities. However, Sue's hard work was recognised by her colleagues for her remarkable achievement.

The nomination said: "We had our 4th meeting of 'The Grey Matters' group and the feedback we are getting from patients is just superb. The vibe within the group is one of support, compassion for each other and friendship, which is so very important when living with this uncertainty and effects of living with a brain tumour." Congratulations Sue.



Discharge Suite – Teamwork

The discharge suite scooped a STARS Award for their teamwork.

The nomination said: "The discharge suite should be recognised for their work in merging two teams and the staff for the smooth transition."

"They have developed the discharge suite into the amazing place that it is today – always putting the patient first."

"Blending two teams within a brand-new environment was always going to bring difficulties, however, the staff acted with professionalism and a positive attitude throughout."

"I believe this is why we can see the positive developments of the discharge suite."

Keep up the good work everyone.

Karl Sergent – Attention to Detail

Karl's kind gesture to go out of his way to help a patient made the family over the moon.

Well done Karl!



Jenna Wilkes – Respect, Caring and Support

Our next STARS Award winner is Jenna Wilkes, who was highlighted for being a true asset to her team.

She has been described as an inspiration, a positive influence and a breath of fresh air.

The nomination said: "She has developed and enhanced the services delivered on the ward and has got the whole AHP team on board to enable the nursing and therapy staff on CDU to deliver a totally integrated care pathway."

Well done Jenna.



ICU 3 team – Respect, Caring and Support

The ICU 3 team won a STARS Award for Respect, Caring and Support.

The team should be proud of what they have achieved!





The Heart Team of the Year collecting their award

Specialist heart team achieve global success

A SPECIALIST heart team at James Cook have been named as Heart Team of the Year at the first Global Cardiovascular Awards 2024.

The Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) team scooped the title at London's Grand Sheraton Hotel on Thursday 14 March.

The awards which are held in partnership with the World Heart Federation celebrate the outstanding contributions to cardiovascular disease treatment worldwide.

TAVI is a minimally invasive heart valve replacement procedure that provides an alternative to open heart surgery for people with aortic stenosis, a disease particularly affecting people aged over 65.

In 2018, James Cook introduced the world's first same day discharge programme and in 2023, set a record after performing ten successful

procedures in one day, with seven patients returning home from hospital the same day.

Hilary Hall, service manager in cardiothoracic and vascular care services said: "I am absolutely delighted that the TAVI team have been recognised by this award – underlining the huge team effort that has gone into developing a service that continues to be at the forefront of developments in TAVI services internationally, innovating successfully, increasing efficiency, all whilst dedicated

to improving the service experience for patients."

James Cook is recognised as an International Benchmark centre for TAVI and have pioneered many developments in the UK including the creation of a specialist nurse role to manage patient pathways and a single-point-of-access referral for all patients.

Paul Williams, consultant cardiologist added: "We're very proud

that James Cook and the

Teesside region have been recognised with this international award. Our unit aims to be at the forefront of minimally invasive treatments for heart valve disease and we have several new developments in progress. Watch this space."

"Our unit aims to be at the forefront of minimally invasive treatments for heart valve disease and we have several new developments in progress."

Cancer team scoop Myeloma UK award

THE haematology team at the Friarage have been awarded the Myeloma UK Award for their commitment to patients living with incurable blood cancer.

Awarded by blood cancer charity Myeloma UK, the Myeloma UK Clinical Service Excellence Programme (CSEP) Award recognises hospitals' commitment to raising the bar for treatment and providing compassionate care.

The haematology community outreach team were commended for their individualised approach to the care and treatment for myeloma patients.

Patients can receive chemotherapy from the comfort of their own home, sparing those further afield from exhausting back-and-forth trips to hospital. Nurses also travel to patients' homes to discuss treatment options.

Suzanne Renwick, head of clinical practice services at Myeloma UK, said: "We were hugely impressed with the team's efforts to adapt to

patients' needs and make sure they are given every chance to keep their disease in check – no matter where they live."

Sarah Clarkson, haematology clinical support sister at the Friarage added: "We are delighted to have been accredited with the Myeloma UK CSEP Award.

"We are extremely grateful to Myeloma UK for their support and look forward to working with them to continue delivering the best outcomes for our patients."

Anita Lee from East Cowton thanked the team for supporting her through intensive treatment and saving her life after being diagnosed with myeloma in June 2022.

After experiencing agonising back pain, Anita went to see her GP but

her pain was initially put down to a kidney infection. Later, it was chalked up to muscle ache.

Three months after her symptoms first began, Anita was diagnosed with myeloma and scans showed her spine was broken. Anita received radiotherapy to tackle the break in her spine, followed by chemotherapy. She had a stem cell transplant in 2023.

She said: "The haematology team are wonderful. They've touched my heart. I can't say enough good things about them. I got sepsis after my stem cell transplant and [my nurses] Jennie and Sarah came to visit me at my house. They're both so kind and lovely.

"I know I would never be able to get the same treatment from anywhere else. Nothing is too much for anybody."

Thankfully Anita is now in remission.



Anita Lee



Friarage haematology team celebrate their Myeloma UK award

Teesside nightingales celebrated at prestigious event

WE celebrated our amazing nursing and midwifery workforce at a prestigious event to recognise and honour their incredible contributions.

The annual Nightingale Awards, which was held at Teesside University, saw a host of nursing and midwifery staff from different specialities from across South Tees Hospitals, come together to celebrate their achievements.

Staff nurse Jennifer Harris-Burland was crowned the Overall Winner of the Nightingale Awards.

She was nominated for going out of her way to check up on a patient who had missed an appointment. The individual had not been well and Jennifer was concerned about the patient.

After a busy shift, she went to the patient's home and realised the individual was in a very poor condition. Jennifer instantly called an ambulance and the individual was later admitted to the hospital.

The nomination described her as 'going the extra mile' and an 'inspiration who saved the patient's life'.

Jennifer said: "I felt deeply honoured to accept it. It was a wonderful

day, listening to all the stories and nominations. The kind words I've received since have been overwhelming.

"I've worked in OHPAT (outpatient and home-parenteral antibiotic) at the Friarage since its inception, helping it grow from a simple outpatient antibiotic service to one that now facilitates a variety of infusions, including biologics and iron.

"As a small team of four, we strive to offer the best service possible to our patients while supporting the teams responsible for their care."

Group chief nurse Hilary Lloyd, who presented Jennifer with the Overall Winner Award, said: "The Nightingale Awards celebrated our fantastic nurses and midwives who go above and beyond.

"There were so many wonderful stories of the exceptional work of our staff.

"Congratulations to everyone nominated as well as our wonderful winners."



Other Nightingale Award winners

Katie Jackson – Student Nurse/ Midwife Award

Heather Lee – Health/ Maternity Care Assistant/ Assistant Practitioner Award

Ann Marie-Wilson – Therapeutic Care Volunteer Award

Jennifer Harris-Burland – Staff Nurse/ Midwife/ ODP Award

Jennifer Puckrin – Sister/ Charge Nurse Award

Charlotte Goodsell – Senior Award

The children and young people surgical day unit and pre-assessment – Team Award

Dawn Groves – Mentor Award

Cpl Amy Kerman – Military Award

Libby Lee – Midwifery Award

Ellie Armstrong and Ellie Turley – Paediatric/ Neonatal Award

The management team from maternity – Matron Award

Pamela Fitzhugh – Exceptional Act of Kindness Award

Chelsea Scott – Advanced Practitioner Award

The Hospital@Home team – Friends of the Friarage Award

The heart failure specialist nurses/ heart failure team – Patient Experience Award

Jane Crouchley – Outstanding Contribution to Nursing



Group chief nurse Hilary Lloyd, Nightingale winner Jennifer Harris-Burland and group managing director Neil Atkinson

Brain tumour patient raising awareness about deadly cancer

NICOLETTE Jones, who was diagnosed with a grade 3 Astrocytoma brain tumour, is sharing her story in a bid to start a conversation around brain tumours and urge everyone to get their symptoms checked.

Nicole, 55, was rushed to James Cook in July 2021 with a seizure.

An MRI scan revealed a right frontal lesion tumour in her brain, which can hinder the ability to walk and lead to difficulty with sight and speech and weakness on one side of the body.

Following initial treatments, Nicole underwent an awake craniotomy surgery - a type of procedure performed on the brain while you are awake and alert.

As the tumour was near the part of her brain which controls her vision, movement and speech, she had to go through the nerve-wracking procedure.

The specialist team debulked (surgically removed) most of the tumour during the surgery and diagnosed her with grade 3 astrocytoma – a malignant form of brain cancer, which is a fast-growing cancer with no cure.

Nicole's diagnosis meant she was unable to undertake day-to-day activities such as driving a car and was suffering from cognitive difficulties – which meant she was no longer able to work.

Although the diagnosis has been completely life changing, Nicole is trying to maintain a positive outlook and has been inspired to raise awareness of brain tumours in the region.

She said: "I miss my independence at times but have found time to enjoy art classes and mindfulness which I didn't do before the tumour, both of which have helped keep me sane.

"I have also started volunteering at the library which has given me a purpose and have met some wonderful people though the Grey Matters group at James Cook Hospital."

Macmillan cancer nurse specialist Susan Ellis said: "There are a lot of different types of brain tumours but sadly, none of them are curable and any treatment is given with the hope of keeping people as stable as possible for as long as possible.

"Grades 3 and 4 are classed as high-grade malignant tumours, with 4 being the most aggressive with particularly poor outcomes.



Nicolette Jones

"Over three years, our trust has seen a steady rise in brain tumour cases, which is very concerning, and we hope Nicole's story inspires others to get their symptoms checked."

Talking about her time spent in the hospital, Nicole added: "I am glad to say that I have had the best treatment at the hospital and every department has been very supportive. They have listened to me with patience and treated me with respect."

Our pledge to the NHS sexual safety charter

SOUTH Tees has pledged its commitment to the NHS sexual safety charter.

Our trust is committed to ensuring that everyone who works, trains and learns within our organisation feels safe and supported at work.

South Tees has come together with all NHS organisations across the North East and North Cumbria to sign up to the NHS sexual safety charter.

We have signed up to ten principles and actions to enforce a zero-tolerance approach to any unwanted, inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviours within our workplace because #ItsNeverOK. Staff can see the intranet for more details.



Roqah Shaher and Rachael Metcalf signing the sexual safety charter

Teesside hospital trust employs first maternal mental health midwife

SOUTH TEES has employed its first maternal mental health midwife to help bridge the gap between maternity and mental health services in the Middlesbrough community.

Abbie Mills joined the STEPS (South Tees Enhanced Perinatal Mental Health Support Service) for maternity team at James Cook in February and hopes to reduce the stigma around poor mental health when pregnant.

Her role involves supporting women who are experiencing fear, trauma, loss or mild to moderate health concerns during pregnancy or in the first year after having their baby.

She works closely with them to develop birth plans that focus on keeping their mental health well, provides one-to-one walkarounds of the maternity environment and attends elective caesareans, induction labours and births to provide support, where possible.

After working as a rotational midwife at the hospital for over four years, Abbie has spent a lot of time on the postnatal ward supporting women and families through the high and lows of becoming parents.

She has joined the STEPS team alongside obstetric consultant Andie Johnson and psychologist Angela Watson, who all share the same passion for supporting women with mental health concerns. They all meet on a weekly basis to view and action referrals.

She said: "The STEPS team and I are hoping to make a positive impact on these women and their

families' long term mental health and to improve the stigma and awareness around maternal mental health in the process. I see mental health as of equal importance to physical health and so it has been amazing to hear people's feedback after only being in post for a few months. One lady even said if she gets pregnant again, she wants me to take over her care."

Abbie's post is funded by Middlesbrough family hubs, and she currently delivers care to patients in various locations across the Middlesbrough community, including local children's centres and James Cook and she makes home visits, when needed.

Abbie hopes her role will continue beyond the funding period so support can be extended to women receiving care at the Friarage.



Abbie Mills, maternal mental health midwife

Swift collaboration saves Margaret's leg

SWIFT collaboration between a range of our hospital and community teams has saved a patient's leg from complete amputation.

Margaret McCann, 69, who had previously undergone angioplasty, dialled 999 after experiencing excruciating pain in December 2023.

After receiving initial treatment from paramedics, she was referred to the trust's urgent community response (UCR) team due to her reduced mobility.

The UCR team offers urgent care to people in their homes helping them to avoid hospital admissions.

Occupational therapist Katy Allen, who is based at the Friarage and works as part of the UCR team, visited Margaret at her Colburn home on 29 December.

She noticed Margaret's right foot was infected and had a peculiar smell.

She took a few pictures and sent them to Vicky Ewan, the clinician lead for the hospital at home and the UCR team who advised her team to collect Margaret's blood samples and send them to the pathology lab for further testing.

The tests showed Margaret had signs of serious infection and dehydration.



Vicky Ewan, Mr McCann, Katy Allen, Margaret McCann and Adam Stannard (left to right)

Margaret was advised to attend the same-day emergency care (SDEC) unit at James Cook to prevent further deterioration of her foot. She initially refused any such intervention as she had delirium due to her infection.

However, after Vicky's strong persuasion, Margaret agreed to attend the SDEC on 30 December and following initial treatment, they listed her for urgent surgery on New Year's Eve.

Consultant vascular surgeon Adam Stannard and his team amputated Margaret's two toes and another half a toe, removed a massive

abscess and discovered that she had wet gangrene.

Margaret said: "I was numb with shock when the doctors said that I had my toes amputated and I had a big hole in the sole of my foot after my operation.

"Without Katy and Vicky's intervention, my husband would have been a widow, and my son would have lost his mother."

She is on her way to recovery and has been in rehabilitation at James Cook.

Vicky Ewan said: "Mrs McCann's story highlights the importance of the strong links between our services at South Tees – from our urgent community response team to our hospital at home team and then to the vascular surgery team.

"It's these working relationships, that help keep our patients safe."

Katy, who initially spotted the deadly infection, said: "It is incredibly rewarding to be a part of the team who have worked with Margaret.

"Seeing her smile and comfortable today is a testament to the support from her husband and to the dedicated and skilled professionals who have been party to her care."

Adam Stannard added: "If Margaret's infection had not been picked by the UCR team, she would have most likely lost her leg and suffered other serious life-threatening complications."



Hospital staff talking to Margaret about her recovery process

Researchers investigate effect of heart drug on patients with cancer

RESEARCHERS on Teesside have been looking at whether a heart drug could prevent heart damage in patients with cancer receiving chemotherapy.

Patients undergoing chemotherapy for breast cancer and non-Hodgkin lymphoma took part in the trial led by a specialist heart researcher from South Tees.

A total of 111 patients from across 13 NHS centres were split into two groups between August 2017 and October 2023, with half receiving the heart drug enalapril and half receiving standard chemotherapy care.

Patients underwent blood tests and heart scans during six cycles of chemotherapy and then again, one month after treatment.

The specialist heart research team looked at whether the patients who

took enalapril had less troponin blood markers in their blood.

Studies show troponin is an early indicator of heart damage, a side effect of chemotherapy and later, heart dysfunction.

David Austin, consultant cardiologist revealed his findings at the American College of Cardiology meeting in Atlanta, USA on Monday 8 April.

He said: "We found that the blood marker troponin was raised in about 80% of patients and there was no difference between the group that had enalapril and the group that didn't.

"We don't think taking enalapril to prevent damage to the heart caused by chemotherapy should

now become part of standard care for these patients.

"Even though taking enalapril does not prevent heart damage, it is not harmful for patients and so those already needing to take it at the same time as their chemotherapy should continue to do so."

Results from the follow up study of longer-term heart scans are expected later this year.

The study was funded by National Institute for Health and Care Research and included a national research team of experts from Newcastle, Durham and Teesside Universities.



David Austin, consultant cardiologist

Funding secured for COPD patients across South Tees region

Along with Middlesbrough Environment City (MEC), Public Health and the NENC ICB, we have successfully placed a bid for non-recurrent funding from Northern Gas Alliance to invest in COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) patients across South Tees.

The scheme looks to support COPD patients by referring them to a supportive assessment service that will review their entitlements to housing and heating-related benefits.

The offer includes access to a £300 voucher to help with gas and electric costs to contribute towards heating their home during winter and avoiding COPD exacerbation or flare up.



Michelle Stamp, Janet Leight, Emma Lunn and Emma Coakley (left to right)

As part of the support offered to individuals, they will also have the ability to be referred to the broader local authority warm homes schemes and broader benefit assessment and housing standards schemes as

well as addressing any health and wellbeing needs through Making Every Contact Count.

Speak with a member of the specialist respiratory team for more information.

Deputy nursing chief applauds staff during hospital visit

NURSING staff were delighted to welcome NHS England's deputy chief nursing officer Acosia Nyanin to James Cook.

A marketplace event was set up on the day which displayed all the amazing work being done by our incredible nursing teams in different areas across the trust.

Acosia interacted with each one of our teams and commended all our staff for their significant contributions to making a difference in the lives of our patients.



Acosia interacting with David Purdue, Lindsay Garcia and Hilary Lloyd



Acosia learning more about our volunteering team and their work



David Purdue, Acosia and Hilary Lloyd



Staff sharing information about their work with Acosia

National aspiration for mechanical thrombectomy

STAFF from neurosciences and spinal care services were delighted to welcome NHS England's medical director, Sir Professor Steve Powis, to James Cook on 24 May.

Steve met staff from University Hospital Tees to promote a national aspiration to roll out mechanical thrombectomy for acute ischaemic stroke patients.

A thrombectomy is a relatively new minimally invasive procedure that aims to remove the clot blocking an artery.

Currently the service at James Cook operates Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm. We are working collaboratively with regional

colleagues to provide services 24 hours a day, seven days per week across North East and Yorkshire.

Richard Whitehouse, senior general manager of neurosciences and spinal care collaborative said: "It's fantastic that Steve visited today. It supports the vision to promote mechanical thrombectomy, the positive work we have undertaken at James Cook, other actions we need to take and some of the challenges we face as we move forward."



Staff from both trusts meet NHS England's medical director

For most patients, evidence strongly suggests that if thrombectomy is performed as quickly as possible, this can reduce brain damage, and prevent or limit disability.

NHS researchers awarded £2million to undertake first-of-its-kind study into thumb base arthritis treatment

A GROUP of researchers from Teesside have been awarded £2million to undertake a national study to investigate the best treatment option for base of thumb arthritis.

The Academic Centre for Surgery at South Tees is part of a wider UK research team who are recruiting patients with symptomatic basal thumb osteoarthritis (BTOA) to take part in a randomised clinical trial.

The SCOOTT trial, funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research will randomly assign patients to receive one of three treatment options: a non-surgical management (ENGAGE) package, trapeziectomy surgery or carpometacarpal joint replacement (CMCJR).

Currently, it is not known what the best treatment is for patients with BTOA, a condition which is known to cause significant pain and limitation in hand function, leading to a reduction in quality of life.

Researchers from South Tees Academic Centre for Surgery, University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation

Trust and the University of York will evaluate if surgical treatment is better than non-surgical treatment and if CMCJR is as good as trapeziectomy for patients with BTOA.

Emma Reay, consultant hand and wrist surgeon at South Tees and co-chief investigator of the trial said: "This is the first study of its kind, and we are delighted to have been given the opportunity to answer such an important and timely question in hand surgery."

Nick Johnson, consultant hand and wrist surgeon at University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust added: "The findings of this large study comparing three common treatment options will provide strong evidence about the best treatment to benefit patients and the NHS as a whole."

Joy Adamson, Royal College of Surgeons chair in surgical trials at



Researchers at SCOOTT trial launch

University of York said: "This will be the largest study to date and we are excited to start this important trial which will inform clinical practice and improve patient care."

The SCOOTT trial was officially launched at the British Society for Surgery of the Hand (BSSH) Spring Scientific Meeting on Thursday 25 and Friday 26 April 2024.

Neonatal team celebrates International Kangaroo Care Awareness Day

OUR neonatal team at James Cook celebrated International Kangaroo Care Awareness Day by donning kangaroo hats and decorating the ward board.

The day was in honour to promote skin-to-skin care, which is vital for babies and parents as it helps to calm them. Kangaroo care promotes a sense of bonding and provides babies with extra care and comfort.

Thomas Skeath was seen entertaining young Sophie with his lively performance on the ward.



The neonatal team



Thomas Skeath with young Sophie and her mother, Betty Lamb

Heartwarming tributes paid to 'ray of sunshine' receptionist

STAFF from One Life Medical Centre have paid a heartwarming tribute to a colleague who sadly passed away after a short battle with cancer.

Shirley Rees, one of our receptionists at One Life Medical Centre, departed from this world on Saturday 20 April.

During her career Shirley had worked for many services including physiotherapy, MSK, podiatry and plastics, but her main role was with the specialist skin service and dermatology at One Life.

Her colleagues described her as the first person to encounter patients when they attended appointments at One Life.

Shirley was always ready with a warm smile and friendly greeting which immediately put them at ease.

However, it was not just the patients Shirley made an impression on but also her fellow staff too. Her affection and love brought together the whole team as a close-knit work family.

One of her colleagues was Perdita Kamali, who said: "Shirley was a ray of sunshine.

"Whenever I arrived at work and saw Shirley at the front desk my spirits were lifted – not only because I knew that the day would run smoothly due to Shirley's impeccable organisation skills, but mainly because of her warmth and caring attitude to all.

"She gave her all at work and took great pride in it. I will never forget her kindness and shall miss her dearly."

"Shirley was a ray of sunshine. Whenever I arrived at work and saw Shirley at the front desk my spirits were lifted."



Shirley Rees being congratulated by colleagues after winning a STARS Award

Diane officially retires after 16 years

A RESPECTED ward manager has officially retired from her post after an illustrious 16-year career in the trust.

Diane Chapman, 60, initially joined the endoscopy unit in 2008 as a staff nurse in the Friarage, after initially working in orthopaedics.

She quickly climbed the professional ladder and was soon promoted to ward manager, where she oversaw a host of positive changes to the unit.

During her time in endoscopy, Diane facilitated several changes including moving up to a new endoscopy unit, looking after an increased patient flow and managing a larger workforce.

It was a cherry on the top moment for Diane as her last achievement in her distinguished career was helping the ward achieve diamond accreditation in STAQC (South Tees Accreditation for Quality of Care).

Consultant surgeon Venkatesh Kanakala said: "Her attention to detail and refusal to cut corners have left a lasting impression on me. Losing her leadership will be a significant loss for our unit."

Vikram Gurud, consultant surgeon, added: "I can't emphasise how much her tireless efforts have been instrumental in the success and smooth running of our unit."

Diane said: "Since I qualified, I have enjoyed my time working at the Friarage, and later as the manager in endoscopy. I have relished my time running the endoscopy unit which has been made easier with the backing of such a good team."



Diane Chapman

"I was so proud when we attained the diamond STAQC award and thank all my staff for their support and kind words".

Her impeccable work rate and love for her team and patients have encouraged Diane to return to work as a staff nurse for two days every week.

This ensures she continues to support the team as a role model and mentor for them which helps them to continue providing the best patient care in the future.

Principal radiographer bids goodbye

ON Tuesday 30 April, principal radiographer Margaret McLean bid her goodbyes to colleagues and expressed her thanks to everyone for making her time a grand success in the NHS.

With a career spanning over 43 years, she initially started studying for a DCR in radiotherapy and completed a practical placement at South Cleveland Hospital (now James Cook).

She said: "I have been extremely lucky as I have thoroughly enjoyed my career and had the support of the department to achieve my goals. I can honestly say I have loved being a therapeutic radiographer, especially in my review role supporting the patients and being

told I have made a difference to them."

Radiotherapy services manager Claire Huntley said: "Margaret has been an advocate for therapeutic radiographers throughout her career, particularly in role extension. She has put patient experience at the centre of her practice and really thrives when managing challenging clinical situations."

"Margaret has worked very closely with her colleague Pat, they come as a pair, and together



have, reviewed all the radiotherapy patients for the best part of 20 years."

Thank you very much for your service throughout these years, Margaret.



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Can't go to Specsavers? They'll come to you

We caught up with Kejal Shah who has been an Optometrist with Specsavers Home Visits for 8 years. She explains to us how this much-needed service works.



So, tell me more about the Home Visits service...

Our at-home eye test is very similar to what you would have experienced in-store, just with a few adjustments and specialist equipment to make it home-friendly.

Optometrists, like myself, carry out the eye test, adjusting it to your individual needs. If glasses are needed, experienced colleagues will help with frame selection and then return to fit them. And, it goes without saying, all customers are supported with ongoing aftercare.

In response to demand, we've also now launched a new audiology home visits service. So far, we have home hearing services in 14 locations in the UK, with plans to expand this over the coming months.

Who is able to benefit from a home eye test?

Put simply, it's about bringing the service to your door, if you can't get to one of our stores.

So if you, a friend, or loved one, are unable to leave your home or care home unaccompanied, due to a physical or mental illness or disability, we can come to you.

There are a wide range of conditions and reasons why someone might not be able to leave their home. You can speak to us about your situation and we can help you understand if you or your loved one qualifies.

What if someone is bedbound, or struggling with communication? Can you still help them?

The Home Visits service is designed to provide eyecare which is as individual as our customers are.

Some customers might be clinically vulnerable or they might be non-verbal or living with dementia. Depending on the situation, we might use pictures instead of letters for example. Even with a customer who is bedbound, we can change the position of the chart so we're still getting completely accurate results. All the tests are adapted to fit the customer's environment and comfort level. We can also speak to the customer or their loved one ahead of the visit, to address any questions or talk through the process.



Given that you provide such a personal and tailored service, does your care go beyond just an eye test?

Every colleague I know sees our services as something beyond just a job. Whether it's sharing stories over a cuppa, popping something in the post for them, or passing them something out of reach, going that extra mile is such a rewarding part of our role. I only need to see a customer's smile to know I've made a difference.

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How do I find out whether someone is eligible?

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