

# COUNTRESS MATTERS

Summer 2024



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## WELCOME

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## MP SAMANTHA DIXON OPENS SAME DAY EMERGENCY CARE FACILITY

**Chester MP Samantha Dixon has officially opened the Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) facility, saying it was 'her greatest pleasure' to do so.**

The facility has been operating since December 2022, serving thousands of patients and providing fast, efficient assessments.

Built as a space where patients with urgent clinical concerns can be assessed, diagnosed, treated and safely discharged on the same day, SDEC helps to cut down on the need for admissions and, as a result, relieves pressure on the hospital and supports A&E.

SDEC also houses an Acute Frailty service, where patients can benefit from comprehensive, specialist geriatric assessments in a calmer and more suitable environment.

It also contains a clinical assessment unit on the second floor, which enables patients to receive additional treatment before being safely discharged, without needing to be admitted into the hospital.

Officially opening the facility, Samantha Dixon said: "This is an amazing hospital, and it is always so nice to come here.



"I've been involved with the Countess of Chester Hospital for many years now and it is fantastic to see just how much it has changed and evolved – things like this are always such a boost."

Patients can only attend SDEC if they have been referred by a healthcare professional (either through their GP, NHS111, North West Ambulance Service), or if they are triaged in the Trust's Emergency Department (A&E). Once referred they will receive urgent assessment, tests, diagnosis and treatment whilst there.

## Celebrating our biomedical scientists

**To mark Biomedical Science Day in June, the histology and cytology laboratories opened their doors to staff with guided tours to showcase the role of pathology in our hospitals.**

Biomedical scientists and support staff play a unique role in the journey of a patient, as they can often be the first people to identify a diagnosis or rule out an illness without direct interaction with the patient. On the pathology tours staff learnt all about the techniques used to produce diagnostic reports – starting from watching a specimen dissection right through to tissue processing, microtomy [carving off a small sample that can be examined closer under a microscope] and specialist staining techniques [adding a dye to make it easier



to see what's going on].

Abigail Armstrong, Pathology Quality Manager, said: "We had a wide range of staff from the Trust take part in these tours, which I hope helped more people to feel better informed about the science that supports making a diagnosis."

# CHAMPIONING SKIN HEALTH: INSIDE THE WORLD OF A TISSUE VIABILITY NURSE



**Maria is the Trust's first tissue viability nurse consultant**

**Maria Hughes is the Trust's first tissue viability nurse consultant, and only the second in the North West. She explains more about her new role.**

#### **What does a tissue viability nurse do?**

A tissue viability nurse is a highly skilled practitioner who assesses, treats, advises, and educates on complex wound management. Whilst a departmental or ward nurse has the knowledge of straightforward wound care and does the baseline assessment, record keeping and management, a tissue viability nurse consultant steps in when the patient's wound becomes complicated or has delayed healing. My role is to guide the team to ensure we provide the best treatment to optimise wound healing.

I am honoured to have been appointed into this role and my aim is to promote new ideas, improve patient safety and drive positive changes in how we care for wounds to provide better outcomes for patients.

The Trust has shown its continued commitment to improving patient outcomes and care by investing in the Tissue Viability

team so that we can better support and treat our patients. There are six of us in the team who are focused on improving patient care and becoming a flagship team regionally and nationally.

#### **What are the best parts of your job and the challenges?**

The best part is working with patients, families and staff to explain what is happening with their wound and doing everything possible to help the wound heal faster and better (if wound healing is the end goal). Another key element is working with the multi-disciplinary team, as wound care is multi-factorial and everyone plays their part.

#### **How does your role benefit patients?**

A big part of my role is to ensure we continue to provide seamless care and improve quality and patient safety. We aim for quicker wound healing for a patient, less pain, and an improved quality of life.

I have led tissue viability services in the community before being in a hospital, so I also understand the daily challenges that community nurses and care homes face.

“ I am honoured to have been appointed into this role and my aim is to promote new ideas, improve patient safety and drive positive changes in how we care for wounds to provide better outcomes for patients. ”



# RECOGNISING OUR STAFF

Recognising our staff is important, and several events have been held recently to celebrate and award our hardworking colleagues: from nurses, midwives, volunteers and apprentices to long serving members of staff.



## Nurses and Midwives days

To mark International Day of the Midwife and Nurses Day, a special awards and celebration event was held in May. We recognised the amazing work of our nurses, midwives, healthcare assistants, student nurses, registered nurse apprentices and trainee nursing associates. There were a range of activities on offer throughout the day and the turnout was fantastic.

Sue Pemberton, Director of Nursing and Quality and Deputy Chief Executive Officer, said: "I hope the celebrations went some way towards demonstrating the appreciation that we and our patients have for the amazing work that our Nursing and Midwifery teams do. This year's award nominees were tremendous, and the shortlisting panel remarked on what a delight it was to read about so many inspiring colleagues."

Congratulations to the nine winners, all of whom have gone above and beyond for our patients.



## Long Service Awards

This year's Long Service Awards saw 47 colleagues recognised and personally thanked for their dedication of 25 years of service to the NHS at an event presented by Jane Tomkinson OBE, Chief Executive Officer, and Ian Haythornthwaite, Chair.

Our long service colleagues shared stories about their experiences of working here, including Alison Satchwell. With an incredible 45 years of service, Alison was just 18 when she started working at Chester City Hospital as a dark room technician in the X-ray department in 1979. As the Trust underwent further development, Alison's department expanded and her job role specialised in performing cardiac ultrasound techniques – a role in which she remained until her recent retirement.

When the first phase of the Countess of Chester Hospital was completed in 1984 and officially opened by Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales, Alison was there to witness it.

Alison recalls: "Diana was pregnant with Harry at the time, so she was glowing! I always remember she was wearing a beautiful navy blue coat."



## Apprenticeship Awards

Our annual Apprenticeship Awards ceremony has been held once more this year. With celebrations led by Ian Haythornthwaite, Chair, the event was an opportunity to recognise our apprentices and their vital contribution. Jonathan Develing, Director of Strategy and Partnerships, and Debbie Herring, Interim Chief People Officer, supported Ian in thanking all the winners and nominees for their hard work and achievements. The event was sponsored by IHP, the construction partners for the new Women and Children's Building (see page 5 for the latest update).

## Celebrating our wonderful volunteers

To mark Volunteers' Week, more than 25 volunteers were treated to an afternoon tea as a thank you for their dedication and contribution.

Anna-Marie Davey, Volunteer Coordinator, said: "Our volunteers are an integral part of the Trust and the time they can give to patients, relatives and staff is priceless. Thank you to all who supported with this afternoon tea – it was well received by all and a great opportunity for our volunteers to mingle, mix and build friendships."



# NEW STRATEGY GETS UNDERWAY TO ENSURE SAFE, HIGH-QUALITY WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**Women, children and their families in the care of the nine dedicated Women and Children's services at the Countess of Chester Hospital have some of the best outcomes across the North West. Our services have experienced some challenges and are on an improvement journey, with clear goals to ensure that every patient can be confident that they will get safe, high-quality services in an outstanding facility, underpinned by the sharing of evidence and information.**

There is a lot to celebrate about some of the related services, such as the Milk Bank, which helps over 70 neonatal units and is the largest in the NHS in England (and continues to grow).

Our exciting new strategy for Women and Children's services at our Trust builds on our vision to ensure safe, high-quality services to:

- Exceed national targets – where we need to do more we will act fast to improve and evidence this

- Achieve outstanding and good ratings with the care regulator
- Aim to bring more healthcare to patients in their home or the most appropriate place
- Ensure we have enough of the right staff in the right place at all times
- Learn from our mistakes and be compassionate to those families involved.

Pippa Scott-Heale, Divisional Director of Women and Children's services, said: "Under these ambitious new plans, women, children and their families will have safe and effective care that meets their individual needs. Our exciting move to a purpose-built new facility next year will enable our vision for outstanding services within outstanding facilities to be a reality."



## New Women and Children's Building reaches 'topping out' milestone

**The names of those who are leading the charge in creating a space that will benefit women, children and their families in the future have been cemented in history at a recent topping out ceremony, as construction of the new Women and Children's Building reached its highest point. A pour of the final concrete was led by Jane Tomkinson OBE, Chief Executive Officer, supported by Pippa-Scott Heale, Divisional Director of Women and Children's services, Dr Sara Brigham, Associate Medical Director for Women and Children's services, Natasha Macdonald, Director of Midwifery, and the project team for the construction works and representatives from the building team at IHP.**

The ceremony marked the symbolic end of establishing the frame of the building – a

key milestone in any major construction like this – and the beginning of the countdown to completion of the three-storey, circa 13,000m sq. building, which is scheduled to be ready for internal fit-out by the end of the year, and open to the public in summer 2025.

Once complete, the new building will accommodate all nine women and children's services, providing increased capacity and additional modern rest spaces for patients, families and staff to enjoy.

Joan Carter, Project Director for the construction works, said: "Topping out was a historic moment – we can physically envision now how this new building will transform our services for patients. We'll be doing lots of things over the next few months to turn the shell into a workable



building, like applying the outside cladding and wiring, plastering, painting and decorating inside."



# RECOVERY OF ELECTIVE CARE BACKLOG ON TRACK TO MEET KEY NATIONAL TARGETS

**Alongside the wider NHS, since the pandemic we have been working hard to bring down long waits for elective care patients of initial consultations, diagnosis, and treatment.**

Shaun Brown, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, said: "Whilst there is more work to do, some targets to bring down the waiting list are being met or surpassed, which is without doubt helping more patients to lead healthier lives for longer. This improved performance is testament to the dedication and focus of our staff."

## **Cancer:**

Knowing whether cancer is present or not is crucial for the welfare of patients, and that's



why there's a target of ensuring a diagnosis within 28 days of referral. 82% of patients are now getting a diagnosis within 28 days, placing us as the best performing Trust across Cheshire and Merseyside and overperforming against the target threshold (77%). We

have also surpassed by nearly 50% the local target given to us to reduce the number of patients waiting over 62 days for cancer treatment.

## **Referral to Treatment (RTT):**

There is an ambitious national target to ensure that by the end

of September no patient waits longer than 65 weeks from their initial referral to being treated. We are making good progress on this target and have plans in place for each speciality to deliver this by the end of September.

## **Diagnostics:**

A faster diagnosis enables the right care and treatment plan to be put in place as soon as possible. Our radiology and endoscopy services have made significant progress on waiting time in recent months to tackle the diagnostics backlog and there are no longer any patients waiting over 26 weeks for a diagnostic test (in line with national targets).

## Could you 'park and ride'?

**Did you know there are three local park and ride services that visit the Countess of Chester Hospital? Buses departing from Wrexham Road, Boughton Heath and Chester Zoo offer a regular service every day of the week, with a bus stop located immediately outside the hospital on Liverpool Road.**

Over 2,400 parking spaces are available free of charge across the three park and rides,

with bus tickets starting at £1.50. Journeys take around 15 minutes from each location.

We know that parking can be a difficult and worrisome experience and so we encourage visitors to our hospital to make use of the local park and ride services as a more hassle-free switch. This also makes a positive contribution to our plans to be more environmentally friendly by reducing the air pollution on site, which has a direct benefit on our patients and the local community.



## New staff recognition schemes

**We have recently introduced new staff recognition awards to recognise the hard work and contributions of our staff.**

The people who work at our Trust do amazing work every day and often go above and beyond in their roles. Therefore, we feel it is important to regularly celebrate individual and team excellence.

Each month, patients, visitors and staff can nominate staff members for the Employee of the Month and Team of the Month awards. The winners will receive a certificate and trophy and you will be able to see their photos and why they have won on our social media channels.

If you would like to nominate a team or individual who you feel has gone above and beyond, you can do so on our website which you can access by scanning the QR code.



# DONATION BOXES 'INVALUABLE' TO MILK BANK

**Earlier this year, our Milk Bank team were delighted to receive more than 10 high quality transport boxes donated by Manchester-based specialist bank, DF Capital.**

A collaboration between DF Capital and Greater Manchester Blood Bikes and the Milk Bank at Chester has provided new and improved boxes which help transport much-needed donor milk around the Greater Manchester area.

Whilst these upgraded boxes will mostly help families in Greater Manchester, the Milk Bank at Chester also provides donor milk to neonatal units across England and Wales using similar boxes.

Charlie Michael, Chief People & Sustainability Officer at DF Capital, said:



The Milk Bank were grateful to receive several donated boxes

"We are blown away by the Milk Bank at Chester team's dedication and tireless efforts in all they do. I'm thrilled that this Milk Bank is now one of our newest charity partners and we hope to bring much-needed aid to infants in need and support to bereaved parents."



## Improving care in the community

**Building on the joint community services already in place between the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, a project has begun to improve care for people in the West Cheshire area.**

Cathy Chadwick, Chief Operating Officer at the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, said: "This is a great opportunity to strengthen the links between the two Trusts and to improve the care provided to patients. Our teams have lots of ideas about how to improve care, with some already collaborating to make positive changes that have had an impact on patients.

"We will be able to learn from each other, share best practice and make the most of the expertise that exists across our two organisations."

With eight workstreams already set up to support and report on progress, the collaboration has got off to a strong start. The aim is to capture ideas and best practice and help the services to grow, as well as exploring joint governance arrangements and removing obstacles to providing the very best care.

## New Green Bag scheme aims to provide safer, efficient care

**A new patient initiative is set to transform the way patients manage their medications whilst in hospital.**

The Trust is excited to be launching a medicine awareness campaign that provides patients with sturdy, green plastic bags designed to store their medication in one place.

The simple, effective measure aims to ensure patients bring their prescribed medications to hospital for both emergency and planned admissions.

The Green Bag Scheme involves pharmacists reviewing patients' medications before discharge and providing them with a green bag containing their medicines.

Overall, the initiative aims to improve patient safety, reduce drug costs and waste, prevent delays and accurately track patients' medications. It is also a physical reminder for patients to bring all their medications to hospital,

ensuring a smoother process for both patients and staff.

All patients are asked to bring their medication with them when attending the hospital.





# CELEBRATING FOUR DECADES OF THE COUNTESS OF CHESTER HOSPITAL

## The Countess of Chester Hospital celebrated a special milestone earlier this summer.

Although there has been a hospital located on site since the 1960s, the Countess of Chester Hospital (as we now know it) was officially opened 40 years ago on 30 May 1984 by, and named after, Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales.

After officially opening the hospital under its new name, the Countess of Chester, Her Royal Highness dined on a special meal prepared by the catering team, consisting of smoked salmon barquettes, whole prawns and crab claws and coronets of ham, followed by strawberry tartlets, cheese and biscuits and fresh fruit.

During a week of special anniversary celebrations this May, current-day staff were treated to a 1984-themed menu in the staff restaurant and several former employees shared their memories and photographs of the historic opening day:

Those who were there at the time recall Her Royal Highness's 'radiant beauty' and 'striking blue eyes'. They also explain how both royal guests made time to chat to staff and patients as they were given a tour of the hospital.

Sandra Libardi, a nurse who was working on Ward 43 during the royal opening, reminisced: "I loved all the fuss of getting our patients and beds perfect for the visit. We were told which patients to stand by. Prince Charles walked through and said hello and he talked with one patient – he



was very engaging. Princess Diana was in a class of her own."

"It was so lovely that the hospital was named after her – a caring, loving lady, just like the ward we worked on at that time."

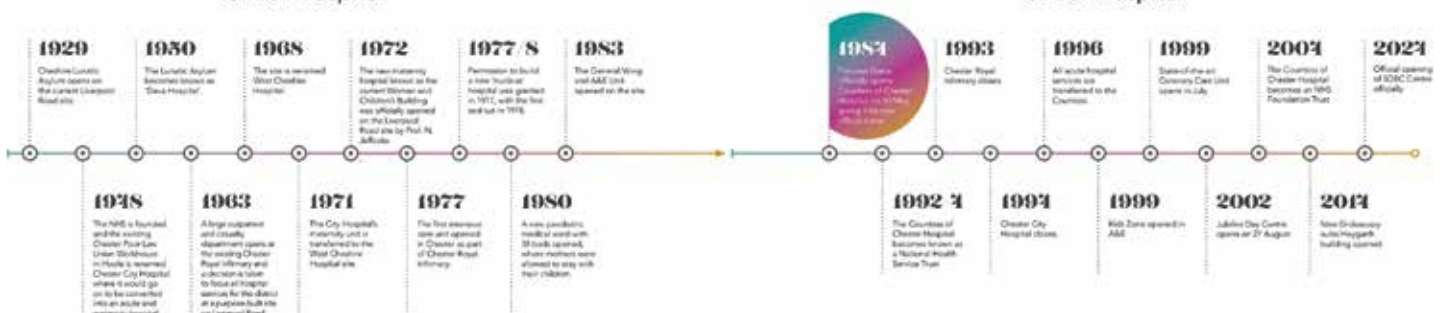
The anniversary provided an opportunity to look back on how much our hospital has grown and evolved significantly, embracing technological advancements and continually improving the quality of care we provide.



Chief Executive Officer Jane Tomkinson OBE said: "Our 40th anniversary is a moment to reflect on our history and the journey we have taken over the past 40 years. It is also a chance to look forward with pride and optimism.

"Our hospital has grown and developed tremendously thanks to the commitment of our team, and we are immensely proud of our achievements over the past four decades."

## the history of our Hospital



## the history of our Hospital



# NEW STAFF WELLBEING HUB OPENS

**A new staff Wellbeing Hub has opened at the Countess of Chester Hospital to provide a space for staff to take time out when needed, relax and reset during the working day and get access to mental health and wellbeing support.**

Funded through legacy gifts left in wills to The Countess Charity, the hub is a key component of the Trust's wellbeing strategy, which aims to promote and support the health and wellbeing of all staff.

The Trust's dedicated Wellbeing team offer both one-to-one and team-based wellbeing support and signposting from within the hub, and a calendar of educational and interactive workshops are on offer on topics including stress management and mental health awareness.

The opening took place during Mental Health Awareness Week at a ribbon cutting event led by former Coronation Street



actor Ian Puleston-Davies. Ian is a strong advocate for mental health due to his own experience with obsessive-compulsive disorder and said that it was 'a huge honour' to officially open the hub. During the opening week, a range of events were held in the hub to bolster staff's physical, mental and financial wellbeing.

Gareth Siggee, Wellbeing Manager, shared his hopes for the hub: "The wellbeing of staff impacts our ability to provide world-class care to patients, so we hope the hub will play a crucial role in everything that we are striving to do to improve our services for patients, as well as help us to support our staff."

Jane Tomkinson OBE, Chief Executive Officer, said: "I was delighted to welcome Ian to the opening of our new Wellbeing Hub as he is an excellent advocate for mental health.

"We have listened to our staff who have told us that wellbeing is extremely important to them, and we designed this hub based on their feedback, to give them a designated space to learn, seek support or get advice."



## Introducing our new civility statement

**A new civility statement for staff has been introduced, as part of our focus on staff wellbeing and developing a compassionate and inclusive culture. The statement was developed and chosen by our staff.**

Dedicated roadshows encouraged staff from across the Trust to get involved and started valuable conversations around civility and kindness. This all contributed to the discussions about our workplace culture and how we want it to improve. Four civility statements were then developed based on what staff said, before staff were asked to choose their preferred statement to adopt.

The civility statement is an excellent foundation for compassion and inclusivity and the aim is that it will lead to a better experience for everyone who interacts with our Trust. The statement aims to ensure our colleagues feel safe, heard and can work together as a team:

“We will always treat everyone with respect and kindness, be polite and professional, listen and help each other whenever we can.”

## Recognising Radiology: HeartFlow award

**The Radiology team have been recognised for the outstanding quality of their CT scans during 2023 with an award from prestigious medical technology company HeartFlow.**

HeartFlow is used to analyse CT images of patients showing signs of coronary artery disease, giving a clearer picture of overall heart health and helping to enable faster diagnosis.

The HeartFlow award is only given to a small number of NHS Trusts in the UK, so this is a fantastic achievement that acknowledges the excellent image quality and service that our CT and Cardiology teams provide for patients at the Countess of Chester Hospital.



# FEEDBACK FROM OUR PATIENTS



"My experience was absolutely outstanding. Excellent care throughout – from theatre to the ward. I was so very impressed with the kindness, care and compassion at every stage for a fractured elbow. Thank you so much."



"I just wanted to give the staff on the respiratory unit a massive thank you for looking after my mum – they were absolutely fantastic and couldn't do enough."



"Can I just say thank you to you all for how I have been treated this week: the staff I have met have all been amazing. I have been poorly for five weeks but tonight I feel so much better."



## Celebrating our operating department practitioners

**National Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) Day was an opportunity to celebrate the dedicated colleagues who work behind the scenes in surgical care.**

ODPs primarily work alongside surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and other allied health professionals and support services to provide skilled care and support during each phase of a patient's perioperative care – anaesthetic, surgery and recovery. They work in the Surgery team and manage the preparation of the operating theatres. ODPs work in anaesthesia, scrub and theatre recovery and provide expert support to clinicians in A&E, ICU and other areas where critically ill patients require support.



## Same PALS service, different location

**Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) has a new home!**

The team – who offer confidential advice, support and information for any patients and their loved ones who have a concern about their care – were previously located in an office within the Countess of Chester Hospital's main entrance but are now based in nearby G4 Outpatients 1, waiting room 3.

The move allows more advisors to be available to patients onsite, giving the team the ability to deal with multiple walk-ins at the same time. It also means there is access to rooms in nearby departments for confidential chats if needed.

There is a waiting room outside, where patients and their relatives can sit in comfort as they wait to speak with the team. Anyone can drop in without an appointment.

### Contact our PALS Team:

Phone: 01244 366066

Freephone: 0800 195 1241 (Option 2)

Email: [cochpals@nhs.net](mailto:cochpals@nhs.net)

Office opening times: 9.30am until 4.30pm

## New Clinical Champion

**The Trust is thrilled to announce that locum consultant urologist Dr Dumitru Samian has become one of Prostate Cancer UK's newest Clinical Champions.**

Dumitru is part of the latest cohort recruited for the charity's flagship Clinical Champions improvement programme, joining consultant urologist Dr Pavlo Somov who was recruited last year.

The programme enables clinicians to drive projects to improve prostate cancer care within their organisation and local area, with each champion building a transformational skillset that equips them to focus on long-term improvement for men and their families.

## Executive Director appointments

**A number of appointments have recently been made to the Executive Team:**

**Interim Chief People Officer  
Debbie Herring**



**Chief Digital and Data Officer  
Jason Bradley**



**Director of Governance, Risk and Improvement  
Karan Wheatcroft**



## Friends and Family Test

When visiting our hospitals as a patient or visitor, we want to hear what you think about the service we provide via our Friends and Family Test. You can leave feedback on cards that are provided in wards and outpatient areas or if we send you a follow up text message.



# FUNDRAISING NEWS

## London Marathon success

**A staggering £10,000 was raised for The Countess Charity – £8,000 for the building of a new balcony for patients in the Intensive Care Unit and £2,000 for the Retinal Eye Scanner appeal – by hospital staff and members of the community at the London Marathon earlier this year.**



Staff members Laura Atherton and Mo Njie joined two long-standing supporters of the charity, Eric Henderson and Lauren Shand, in running a gruelling 26.2 miles at

one of the world's biggest sporting events. Their places in the marathon were generously secured by the Chester Lions Club who have helped in this way for the past 15 years.

## 10 Years of fundraising

**In the last ten years the Emily Ffion Trust has been raising money for vital medical equipment, donating over £48k worth of equipment to benefit countless youngsters using children's services at the Countess of Chester Hospital.**

The trust was set up by John and Sara Sowden, whose 21-month-old daughter Emily passed away suddenly from acute viral bronchiolitis in 2013. Over the years, the Emily Ffion Trust Fund has paid for specialist life-saving equipment, and the latest donation has funded four new saturation machines for the children's ward.

Here's just some of the ways in which charitable funds have helped in recent months:



With the Olympics on the horizon, the Trust's membership of the North West NHS Games for 2024 has been renewed through charitable funds.



Thanks to funding from legacies left to The Countess Charity, we opened a new Wellbeing Hub for staff in May after they said they needed a designated space.

## Countess Charity free will writing service

**Expert will writers Octopus Legacy are offering staff and volunteers the chance to write their will for free. Writing a gift to The Countess Charity into your will is one way to say your forever thank you. It's a gift that will make a difference to patients now and in the future.**

To write or update an existing will for free quote COCHFEE and contact Octopus Legacy via:

- Write your will online at [will.octopuslegacy.com/COCH](http://will.octopuslegacy.com/COCH)
- Book to write your will over the phone or via a face-to-face meeting: 0800 773 4014



\*Read the FAQs about procedures for complex estates / wills on [www.will.octopuslegacy.com/FAQs](http://www.will.octopuslegacy.com/FAQs)

To find out more contact Ngozi Ikoku, Trust and Legacies Fundraiser, on [coch.fundraising@nhs.net](mailto:coch.fundraising@nhs.net) or 01244 366240.



**WRITE YOUR forever Thank you INTO YOUR WILL**



Emergency Department (A&E) staff have received boxes packed with treats to support their wellbeing as a small token of gratitude from the Emergency Department leadership, which were funded by the Charity.

# UPDATE FROM OUR LEAD GOVERNOR, PETER FOLWELL

**As we head into the summer, there is a lot to tell you about.**

**Our Annual Members' Meeting:** I really hope that many of our members and people from our local communities will join us at the Annual Members' Meeting on Wednesday 25 September. It will be a chance to hear about the Trust's improvement work and new strategy and give an opportunity to ask questions. Find out more further down the page.

**Elections for our Council of Governors:** In August, we will be holding our governor elections and I hope some of our members will put themselves forward for the position of governor. It is such a rewarding role and my fellow governors would love to

see some new faces around the table to support our work.

**Membership open!** We are always keen to welcome new members - if you're not yet a member, please join today and show your support for your local hospital.

**And finally:** This will be my last column as a governor and as Lead Governor as I have taken the decision to step down. Being part of the Council of Governors has been very rewarding – I have met many patients and staff and have been grateful for the support and collaboration of my fellow governors. The Trust is moving forwards and improving and I am pleased that I have been part of that journey.



**Peter Folwell, Lead Governor**

## Thanking our Council of Governors: a message from our Chair

**Our Council of Governors is a passionate and committed group of people and their input and contribution is hugely valued.**



We have been fortunate to have two governors - Peter Folwell and Caroline Stein - who have worked tirelessly to support our hospitals as well as their fellow governors for a number of years. Taking on the role of Lead Governor and Deputy Lead Governor respectively, they have both had a positive impact on our hospitals and made sure that the views of patients and our local communities are heard.

Both Peter and Caroline will be stepping down from their roles in September this year and I would like to express my personal thanks for the help and support that they have given to me and the Board. They have brought a wealth of experience to us and I will be sorry to see them leave us. Thank you, both, for everything you have done for our Trust and our patients.

## Annual Members' Meeting

**Our Annual Members' Meeting will be held from 4.30pm until 6pm on Wednesday 25 September 2024 and all are welcome to attend.**

Trust Chair, Ian Haythornthwaite, said: "The meeting will be held in public so whether you're a patient, carer, member of our local community or a member of staff, please do join the meeting – we'd love to see you there."

The meeting will be held online on Microsoft Teams. To request the meeting link, please contact the Corporate Team using the details below.

## Could you be a governor?

**Being a governor gives you the chance to make your voice heard and shape the future of your local hospital. There are three constituencies which governors can be elected to: public, partnership and staff.**

Ian added: "This year, there are ten vacancies for public governors on our Council of Governors. Our governors play a really important role in supporting us as we strive to improve our services, standards and care so that we can provide the best possible care for our local communities."

To find out more contact our Corporate Team using the details below.

## Join our Trust as a member!

**We hope to welcome you to the Countess team – join as a member today! Members will enjoy the following benefits:**

- Receive a copy of Countess Matters to your inbox
- Opportunity to vote in annual governor elections
- An invitation to our annual Members' Meeting
- Invitations to take part in surveys and discussions about services.

Use the QR code to complete a membership form or contact our Corporate Team using the details at the bottom of the page.



## Going greener

**Countess Matters is about to go greener by going digital. We will share Countess Matters with our members on email and via our website and social media: Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.**

By going digital, we will save paper, carbon and also significantly reduce costs. To check we hold your email address, please contact our Corporate Team using the details below.





Support from people who care



We want to know what matters most to you, so we can help get you back to the things you love!



We tend to see people after they have either had an injury, illness or hospital admission. Our ethos is to start rehab as soon as possible to give our patients the chance to recover quickly and to a high level. Maximising independence is the core of what we do at Houlbrook Physiotherapy. We work with people with a range of conditions and are experts at tailoring treatment programmes to our patients needs as they change over time.

info@houlbrookphysio.co.uk  
07840130956

Faculty of Health,  
Medicine and Society

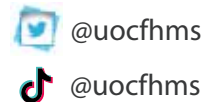
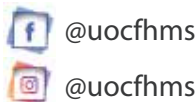


At the University of Chester, we offer a wide range of Health and Social Care programmes, including full and part time Nursing routes, Nursing Associate, Return to Practice Nursing, Art Therapy, Advanced Practice, Non-Medical Prescribing, and many more across our Chester, Birkenhead and Warrington sites.

**Not sure if you have the right qualifications?**

Why not try our totally free 'Go Higher' Summer School (part of the OfS Degree Apprenticeship Fund).

To find out more about our programmes, please visit <https://www.chester.ac.uk/about/faculties/health-medicine-and-society/>  
For admissions enquiries please contact [hscadmissions@chester.ac.uk](mailto:hscadmissions@chester.ac.uk)



# LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST

Moving to **Belong Chester** is an opportunity to be part of a vibrant community. Our care village provides a state-of-the-art environment, high quality 24-hour support and advanced dementia design. A wide ranging programme of activities and events help promote independence, wellbeing and an active lifestyle.

- Specialist dementia and nursing care
- Small households create a homely setting
- Free Admiral Nurse service for customers and their family
- Modern apartments enabling people to live independently with support
- Village facilities include bistro and salon, open to the public
- Gym with specialist equipment to improve wellbeing
- Specialist day care service in the village hub
- Intergenerational nursery offering shared learning experiences



Please get in touch to find out more and arrange a personal tour.

01244 445500 enquiries@belong.org.uk www.belong.org.uk

Belong Chester | 36 City Road, Chester, Cheshire CH1 3AD



Other locations: Atherton | Crewe | Didsbury | Macclesfield | Newcastle-under-Lyme | Warrington | Wigan | (Birkdale opening 2025)



# KEY WORKER SCHEME



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The logo for Anwyl, featuring the word 'ANWYL' in a white, serif font with a stylized wave underneath the letters 'W' and 'Y'.

ANWYL



# Welcome *home*

New homes available at **Deva Green**, Chester

A photograph of a modern, two-story house with white walls and orange accents. The house has a gabled roof and a small porch. To the left, a brick wall features the text 'welcome to Deva Green sales centre'. The house is surrounded by a green lawn and a black metal fence.

welcome to  
**Deva Green**  
sales centre

**01244 729413**

  @anwylhomes

**devagreen@anwyl.co.uk**

[anwyl.co.uk/devagreen](http://anwyl.co.uk/devagreen)



# 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.

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-eye-tests](http://www.specsavers.co.uk/home-eye-tests) which features a simple step-by-step guide to eligibility and a wealth of information. Alternatively, you can call **0800 0890144**.

Dad doesn't go to Specsavers  
They come to him

Find out about home visits and see if your loved one is eligible, online or on 0800 0890144.

**Specsavers**

Geographical restrictions apply.