

# COUNTRESS MATTERS

Autumn 2024



## Transforming Care Together: new five- year strategy revealed

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*Annual survey reveals greater patient satisfaction  
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# WELCOME

Welcome to the latest edition of **Countess Matters**. You can also keep up to date with our latest news on **Facebook**, **X (Twitter)** and **Instagram**.

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## COLORECTAL TEAM SHORTLISTED FOR NATIONAL CANCER AWARD

The Trust's Colorectal team is 'honoured' to have been shortlisted for a cancer nursing award for their work in implementing a groundbreaking initiative that speeds up diagnosis for patients.

The team is the first in the entire region to introduce nurse-led triage, significantly transforming the patient experience in the form of a faster diagnostic process, addressing health inequalities and ensuring all patients receive the same high-quality care.

After patient feedback highlighted the stress and uncertainty associated with waiting for investigations and results, the team worked on launching an innovative approach to improve care and support.

The initiative includes using nurse-led triage at the start of the patient's journey and similar reviews throughout, ensuring patients received timely and comprehensive support from the outset.



**The Colorectal team have been shortlisted for a national cancer award**

Kate Holloway, Lead Gastrointestinal Nurse, and one of the leaders of the initiative, said: "It is an honour to have been nominated and shortlisted for the Nursing Times Awards and it is a really exciting time for the team."

The Ingrid Fuchs Cancer Nursing Times Award recognises individuals or teams who have enhanced the quality of care for cancer patients, and who excel in delivering compassionate care that makes a long-lasting impact on cancer care delivery.

The Nursing Times Awards took place at the Grosvenor House Hotel on October 23.

## Celebrating 10 years of our Country Park

It's 10 years since the Countess of Chester Hospital Country Park opened to the public, and several local dignitaries helped mark the milestone with a special celebration.

The popular green space next to the hospital first opened in September 2014 and has become a cherished part of the local landscape, serving as a peaceful retreat for hospital staff, patients and the local community.

Its special anniversary celebration was hosted by Chester Zoo CEO Jamie Christon in his capacity of Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Cheshire, with guests also in attendance who have been involved in the country park over the past decade.

Jamie Christon said: "This brilliant, vibrant space is a shining example of



**Jamie Christon with volunteers from the Country Park**

creating positive outcomes in local communities and has brought many people hours of joy. It's wonderful that just a few minutes outside of the busy city centre you have this beautiful and calming space that allows people from all walks of life the chance to connect with nature."

# SPOTLIGHT ON... THE MEDICAL EMERGENCY TEAM



The new MET team

## Enhancing rapid response for critically ill patients

**The safety and wellbeing of patients remains our first priority. That's why, as part of our continuous effort to provide the highest standards of care, we have an embedded Medical Emergency Team (MET) – a dedicated team specifically trained to provide a rapid response to patients showing signs of serious deterioration.**

The team is available 24/7 and supports the existing system for identifying patients who may be deteriorating, using the second National Early Warning Scoring system (NEWS2) to monitor key health indicators like oxygen levels, breathing rate, blood pressure and pulse rate, with a higher score indicating a higher risk of deterioration.

If a patient's NEWS2 score is high or staff have serious concerns, the MET can be called in by nurses or doctors to provide urgent, specialised care. This is especially

**“This is a brilliant initiative which reflects the Trust's ongoing commitment to providing the highest level of care for our patients, ensuring that help is always at hand when it's needed most.”**

helpful in providing additional care during the night and at weekends.

The team help to ensure that patients receive rapid and expert care in the event of deterioration, giving staff the additional option to allow escalation of patients within their care where they have concerns and require an immediate response.

For patients, this service provides assurance that, should their condition deteriorate, there is an emergency response team available all day, every day to review their

care, expedite investigations and devise management plans.

The MET complements existing care routines, and they work closely with ward staff, acting as a safety net so that when a patient's condition worsens unexpectedly their care can be escalated without delay.

Dr Nigel Scawn, Medical Director, said: “This is a brilliant initiative which reflects the Trust's ongoing commitment to providing the highest level of care for our patients, ensuring that help is always at hand when it's needed most.

“The MET allows us to respond more rapidly and effectively to patients who need urgent attention, particularly during times when their usual clinical team may not be immediately available.”

## Adding a different dimension to endoscopy training

**Our Endoscopy team is taking innovative training to the next level with the use of an advanced mannequin that mimics the inside of a human gullet, stomach and upper small intestine.**

The highly realistic model allows the team to practice and refine their endoscopic techniques in a safe, controlled environment before working with real patients.

The training process involves guiding an endoscope – a flexible tube – through the mouth, down the gullet and into the stomach, all while viewing the procedure on a large screen.

This setup allows trainees to develop precision and confidence as they learn to navigate the scope, perform diagnostic assessments and practice a range of therapeutic procedures.

Terry Wardle, Consultant Gastroenterologist, said: "I always compare it to playing a PC game – the more practice you get, the better you become at it."



**The Endoscopy team using the mannequin**



**Faye Stevens (left), Infection Prevention and Control Nurse, teaching colleagues Katie, Oliver, Gina and Nike about hand hygiene**

## TAKING THE GLOVES OFF TO IMPROVE STANDARDS

**Our Infection, Prevention and Control team have introduced the 'Gloves Off' initiative, to improve patient and staff safety by challenging the use of gloves by staff.**

Glove use is essential for some interactions between patients and staff, but for other situations it is safer and more effective to provide care without gloves and instead use good hand hygiene by washing hands with hot water and soap.

For example, some of our colleagues who work in non-caring roles – like our domestic and kitchen staff – do not need to be wearing gloves as much and can more effectively carry out duties by washing their hands instead.

As well as reducing cross-contamination and the risk of infection for patients, this plastic glove saving initiative will have the secondary effect of improving our environmental footprint.

Faye Stevens, Infection, Prevention and Control Specialist Nurse, said: "This initiative has been so helpful in getting all colleagues to question their glove use and to ask themselves if they need to be wearing gloves. Thanks to the engagement from staff, we have seen great results so far. I am excited to see how much more of an impact we can make over the next 12 months."

If you have a question about your care, please ask our staff members why they are or are not wearing gloves in your interaction with them.

## New Zero Tolerance campaign launches after a 15% rise in violence towards staff in the last year

**The Trust's new Zero Tolerance campaign aims to combat threatening and abusive behaviour to make sure our staff and patients feel safe and respected.**

Abuse, whether verbal or physical, has a huge impact on staff wellbeing and can affect the care our staff provide. Following the results of the 2023 staff survey, we have been working to create a more positive and supportive work environment for everyone, and this campaign is part of how we are taking action to stop abuse.

In the last year, there has been a 15% rise in abuse towards our staff, a startling and completely unacceptable shift.

Enough is enough. By tackling abuse head-on, we're making sure our workplace is one where our staff feel safe, valued, and supported. When staff feel secure, they can focus on delivering the best care without worrying about being mistreated on the job. The Zero Tolerance message is aimed at improving the working environment, staff mental health, morale, and job satisfaction.

For our patients, the campaign ensures they receive care in an environment built on trust and respect. It will help to create a better care experience, which is essential for their recovery and wellbeing.

The Zero Tolerance campaign is about listening to our staff and creating a culture where abuse is not tolerated, making the Trust a safer, kinder place for everyone – whether you're receiving care, visit a loved one, or are a volunteer or staff member.



# SURVEY RESULTS SHOW INCREASING PATIENT SATISFACTION WITH STANDARDS OF CARE

**Patients have reported significant year-on-year improvements in their experiences at the Trust in the latest annual survey held by the regulator, the Care Quality Commission.**

Patients said the length of time they were on the waiting list before being admitted has improved the most, reflecting huge reductions to elective care waiting times made at the Trust, with cancer services a particular success. We continue to focus on this.

The Trust was also better than most in involving family or carers in discussions about leaving hospital. Patients reported consistent communication about their treatment and care – reflecting the significant investment made to the caring workforce and its leadership in recent times. These successes are part of a Trust-wide focus to improve care for patients and families and put a greater emphasis on staff wellbeing.

Sue Pemberton, Director of Nursing and Deputy Chief Executive Officer, said: "We are already seeing the impact of improvements and remain steadfast in our commitment to be an organisation that people can rely on when they need us, with patients at the heart of everything we do.



Listening has become an integral part of our new approach, and we hear this feedback. As well as some reassuring improvements reported by our patients, which we welcome, we will continue to strive to do better on the issues that we haven't quite got right yet."

Notably, patients were unhappy with the time waiting for a bed after arriving at hospital, reflecting the continued pressures felt by A&Es nationwide, and with being disrupted at night.

Several changes have been made already this year to free up beds sooner, which are not yet reflected in these results, and there will soon be a wider range of food choices. The improved Friends and Family Test feedback postcards will also be easier to find throughout the hospitals.



Patients can now access their hospital information on the NHS app

Patients can now easily access their outpatient appointment information through the NHS app, marking a key step in improving online health communication for our patients. This update empowers patients by providing more visibility of their primary and secondary care information in one place, anytime, anywhere. Along with the NHS app and appointment reminders, a pilot in Rheumatology means that outpatient appointment letters for those patients are now accessible online via a secure webpage or the app.

Dr Theresa Barnes, clinical lead for the project, said: "This service enhances patient care, offering more control and future personalised care options."

Digital outpatient appointment letters will soon be available for all specialties, whilst we ensure continuity by posting some letters during the transition, or for patients who opt out or can't access the digital service.

## New breakfast club is transforming stroke patients' recovery experience

**A breakfast club that recently launched on the Stroke Unit at Ellesmere Port Hospital is transforming patients' recovery and giving them a fun reason to get out of bed every morning.**

The club has become a lifeline for patients often in hospital for extended periods of time, giving them a renewed sense of purpose, community and a vital boost to their rehabilitation.

Stroke patients are invited to gather each morning to prepare and share a meal, giving them the opportunity to complete everyday tasks they might otherwise miss during their recovery.



**Patient John Powell with therapy assistants from the breakfast club at Ellesmere Port Hospital**

John Powell, who was on the wards at Ellesmere Port Hospital for at least four weeks, said the club gave him a reason to get out of bed and meet people: "I progressed massively – the club gave me so much independence. The people I shared a ward with were brilliant and we all had a real laugh together."



# CELEBRATING OUR OUTSTANDING PEOPLE AT ANNUAL AWARDS EVENT

**This year's Celebration of Achievement Awards was a fantastic opportunity to show our appreciation of our staff, with a glitzy occasion that recognised those teams and individuals who have been outstanding in their roles.**

The eagerly awaited event took place in September at the Chester Racecourse, with 350 staff in attendance. There were 11 categories, including Outstanding Team of the Year, Individual Achievement of the Year

and Volunteer of the Year Award.

An increasing number of our people are delivering excellence every day as we continue our journey of improvement, and this was reflected in the large number of nominations received by staff, patients, carers, volunteers and governors.

Sallie Kelsey, Head of Education, said: "Our staff look forward to this event every year, and this was no exception. There was

a real buzz on the night, and you could see how much the recognition meant for those who won and were shortlisted. This event has gone a long way to show how much colleagues are appreciated and acted as an important reminder in our shared determination to transform services for our patients and the local community."

We'd like to extend a special thank you to Hill Dickinson and Weightmans for their sponsorship of the evening.

## Employee and Team of the Month awards launch

**Our recent relaunch of the staff recognition programme has had a significant impact on the wellbeing of our colleagues. Each month, we acknowledge an exceptional staff member and team who have made a lasting, positive impact on patient care and demonstrated exceptional performance and innovation with a recognition award.**

Winners are presented by members of the Executive team with a certificate and badge, and are recognised for their achievements throughout the month internally. This visibility and profile are just a small way to say 'thank you' to those individuals who go above and beyond for our patients and local community.

The awards are based on nominations, which don't need to be from just staff

– patients can make a nomination too. Designed to highlight and appreciate the outstanding efforts of our employees and teams, the recognition awards celebrate and acknowledge the hard work, dedication, and exceptional contributions of our staff. If you'd like to nominate an individual or team for an award, scan the QR code here:



**Hannah Hughes, Orthopaedic Therapy Team Leader, winner of the first Employee of the Month award [centre] presented by Jane Tomkinson OBE, Chief Executive Officer, and Debbie Herring, Acting Chief People Officer**



**Pictured: The Clinical Solutions and Data Warehouse team, who won the September Team of the Month award.**

# LISTENING TO OUR STAFF

**Over the past year, we have been listening to our staff and taking action in response, including the feedback given as part of the 2023 national NHS Staff Survey.**

The comments our people and teams have given provides the Executive team with a unique understanding of how it feels to work at the Trust and an appreciation of the challenges that staff experience.

Debbie Herring, Interim Chief People Officer, said: "Feedback from our staff is invaluable. It helps us to identify what's working well and where we need to improve. We've made some significant changes since the 2023 survey and whilst there remains much more to do, we have taken a step in the right direction and we are making concrete improvements for the people who work in our hospitals."



## How we responded to feedback from our people

Our staff told us that:

### **They wanted positive action on health and wellbeing**

We expanded our Wellbeing team and built a Wellbeing Hub so there was a designated space for our staff to focus on their wellbeing.



### **They didn't have confidence in how we act on concerns they raise**

We strengthened our Freedom To Speak Up (FTSU) service by reviewing it and setting up a network of over 50 FTSU Champions. Our Chief Executive made clear pledges to staff about how we will respond to any issues they raise via the FTSU route.



### **They wanted improved access to nutritious and affordable food**

We expanded the choice of freshly prepared, homecooked meals in our Staff Restaurant, opened our Greener Café and opened a new Marks & Spencer store at our Countess of Chester Hospital.

### **They wanted a focus on cultural awareness**

We held a series of roadshows to develop a civility statement and a civility pocketbook which sets out how we want to work together and for the benefit of our patients.



### **They wanted more support to develop themselves**

We launched a new appraisal process so that our people will receive more constructive feedback through a more supportive process. We also relaunched the Team Engagement and Development tool to support teams to understand how they can work together effectively.



### **They felt racism was the most concerning issue**

We launched a Zero Tolerance campaign to make it clear that we will not tolerate abuse against our staff. More information about this campaign is on page 4.

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**“Feedback from our staff is invaluable. It helps us to identify what's working well and where we need to improve.”**

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# LEADING THE WAY TO PROVIDE OUTSTANDING CARE FOR OUR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

TRANSFORMING CARE  
together

**We have unveiled a new strategy to provide a clear and bold direction for how we will provide comprehensive and outstanding care for our patients and their families now and into the future.**

Our Transforming Care Together strategy sets out our vision to take a strong leadership role to promote a positive culture in the way we look after and care for our patients, our population, and each other.

At the heart of our approach are the 400,000 people who live in the communities we serve, including: Chester, West Cheshire, Ellesmere Port, Neston and Deeside. We want everyone who turns to us for care and support – whether that is in hospital, a community setting or at home – to receive the best possible care, experience and outcomes from the services they receive.

We are looking outward and beyond the traditional ways of delivering healthcare – it's about transforming how we think about and respond to the diverse needs of those we are here to care for.

Our strategy is built on a more holistic approach where we focus on the opportunities for earlier intervention and prevention. By working collaboratively across our own teams and with other organisations, we will proactively address health concerns before they become critical so that we reduce the burden of disease and improve the quality of life for our patients.

This more integrated approach means we can concentrate our efforts where they are needed most, tracking the root causes of health inequalities and making sure no-one is left behind.

Transforming Care Together, the name of our new strategy, describes our intent to do things differently. It is forward looking and describes the partnerships we aspire to build on and develop with our patients, their families, our healthcare partners and colleagues in social care. We are committed to leading the way in delivering compassionate, safe and equitable care.

By prioritising the wellbeing of every individual, by listening and continuing to improve, we can build a culture of



excellence and better meet the needs of our patients now and into the future.

Our Transforming Care Together strategy is available on our website.

#### **How will we achieve this?**

We are updating our clinical strategy to ensure it meets the needs of our patients and the wider health needs of the local communities who rely on us for their care.

We are continuing to improve quality and safety across all of our services:

- Earlier this year, we launched a fresh and more robust approach to improving the experiences our patients and families have when using or visiting our services. Our staff are leading this work to make sure this approach is embedded in all that we do.
- Strengthening our role in system leadership, and forging new partnerships and collaborations across health, social care and other organisations.
- Focusing on our people by establishing shared values and behaviours, and

expanding the health and wellbeing offers for our staff.

- Setting clear plans for key areas including a new financial strategy and plan and identifying digital solutions.
- Embedding strong governance, organisation learning and keeping clear focus on population health and health inequalities centered around integrated care.
- Progressing our research, education and innovation ambitions.

#### **Our goals:**

1. Create a positive patient and family experience
2. Develop our people and our culture
3. Provide purposeful leadership
4. Add value
5. Actively seek partnership opportunities
6. Contribute proactively to improving the health of our population



# WE'VE SIGNED THE NHS PREVENTION PLEDGE



## We're aiming to step up our work to prevent ill-health and better support the local communities that we serve.

We know that our local population is changing with many people in our local area growing older and living longer, sometimes with multiple long-term conditions.

We know that this means the demand on our services will change over time and, in the future, they will look different than they do now.

We are already looking ahead, to plan our services so that we continue to meet the needs of our changing population and better support people to manage their own self-care. We want our services to adapt to support people to stay well and live longer and healthier lives.

## Preventing ill health: the Prevention Pledge

As we plan for our future, we must renew our focus on preventing ill-health and work more collaboratively across organisations and geography.

Across Cheshire and Merseyside, 17 NHS Trusts have signed an NHS Prevention Pledge which sets out 14 core commitments which cover a number of key themes, including the prevention of physical and mental ill-health, health inequalities, the health and wellbeing of NHS staff, improving the quality of services and adding more social value to our local communities.

We signed up in April 2023 as part of Cohort 3 and since then have delivered on nine of the 14 core commitments with work well underway on the remaining six commitments over the next seven months. Some of our achievements so far include:

- Launching a Breakfast Club for stroke patients to increase the intensity of rehabilitation therapy and socialisation
- Establishing a Nutrition Improvement Group for patients
- Securing funding to continue providing our Treating Tobacco Dependency Service to patients and staff
- Opening a Wellbeing Hub for our staff
- Opening a new Marks & Spencer store to improve food and drink choices for patients, visitors and staff
- Launching our Anchor Institution Steering Group.

## Becoming an Anchor Institution

We are a major employer and one of the largest organisations in the local area and by choosing to invest in our local area we can significantly influence the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve.

Our aspiration is to contribute more to the local area and people by:

- Working closely with local partners
- Investing in services

- Employing people and companies from our local area
- Purchasing goods and services locally
- Reducing the impact we have on the environment
- Using our estate wisely



Jon Develing, Director of Strategy and Partnerships, said: "We know that 80% of health outcomes are determined by aspects of our lives that are not specific to health – things like housing, education, access to green space, employment status and income. Given the role we have in Chester, it's vital that we make a positive impact on our local community and support people to live healthier lives."

The Trust's newly convened Anchor Institution Steering Group brings together a number of people who are working on a wide agenda to ensure the Trust reaches its goal of becoming an Anchor Institution.

Their work encompasses the sustainability agenda to support the Trust to reduce its impact on the environment and reduce its carbon emissions, the ongoing work to meet the core commitments of the Prevention Pledge and to make sure the Trust adds social value to the local area by considering how decisions and actions impact people's lives.



**Our new breakfast club for stroke patients is helping patients regain their independence. Read more about this on Page 5.**

# FEEDBACK FROM OUR PATIENTS



"Fantastic treatment. Arrived with a chest infection and had initial checks, blood samples, X-ray chat with the doctor, diagnosis and medication – all complete within two hours. Thank you."



"...how lovely the domestic team member, Helen, was to my mum during her impatient stay. Helen was so cheerful and took the time to interact with my mum every shift and it made her day. Thanks, and keep being you!"



"A huge thanks to A&E and SDEC for looking after my dad. Can't thank the staff enough for their kindness and support in taking care of dad and reassuring myself."



## New Women and Children's Building: latest

Construction of the new Women and Children's Building continues at breakneck speed, with the skeleton of the inside now shaping up and the building watertight. The lights have also been 'switched on' to enable the builders to finish during the winter months. Plans are being made for the eventual transfer into the building



to ensure it's done safely for patients. Colleagues who will be moving across are getting site tours and procurement is underway of things like new equipment.

## Help us to help you stay well this winter

As ever, the NHS is here for you this winter, and anyone with health concerns should continue to come forward for care.

Help us to help you access the right NHS care by calling or visiting NHS 111 online for urgent health advice or call 999 in emergencies.

During winter, we treat many people for viruses like flu and COVID-19, and vaccines are our best defence. Book online through the national booking service, the NHS App, or your GP.

- To book a flu vaccine visit: [www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/book-flu-vaccination/](http://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/book-flu-vaccination/)
- To book a COVID-19 vaccine visit: [www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/covid-19-services/covid-19-vaccination-services/book-covid-19-vaccination/](http://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/covid-19-services/covid-19-vaccination-services/book-covid-19-vaccination/)

We are also offering the RSV vaccine to pregnant women at the Countess of Chester Hospital for the first time this year – keep an eye out on our Maternity Facebook page or speak with your midwifery team for more information about the clinics.

## Taking pride in all that we do

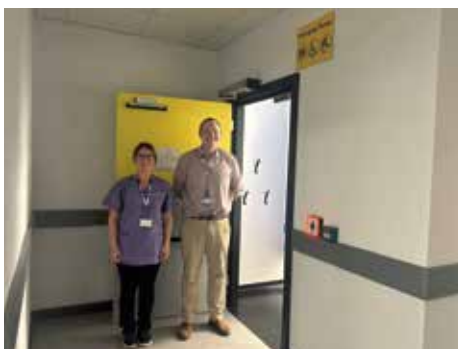
Around 30 members of staff helped to transform Chester Pride into a sea of colour for the celebrations in August, showing our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Our participation in the event followed the relaunch of our LGBTQ+ Staff Network last year and a visit to the Countess of Chester Hospital this summer by Chester Pride's Chief Executive, Richard Euston, who heard about our ambitions to further enhance support and services for LGBTQ+ individuals.

Ashley Vaughan-Pearson, Chair of the LGBTQ+ Staff Network, said: "We are proud to foster an inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTQ+ individuals at our Trust – this extends to staff and patients and is why community relations is important for our network's mission."



Trust staff celebrate Chester Pride



From left to right: **Debbie Tasker, Domestic Services Assistant, and Adam Flynn, Assistant Facilities Manager, outside the Changing Places facility**

## Enhancing accessibility with the Changing Places facility

Did you know the Countess of Chester Hospital is one of only a handful of locations in the borough to have a Changing Places facility?

This all-in-one space, which caters for a variety of needs, includes a ceiling-mounted hoist, changing bench, toilet and height-adjustable wash basin, as well as a shower and privacy curtain.

Changing Places facilities are different to standard accessible toilets, as they have extra features and more space, allowing people the opportunity to maintain their independence and dignity when out and about.

Our Changing Places room is located in the main entrance of the hospital, behind M&S.



# FUNDRAISING NEWS

## Retinal Eye Scanner Appeal

**Can you help us to provide a 'state of the art' Optus Retinal Scanner for our Eye Department?**

This advanced piece of equipment produces wider images of the retina (thin layer of tissue in the eyes), benefitting adults and children by allowing faster diagnosis and being less invasive.

It also has a particular advantage for young children and babies who will be able to undergo scans for the first time with the new, more child-friendly machine. The increased ease of testing will also enable staff to use it on children and adults with special educational needs.

The scanner will make a marked difference to the service that we provide for our patients. We are hoping to raise £200,000 for the Optus Retinal Scanner by spring 2025.

Colleagues from the Eye Clinic are passionate about the cause and have undertaken some incredible fundraising attempts to help raise the required amount.

Earlier this year, staff raised thousands of pounds by taking part in the UK's biggest



**Orthoptist colleagues have been fundraising for the Retinal Eye Scanner Appeal**

skydive, which saw them jump 15,000ft out of a plane, and others completed a trek up Snowdon.

**Donate to our Retinal Eye Scanner Appeal**

Follow us on Facebook to keep up to date with all our events [www.facebook.com/COCHFundraisingTeam](http://www.facebook.com/COCHFundraisingTeam) or make a donation to the Optus Retinal Scanner Appeal by visiting the Fundraising office in the main reception of the Countess of Chester Hospital, or call us on 01244 366240.

You can also donate here:



**Jubilee Day Centre staff in one of the rooms that received a makeover**

## Jubilee rooms get charity makeover

Staff in our Jubilee Day Centre have done a fantastic job transforming two rooms into calming relaxation spaces for patients who may feel anxious about being in hospital.

David Wilson-Jones and his team used funds donated to The Countess Charity and money raised from a ward outing to create a more comforting and less clinical space for patients.

Painted in calming green, earthy tones and featuring light boxes with serene images of Chester's River Dee, these rooms have been specially designed to help anxious patients feel more at ease, and feedback has been very positive so far.

With special thanks to Christine Knight, Lady Captain at Chester Golf Club, whose substantial donation helped transform these rooms for patients.

## Ice creams go down a treat with staff

To thank our staff for their hard work, an ice cream van visited both our Countess of Chester and Ellesmere Port hospitals over the summer.



Staff were treated to either an ice cream or ice lolly free of charge as a small thank you for everything they do, in a generous gesture funded by The Countess Charity.

Colleagues from the Palliative Care Team said: "It's something to look forward to and makes you feel valued. We weren't really expecting it."

Sharon and Sam from Admissions added: "It's a nice gesture and brings a smile to your face. We've been looking forward to it all day!"

The ice-cold treats were well received and put smiles on everyone's faces!

## Charity funds new cutting-edge tattoo machine for breast patients

**Thanks to generous funding from The Countess Charity, patients who have undergone breast reconstruction surgery now have access to a brand new, cutting-edge nipple tattoo machine.**

This incredible, advanced piece of equipment creates semi-permanent, natural looking nipple tattoos for breast cancer patients, giving them a vital boost in confidence and self-image.

It is a marked improvement on the Trust's previous tattoo machine, and the charity funding, as well as funds donated by a patient who wanted to give something back to the team, has allowed staff to receive specialised training to set up a clinic offering regular tattoo appointments.

Karen Worrall, Senior Breast Specialist Nurse, said: "These tattoos are a vital part of the healing process for many patients. Being able to offer them the best possible care with results that last is incredibly rewarding."



**Karen Worrall with the new nipple tattoo machine**

# CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESSES

**In September I had the pleasure of chairing our Annual Members' Meeting (AMM) where we celebrated our many successes over the past 12 months.**

From reducing harm to launching new clinics, we've made significant strides to improve patient care as well as placing a stronger focus on supporting our staff better. We've enhanced opportunities for our staff to speak up and provide feedback, prioritised

their wellbeing and improved the way we champion and develop them in their roles.

To showcase these improvements and set out our vision for the future, we put together a video highlighting our progress and ambitions which you can watch using the QR code.

The video is six minutes long and has music but you can also watch without sound.



## Introducing our new strategy

**At the AMM, we also introduced our new strategy, Transforming Care Together. It outlines our commitment to providing outstanding care for our patients and families, with a clear vision centred on strong leadership, a positive culture, and collaboration. You can read more about the strategy on page 8.**

It is an exciting time to be part of our organisation. Our patients are experiencing the positive impact of our efforts to enhance the quality and safety of our services. At the same time, we are looking ahead and strengthening our position within the healthcare system so we can continue to make a difference to our local communities.

We value our members and their support as we continue our focus on improving patient care and supporting our staff to be their very best through their work.



## Welcome to our new Governors

**At the AMM, we were able to announce the results from our recent Governor elections and we were really pleased to be able to welcome six new governors to our Council of Governors:**

**Chester and rural Cheshire:** Jan Chillery, Sheila Dunbar, Louise JHA and Terry Peach

**Flintshire:** Myrddin Roberts

**Rest of England and Wales:** Daryl Cassidy

Our governors make a huge impact each

and every year, supporting us by attending meetings, contributing to discussions or by taking part in our walkabout programme where they get to meet our staff and patients and learn more about our services.

On behalf of the Trust I would like to extend our sincere thanks for the work all of our governors have done over the past 12 months as we work to improve patient experience and standards of care.

**Ian Haythornthwaite  
Chair**

## New lead Governor announced

I'm delighted to announce that we have a new lead governor; John Jones, who has served as a governor for a number of years already, has stepped up to lead our Council of Governors. I look forward to working with him as we continue to improve our services and standards of care.





# PROSPECT HOUSE

CARE HOME

- NHS Continuing Care
- Palliative Care
- Dementia Care
- Nursing Care
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Transforming Care Together: new five-year strategy revealed  
More on page 8

02 Cancer services shortlisted for national award  
05 Annual survey reveals greater inpatient satisfaction  
06 Monthly staff recognition scheme launches

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More on page 5

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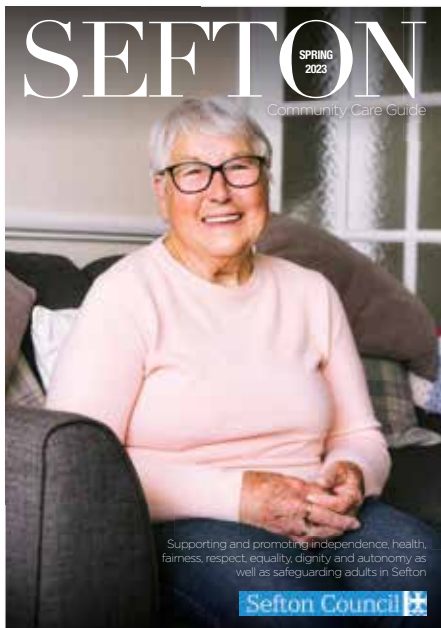
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The Anwyl logo features the word 'ANWYL' in a white, sans-serif font. A teal-colored wave graphic is positioned behind the letters 'W' and 'Y', extending from the top of the 'W' to the bottom of the 'Y'.

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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 16 locations in the UK, including in the Chester area, 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.

That's a big part of what we do. Provide a personal service, tailored care and expertise, right to people's homes, no matter what their situation – in homes, care homes or sheltered housing.

**How do I find out whether someone is eligible?**

You can head to our website at [www.specsavers.co.uk/home-visits](http://www.specsavers.co.uk/home-visits) which features a simple step-by-step guide to eligibility and a wealth of information. Alternatively, you can call **0800 0890144**.

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