Not the retiring type!

But Linda Bullen is retiring from the hospital, page 5
Keoghs Review update

The Board of Directors is making good progress on the Trust’s Keoghs Review action plan, published in July. The review, led by Professor Sir Bruce Keogh, NHS England Medical Director, reviewed the quality of the care and treatment provided by 14 hospital trusts in England, including ours (see August edition).

Chief Executive Dr Gordon Coutts (pictured) said: “We have created a very detailed action plan to check that all the required actions are being carried out and I am pleased to report good progress [see panel right]. Our hospitals will receive a further visit from the Keogh team in November to assess that progress. We review our plan internally every week, and every two weeks we review the evidence of our progress with NE Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

“It’s important that as we make these improvements staff familiarise themselves with the changes and integrate them into their daily lives.

“I will ensure I give the headlines on action taken and action planned via my weekly emails to all staff and in Mainstream. I am determined to demonstrate that we are listening and acting on your feedback to continue to improve and demonstrate the progress we are making.”

The 4-page action plan and the 62-page report were both published on our webpage on 16 July: www.colchesterhospital.nhs.uk/Keogh_Review.shtml

Action plan latest

- Quality Strategy: following several focus group meetings, Medical Director Dr Sean MacDonnell presented a draft strategy to the Board on 2 September for finalising this month
- Sepsis: a treatment protocol has been re-launched (see page 4)
- National Early Warning Score (NEWS): more than three-quarters of our wards and departments are using this tool to identify patients whose condition is deteriorating and who require more senior clinical review. The remainder will be doing so by the end of the month
- From August, the Trust’s Quality Improvement Bulletin is being emailed to all 4,200+ staff monthly.

Director posts advertised

Adverts were placed last month to recruit to the Director of HR and Organisational Development post and the Director of Nursing and Patient Experience post. The closing date was 13 September. Interviews and the final selection process will take place in mid-October.

Santa Fun Run – date announced!

The date of Colchester Hospitals Charity’s fourth Santa Fun Run has been announced. Consisting of a 3km (1.86 miles) or 5km (3.1 miles) course, it will start and finish in Colchester’s Castle Park on the morning of Sunday 8 December.

Colchester Hospitals Charity (CoHoC) is the charitable fund of our Trust, which manages Colchester General Hospital and Essex County Hospital.

CoHoC fundraising manager Caroline Bates said: “Last year 500 people took part, raising funds for CoHoC and this is your chance to join them and beat that number! No previous experience is required and the spirit of the event is ‘taking part’ not ‘winning’. People can join in, individually or in teams. It’s open to children and adults of all ages and abilities, including anyone who wants to walk or push a buggy, pram or even a wheelchair round the course.

“We are asking everyone to make the most of this opportunity and try to raise as much as possible for CoHoC,” said Caroline. “This year we expect even more people to take part and to beat last year’s record breaking 500 entrants.”

Adults: £10 includes free Santa suit
Teams of 10 or more: £5 (free Santa suit)
5-15 year olds: £5 (free Santa hat)
Under 5: free to enter.

To book, visit the website:
www.santafunrun.eventbrite.co.uk
Call: 01206 745282 (answerphone out of office hours)
Email: fundraising@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk
Two Colchester physiotherapists have won a prize for their role in research into ways of improving a distressing condition affecting millions of women in the UK.

Samantha Head and Faith Gage, who are based at the Physiotherapy Department at Colchester General Hospital, are working with academics from the University of Essex investigating whether the addition of a Pilates class to standard physiotherapy care can improve outcomes for women with urinary incontinence.

Samantha and the Pilates Research Team won an achievement commendation in the Essex & Hertfordshire Comprehensive Local Research Network (CLRN) Best Practice Event Awards. The study is funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB) Programme.

Professor Gill Green, Director, NIHR Research Design Service East of England, said: “The research addresses an important and distressing condition affecting more than five million women in the UK. This study is a beacon of good practice demonstrating effective collaborative working between NHS clinicians, university academics, and administrative staff.”

Samantha is the Principal Investigator of the study which is called “Modified Pilates as an adjunct to Standard Physiotherapy Care for Urinary Incontinence.” She explained that our Trust is currently using Modified Pilates to treat some patients with urinary incontinence and has seen improvements in symptoms and quality of life with these patients.

“It is often the impact of the patient’s symptoms which are so distressing, affecting women’s quality of life, self-esteem and social interaction,” she said.

“Urinary incontinence may also become a barrier to regular physical and fitness activities. This withdrawal may threaten women’s general health and wellbeing”.

Samantha and Faith won £100 to spend on their personal development and training needs while NIHR awarded our Trust and the University of Essex £162,000 for the study.

The aim of the 33-month pilot study, which began last October, is to begin gathering evidence to investigate claims that Modified Pilates – a mind-body technique involving slow, controlled movements focusing on posture and breathing – can be effective in helping patients suffering from urinary incontinence. Potentially, its findings will help design a future multi-centre trial.

Based in the Physiotherapy Department at Colchester General Hospital, the study aims to recruit 100 women who suffer from urinary incontinence. All will receive standard physiotherapy care, which includes pelvic floor exercises, and lifestyle advice, with half also attending Modified Pilates classes for six weeks.

Both groups will then be assessed to see if their symptoms, self-esteem and quality of life have improved.

Back row, from left: Lindsay Wheatley, senior physiotherapist; Terri Reynolds, senior administrative assistant; Tanya Jewell, senior physiotherapist. Front row: Samantha (left) and Faith.
Sepsis time bomb

Sepsis is a life-threatening condition that arises when the body’s response to an infection injures its own tissues and organs. Sepsis can lead to shock, multiple organ failure and death, especially when not recognised early and treated promptly.

A total of 37,000 people die annually across the UK from sepsis and despite massive leaps forwards in medical knowledge over the last 30 years, there has been only a small fall in mortality. To put this into perspective, more people die from sepsis than breast and bowel cancer combined.

Sepsis is a time-sensitive disease similar to that of an acute myocardial infarction, stroke and trauma, yet there is a ‘golden hour’ to reverse tissue hypoxia and prevent established organ failure. This is why it is vital to screen for sepsis as soon as a person exhibits certain physiological parameters or an infection is suspected.

In response to this unacceptably high mortality rate and due to the benefits of published evidence of therapeutic interventions, the Trust is re-launching the Sepsis Screening Tool, which aids the early recognition of sepsis in high-risk patients.

If a patient is positive, the Sepsis 6 care pathway is followed, which contains three therapeutic and three diagnostic steps to be delivered by staff within one hour.

It is important to remember that for each hour’s delay in the administration of appropriate antibiotics there is a 7.6% increase in mortality. The swift administration of effective antibiotic therapy has been shown to be the single, strongest indicator for survival. If sepsis is caught early on, the outlook is good for the majority of patients, so staff are reminded to always screen for sepsis.

Sepsis time bomb posters, (above), have been distributed to all wards and soon there will be a ‘download the screening tool’ icon on all of the Trust computers.

“More people die from sepsis than breast and bowel cancer combined”

Tea party next month celebrates Life After Breast Cancer

The Friends of Essex County Hospital Breast Care Unit are getting ready for their annual Life After Breast Cancer tea party held every October during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This year’s event, on Thursday 3 October at Colchester Town Hall is open to anyone, including men, who has ever had a diagnosis of breast cancer, either recently or years ago. It celebrates that the number of deaths from breast cancer is falling and survival rates have been improving for more than 30 years, and are now better than ever before.

If you would like to come to the party contact Karen Reeve on 01206 744408 or email: karen.reeve@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk

See also back page. If you don’t understand Twitter: https://twitter.com/about

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See also back page. If you don’t understand Twitter: https://twitter.com/about
Consultant oncologist Dr Philip Murray retired last month, having started at the Trust in December 1992. In the two decades since, he has made an enormous contribution to oncology services at Essex County Hospital.

Dr Murray was involved with many aspects of research, as well as service delivery. He built links with the University of Essex, led a research team and wrote many publications in addition to his large clinical practice.

He was not only a long-standing member of the Trust’s Charitable Funds Committee but personally raised over £1,000 for Colchester Hospitals Charity (CoHoC) by doing a parachute jump and £8,000 running the Royal Parks Half Marathons in 2011 and 2012.

Divisional Clinical Director Dr Gillian Urwin writes: “The service that Dr Murray has given to numerous patients with cancer over the years has been fantastic and there are many people who are very grateful to him for his skill and dedication. I thank him for his leadership delivering the plans for the new cancer services. That the Radiotherapy Department will move to Colchester General Hospital in 2014 is in no small part due to his commitment and drive for improvement.

“Dr Murray’s outstanding contribution to the radiotherapy group at a regional level has been instrumental in securing the future of radiotherapy in Colchester so it is disappointing that he will not be part of the move next year. “The team and the hospital will miss him and we wish him all the best and a long and happy retirement.”

Linda Bullen, Orthopaedic Pre-Admission Sister, retired this month. Linda began at Colchester General Hospital in 1987 on West Bergholt Ward, moving to Aldham Ward in 1995, where she gained her Orthopaedic nursing experience. Around that time she achieved a 1st in her nursing degree and was thrilled when she was promoted to work in the pre-admission clinics. Since then she has led her team to set an immensely high standard of elective orthopaedic pre-assessment.

Sadly, in 2002 Linda and husband Roger’s daughter Catherine died in tragic circumstances in the African bush. She was a fifth year medical student, destined to become by all accounts, a brilliant doctor, but died from severe gastroenteritis in Namibia, aged 22. There was a feeling that something positive should emerge from this appalling tragedy and within days the Catherine Bullen Memorial Fund was launched for the relief of poverty, sickness and distress and the preservation of health in rural Namibia. During the past decade, Linda and Roger have become well-known throughout the Trust for their ceaseless and tireless fundraising for projects in Namibia, such as building and running a clinic, buying an ambulance and constructing a canteen, kitchen facilities and indoor recreation area at a primary school. In 2008, the Fund was renamed the Catherine Bullen Foundation and, to date, has raised £277,000. Linda can be found during her “holiday” in uniform in the clinic or out in the bush volunteering and helping people in circumstances that people in Western society cannot imagine.

Linda has limitless enthusiasm, energy and spirit. The successes of the Orthopaedic Pre-Admission Team are due to her unfailing hard work and leadership.

She will be greatly missed.

See also Letters, page 15
Did you know that the Trust has a Book Club?
Library & e-Learning Lead Andy Richardson writes: “We meet once a month. There is no charge. People either buy or borrow (from a library!) the current book to discuss at the meeting over tea, coffee, juice and biscuits. Books reviewed recently include Mark Haddon’s ‘The Red House’, Khaled Hosseini’s ‘A Thousand Splendid Suns’, Camilla Macpherson’s ‘Pictures at an Exhibition’ and J.G.Farrell’s ‘The Siege of Krishnapur’. All interesting reads for different reasons.

“Please feel free to come along and get involved. For further information contact me on 01206 74 2146 or by email.”

 Clubs for Trust staff
As well as the Book Club (above), other clubs for Trust staff, include:

■ CHUFT Choir: weekly practice sessions on Tuesdays, 5.30pm-6.30pm
■ Beginners Running Club on Tuesdays at 5pm and Fridays at 6pm. The meeting point is outside the main entrance to Colchester General Hospital.

To sign up or get more information, please contact the Health & Wellbeing Department on 01206 745284.

More news for staff, page 12

The “robots” are coming to Pharmacy

Currently the Pharmacy Department serves Colchester General Hospital from two locations: the main unit near the main entrance, which dispenses items to ward staff and outpatients, and the Pharmacy Support Unit (PSU) on the edge of the site which stores and manufactures pharmaceuticals.

The Trans-Pharm project is now underway which will see the (almost) joining of services under one roof within the current PSU facility. PSU will be remodelled and two automated dispensing systems (or ‘robots’) introduced that will both assist in dispensing and the storing of some 50,000 pharmaceuticals items. A smaller discrete service will remain somewhere near its current location so that services to outpatients and A&E patients will not be affected. It is intended that the space created will allow for the much needed expansion of the Emergency Department (A&E) – see pages 8-9.

Trans-Pharm Project Co-ordinator Derek Eves writes: “The larger robot will carry 2,500 different lines, with its smaller counterpart storing 7,500 packs and 1,300 different lines. It is anticipated that the larger robot will have a minimum output capacity of 3,000 packs a day, and the smaller robot 1,750 packs.”

Wireless technology for staff will also be introduced to dispense from wards using tablets (the electronic kind!)

To date, the stores element of PSU has been moved to the old HSDU on the first floor of the main hospital. The remodelling work in PSU starts this month, with works planned to last until February. The larger robot will be operative from this date. Installation of the smaller robot is subject to the remodelling of the entrance area which has not yet had final approval. This will not impact on services.

Chief Pharmacist Dr Richard Needle said: “This project is a very exciting development. The technology being introduced is state-of-the-art and will help us enhance the service we give to patients and staff on the wards.”

More information from Derek Eves, 01206 746182, or email derek.eves@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk
Saving Essex Eyes
Less than half of all children in Essex had an eye test in 2012, according to research carried out by a new charity called Saving Essex Eyes. The charity was set up by Niall Dorgan an optometrist at the Trust, together with colleagues Sue Kevan, an orthoptist, and optometrists Nick Hagan and Louise Staunton, directors of Specsavers in Colchester.

Research shows that only 41% of Essex schoolchildren had an eye test in 2012/13, meaning there could be up to 48,000 children in schools across the county struggling with their vision.

To combat this the charity has decided to hold a children’s eye health campaign, with a schools poster competition – pictured below – which closes on 21 October.

Niall said: “We want the competition to be fun but also to get children to think about how important eyesight is and what it might be like not to be able to see properly. We are asking them to create a design which would persuade their friends to ‘Get your eyes tested!’”

Volunteers’ tea party
The Trust held its annual summer volunteers’ tea party (right) on 29 August to thank them for the hugely positive impact they have on the patient experience.

Volunteers are an intrinsic part of the team and are hugely appreciated by staff and patients alike. They work in many areas at both hospitals, including helping on the care of the elderly wards, making tea and chatting with patients, working in reception areas and carrying out important administrative tasks, such as filing. In addition, there are other volunteers at the Trust, such as those affiliated to the Colchester League of Hospital and Community Friends, the hospitals’ chaplaincy service and Hospital Radio Colchester, (celebrating 50 years this year!).

Dr Wood’s national role
A long-serving Colchester consultant haematologist has been appointed to a national role. Dr MARION WOOD, based at Colchester General Hospital since 1992, has been appointed Chair of the Association of Clinical Pathologists (ACP) for a five-year term of office.

Covering the standard
JOY MASON, clinical nurse specialist, Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), was on the front cover of Nursing Standard magazine last month. Profiled in the 21-27 August edition, she describes how she supports patients individually, handles about 15 calls a day and how “we don’t talk gobbledegook but discuss things in layman’s terms”. Last year, Joy was named overall winner of the national Crohn’s and Colitis UK IBD Nursing Awards.

Welcome Paul Hudson
PAUL HUDSON joined the Trust in July as the new Radiology Service Manager within the Clinical Support and Cancer Division. His career in radiology started at Whipps Cross University Hospital as a radiographer. Paul has most recently been working for NHS Education in Scotland. His previous roles include radiology operational lead at Basingstoke and North Hampshire NHS Foundation Trust and clinical product manager for Xograph Healthcare.

Mary Barron Suite volunteer retires
A popular volunteer and great-grandmother retired on her 80th birthday after supporting cancer patients at the chemotherapy unit at Essex County Hospital. Once a week, for 12 years, JEAN ARTHUR came to the Mary Barron Suite where she served drinks and chatted with patients. When she started in 2001, Mrs Arthur was told the unit would be relocating to Colchester General Hospital ‘within two years’. Twelve years later the Mary Barron Suite finally moves next month – see page 9.

Changes to the senior nursing arrangements
From 1 August:
■ LOUISE NOTLEY is Acting Assistant Director of Nursing
■ HELEN EDWARDSON has seconded into the Consultant Nurse for Older People role
■ CHRIS BURROWS has moved to the role of Matron for Medicine
■ KAREN LAKE has seconded into the role of Matron for Specialist Medicine
■ HELEN BENNETT has been made Matron for EAU on a substantive basis.

KEVIN O’HART remains the Acting Deputy Director of Nursing & Patient Experience.

To learn more, call Niall Dorgan, 07791 322344, or look for “Saving Essex Eyes“ on Facebook
Improvement works across our hospitals

Highlighting the improvement building works at Colchester General and Essex County hospitals in the past 18 months

Left: The ICT’s Infrastructure Team have spent the past year tidying the computer cabling in Colchester General Hospital. Every connection had to be retraced and recabled, without interruption to the service.

Left: Measures to reduce carbon emissions include installing LED lighting in the corridors at Colchester General Hospital, which can cut emissions by up to 90%. Earlier this year, the Trust achieved for the second time in a row the Carbon Saver Gold Standard for reducing its carbon emissions over a three-year period.

Above: in the spring, the front entrance at Colchester General Hospital was improved with a new resin-bonded gravel surface.

Left: The entrance canopy and lobby area were modernised in 2012 and given better signage. The pedestrian bridge opposite the entrance was also upgraded, traffic calming measures and ambulance parking bays introduced.
Building work is progressing well on our new Radiotherapy Centre at Colchester General Hospital. At last month’s Board meeting, members agreed to fund a fourth linear accelerator (linac) for the new £25m centre. A linac is a machine used to give radiotherapy to cancer patients. Essex County Hospital currently has three linacs but, due to rising demand, the Trust will install the fourth now and a fifth when required.

Meanwhile, as part of the relocation of all cancer services at Essex County, the Mary Barron Suite (chemotherapy unit) will relocate to Colchester General Hospital in mid-October.


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Work progresses well on the interim project to improve the short-term capacity in the Emergency Department (A&E) at Colchester General Hospital. The number of resuscitation bays will be doubled to six; majors bays will increase from 13 to 20; minors bays from five to 12 and children’s bays from three to five. The £2.2m programme of works is being extended with the infilling of a courtyard (pictured top left) to provide a platform for a future potential expansion of the theatre block or the critical care facilities.

Meanwhile, the Trust opened a new modular building (main picture) on 10 September. It houses the A&E reception, waiting area and triage suite. Pedestrian access to A&E is now via this new building.

See also “The robots are coming”, page 6.
In 2012/13 nearly one in five (17.4%) of all inpatient falls at Colchester General Hospital occurred in the toilets, resulting in moderate and serious injuries, such as lacerations and fractures. These figures were the basis for the development of the Throne Project, to understand the nature of why falls occur in these places, to improve patient safety and to reduce falls.

Led by Falls Prevention Nurse Carrie Tyler and occupational therapists Sarah Marsden and Laura Murton, this unique project is inspecting and photographing every patient toilet, documenting both positive and negative aspects and highlighting potential risk to patients and staff. For instance, adequate lighting, positioning of call bells, appropriate equipment, placement of bins, flooring and emergency access. The initial results of the audit indicated that toilets across the hospital were exceptionally clean and well-stocked, with clear signage for patient use. Some toilets – such as Mersea Ward’s and the Isolation Unit’s – were deemed excellent. The audit also highlighted areas for improvement, such as maintenance of emergency access keys and locks, replacing metal bins with plastic, updating and replacing emergency pull cords with visible, easy-to-reach, red cords.

By the end of 2013 the project leaders plan to meet all ward sisters to present them with a personalised ward toilet review, risk assessment and Trust factsheet, highlighting patient toilet safety, to be disseminated to all staff including nurses, health care assistants, housekeepers and allied health professionals.

This will then be audited in three months to review the impact of the changes.

First CT colonography course

Pictured below are some of the participants in the Trust’s first CT colonography course at The ICENI Centre. CT colonography is a procedure that allows detailed examination of the bowel, while also looking at other abdominal anatomy. It involves the introduction of carbon dioxide via the rectum to continually distend the bowel during the CT scan. Led by consultant radiologist Dr Darren Boone, the course included lectures from colorectal surgeons Miss Sharmilla Gupta and Mr Tan Arulampalam, and gastroenterologist Dr Mary Mcstay. Other staff involved included CT manager Catherine Pellow, Deputy CT Manager Sheona Stewart, senior radiographers Deborah Chapman and Jo Whitmore, and CT Administrator Julia Handscombe.

The course was held to share our practice and experience with other hospitals and delegates came from across the region as well as from our Trust. We are planning to hold another study day on 15 January.
Clinical portal update

The Trust has been working with increasing intensity on the introduction of a “clinical portal”. It will not only replace our existing Patient Administration System (PAS) – see below – but provide links to other clinical systems within the Trust, giving clinicians a single point for accessing all patient information, thus improving working practices as well as the patient experience and safety.

Director of Operations Sue Barnett wrote in an email to all staff: “In order to go live, the Trust needs to be 100 per cent confident that the system will work and the day-to-day operation of the hospital will continue to run smoothly. Large numbers of staff have worked tirelessly on the project and we are very close to being where we feel we need to be to push the go-live button. We recognise the enormous contribution of staff to get us to this point, for which we are grateful, and we are sure we can count on their on-going commitment to make this project a success.”

Big screen comes to Colchester General!

A public screening of a poignant documentary film about a young father with motor neurone disease (MND) is to be given at Colchester General Hospital.

I Am Breathing tells the story of Neil Platt, a Yorkshireman who is diagnosed with MND shortly after the birth of his son, Oscar. Within a year, he goes from being a healthy young father to becoming completely paralysed from the neck down.

Proceeds will be donated to the Motor Neurone Disease Association, which promotes global research into the disease and provides support for people affected by MND.

Screening the film at the hospital is the initiative of Lea Kirton, palliative care clinical nurse specialist, who is based there.

“The film highlights what complex needs people with MND have,” she said. “I've already seen the film and found it enlightening and an eye-opener to me as a health care professional. Obviously, it's sad but it also contains a lot of humour and I would encourage people to come along.”

Most ever entries for latest Awards

Between 26 April and 6 September there were 171 successful entries for the Trust’s eighth At Our Best Awards. There were 74 entries for individuals, six for volunteers and 91 for teams. Based entirely on the 50-word citation, the entries were shortlisted down to 16 individuals, 15 teams and six volunteers. Everyone who is nominated gets a letter of thanks from Chief Executive Dr Gordon Coutts. The shortlisted volunteers, individuals and teams have been invited to the Awards lunch on 30 September where the winners and runners-up will be announced.

Shingles jab campaign for 70 and 79 year olds

Once infected, the chickenpox virus can stay in people’s bodies for the rest of their lives. Sometimes, the virus reactivates and causes a disease called shingles. Shingles is not like other infectious diseases because you do not catch it from someone else. Shingles can be very painful and tends to affect people as they get older. And the older they are, the worse it can be. For some, the pain can last for many years.

There is now a vaccine that can reduce your risk of getting shingles or reduce the severity of its symptoms should you develop the disease. From 1 September, all people aged 70 are eligible to get the vaccine. People aged 79 will also be offered the vaccine in a catch-up programme. In future years, more of the 70-79 age group will be offered the vaccine until, ultimately, only people aged 70 need to be targeted.

Continued from page 6

**Flu Fighters for staff**
The Flu Fighters will be out and about in the Trust from 1 October giving flu jabs to staff and free lollies. Check noticeboards and the intranet for details of days and times.

**Emotional resilience**
If you increasingly feel under pressure and would like to work towards reducing your stress levels, emotional resilience training is available for all staff. It looks at how you can identify stress within yourself and the measures you can take to try and manage this. Or, if you manage staff, learn how to identify symptoms and signs of mental health issues to provide appropriate support to colleagues. To book a place, please ask your manager to nominate you via OLM, or look on the intranet, under "About Us > Training & Development.”

**Inpatient information**
Ward staff are reminded there is a booklet which all inpatients should be given on arrival at the ward, to help put them and their relatives at ease and explain what will happen during their stay in Colchester General. For copies of the Inpatient Information booklet, call Head of Communications Paul Searle (see back page). Also, look on the Trust’s website, under “Patient Information”.

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**News from the Board**

Dr Sally Irvine is Chair of the Council of Governors and the Board of Directors. She writes: “The Board of Directors met twice, once informally and once formally before the Annual Members’ Meeting on 11 September, to talk through the ways we can move forward on the very clear need for greater clinical input into both decision-making and leadership within the Trust. A range of useful ideas came out which we are working on with the Divisional Clinical Directors and we will let everyone the outcomes as soon as they are agreed.

“We also spent time looking at the Keogh Action Plan, specifically the way in which the ‘quality agenda’ is turned into a coherent Quality Strategy, and how the different activities all work together. It is clear that this strategy is an essential part of everything we do and is the basis of all other strategies and business planning. It affects everyone, and is not a separate activity. The review of the way we handle complaints is also high on our agenda, and a report will be available by the end of September, with a plan to implement the proposals by the end of October. Overall, we are quite pleased with the way the Keogh Action Plan is being addressed but there is no room for complacency. With the winter pressures on their way we all need to be as much on our toes as possible, and it is good that the Board receives so many good reports from ‘walk-abouts’ by directors, both non-executive and executive.

“I should report to you that I was pleased to be reappointed as Trust Chair for a further three years from 1 August 2013. The following additional reappointments to the Board of Directors have also recently been approved by the Council of Governors:

- Sir John Ashworth has been reappointed as a non-executive director for a further three year term from 1 May 2013
- Professor Christine Temple has been reappointed as non-executive director for a further three year term of office from 1 August 2013
- Helen Parr will be reappointed as a non-executive director for an additional year from 1 December 2013.

“Lastly, it has been a very busy summer and the Board are aware of the very great pressure under which staff all work most of the time. The NHS is highly dependent on the commitment and dedication as well as professionalism and resourcefulness of all those who work in it, and is also acutely aware that the public does not always get the full picture of what we can and do deliver in terms of quality and effectiveness. The Board wanted to thank all staff for being so patient-focused, loyal and generous with time and energy. I hope you at some point managed to enjoy the warm summer weather!”

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1 Read more about the Board and the Council of Governors on our website, under “About Us”

**Governance of our Trust**

The governance of our Trust comprises a membership (public and staff); a Council of Governors; and a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors comprises the Chair, non-executive directors and executive directors. The work of the Board is supported by sub-committees, which report directly to the Board. The Council of Governors (formerly known as the Members’ Council) works closely with the Board of Directors to influence decision-making and strategic planning. The Council influences and signs off strategies while monitoring performance and holding the Board of Directors to account. In addition to the Chair, there are 26 governors on the Council. The Council of Governors have at least four meetings a year “held in public” (different to “public meetings”). People from across Essex and Suffolk – and our staff – are represented by their governors.

1 Read more on our website, under “Organisational structure”:
www.colchesterhospital.nhs.uk
MP praises A&E having done 10 hour shift

Sir Bob Russell, MP for Colchester, worked a 10-hour night shift in the Accident & Emergency Department on Friday 26 July. Afterwards he commented on the professionalism, enthusiasm and high morale of staff.

Sir Bob’s stint started at 9pm and went through the night to 7am. He met hospital and ambulance staff, as well as those seeking treatment. These involved a variety of conditions and an age range from infants to elderly people.

Afterwards he explained he thought it important that as the local MP he should witness first-hand how the department worked, and to discuss matters both with staff and those seeking help.

“I was very impressed with the professionalism and enthusiasm of the staff, particularly in dealing with some people the worse for wear with drink. Morale amongst A&E staff was good, although less so with some of those from the East of England Ambulance Service whom I met.

“What I can say with confidence is that those who have need to visit A&E at Colchester Hospital can be reassured of the excellent service they will receive – indeed, words of appreciation were expressed to me by some of those who had been treated.”

See also page 9

This Month’s Graph

Survey: 351 staff have answered the question: “Where do you get news about the Trust from?”

Source: Head of Communications

The size of the word indicates its frequency in the results

- Visit “How long will I wait”: www.colchesterhospital.nhs.uk

IN THE DIARY

Chief Exec’s Staff Briefing
Postgraduate Medical Centre. Dr Gordon Coutts briefs senior managers. Key messages are then cascaded to all staff. If you do not receive the cascade, email info@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk
Fri 27 Sep, 10am
Fri 25 Oct, 10am
Fri 29 Nov, 2.30pm
For more information, go to intranet’s Home page http://intranet.rde.local (Info About > B for Briefing).

Bangladesh fundraising quiz
Postgraduate Medical Centre. Tickets on a first-come first-served basis. Contact midwife Anne Lines: ex 1600 or anne.lines@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk

Urology cancer support group
NE Essex Urology Cancer Support Group (held on the first Wednesday of every month, but not Jan or Aug). Call nurse specialist Lucy Powell 01206 742964.

“I Am Breathing” film
A 73 minute-long film about the thin space between life and death. Lecture Theatre, Postgraduate Medical Centre. Within a year, Neil Platt goes from being a healthy young father to becoming completely paralysed from the neck down. Neil faces Motor Neurone Disease (MND) with incredible humour and honesty, determined to share this last stage of his life through a blog that touched many people. With his posts forming the film’s narration, I Am Breathing tries to listen to Neil as he asks in the last months of his life: “What makes us human?” Refreshments available. Doors open 5.45pm. We are asking for a voluntary contribution of £3. All proceeds go to MND Association. To book your place please call the palliative care team on 01206 746272 or email lea.kirton@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk

Tendring Diabetes Patient Forum
Sam’s Hall, Community Voluntary Services Tendring, Rosemary Road, Clacton, CO15 1NZ. See also Colchester event on 16 October, page 15. More on the CCG website: www.neessexccg.nhs.uk

Continues on page 15
Recently, I have been talking to different groups about the work of the Trust. Board members and governors met GPs, practice managers and the NE Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to discuss the findings of the Keogh Review and our action plan. Overall, they were grateful for the feedback and also expressed support from their patients and themselves for our hospitals.

Sarah Shirtcliff, Acting Director of Human Resources, and Sharon Wyatt, Education and Development Manager, joined me at a meeting with our outgoing trainee doctors. We wanted to thank them for all of their hard work and also ask them one last time what we could do to improve. We find these sort of sessions very helpful to hear staff suggestions.

At the Staff Partnership Forum we discussed our agreement between the trades unions and the Trust and how we can continue to grow and build effective working together. It was very encouraging to learn that unions and our managers believe we have a good working relationship that is healthy and productive, that there is a strong team spirit and that we work well together, even during difficult times. However, we can still improve. Thank you to all those who participated.

The Chair, Sally Irvine, and I also met with the Chair of the CCG, Dr Gary Sweeney and its Clinical Chief Officer, Dr Shane Gordon. Among several topics of conversation, one was the national debate about A&E. Some of you will have noticed the building work for our A&E expansion has started. The MP for Colchester, Sir Bob Russell, spent a night shift in A&E on Friday 26 July. He said he found staff professional and enthusiastic and had a high morale, adding: “What I can say with confidence is that those who have need to visit A&E at here can be reassured of the excellent service they will receive”.

Meanwhile, this has been a difficult month for the NHS in the media. Many staff live in the area and I realise that having our Trust in the headlines is stressful.

However, the Keogh Report noted that patients are, on the whole, loyal to our hospitals and our staff are “committed, loyal, passionate, caring and motivated”.

I could not have put it better myself so I would like to thank staff for keeping focus on patients and improving their care. Together we will implement the action plan and continue to improve the care we provide.

Remember our patients talked about good care and are loyal. With your passion, caring attitude and motivation, we will live up to that loyalty and make our Trust even better.

Dr Gordon Coutts | Chief Executive

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**Describe your job**
I have been at this Trust for about two years. My current job as Medical Secretary involves typing clinic letters, filing letters in patients’ notes, ensuring medical notes get returned to the Healthcare Records Department, and communicating with consultants and their doctors. I also sort out any patient queries on the telephone.

**What would you change at the Trust?**
Better parking for staff at Essex County Hospital and more communication between clinical and admin staff. Better catering at Essex County Hospital too!

**How does your role improve patient care?**
Keeping GPs updated with any changes to patients’ care or their diagnosis.

**Best part of your job?**
Giving a patient information that is reassuring and making sure they get off the phone feeling comfortable.

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*Do the 60 Second Interview:*
www.surveymonkey.com/s/60_Sec_Interview

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**CLaire Gray**
MEDICAL SECRETARY – TEMP
ESSEX COUNTY HOSPITAL
10 YEARS IN THE NHS
Letters | Emails
Your views

Sarah Kitchener Perrow Fund
Our Annual Charity Ball took place on Saturday 13 July and we raised over £9,000 in memory of our daughter Sarah. The Ball was themed as a “Night at the Races” and we presented a cheque on the night for over £17,000 – the amount we have raised in the last 12 months.
I am now in training for the London to Paris bike ride next summer. I have not had a bike for over 35 years so not sure how it will work out. I did ask for stabilisers at first and then a three wheeler!

Best wishes

Philip Kitchener
phil.kitchener@hotmail.co.uk
www.justgiving.com/teams/sarahkitchenerperrowfund

Philip and Sarah both worked at the Trust. The Sarah Kitchener Perrow Fund is an umbrella group of the Samantha Dickson Brain Tumour Trust, the UK’s leading charity dedicated to brain tumour research, information and support.

Foreign coins?
Do you have any foreign coins left over from your holidays? If so, please send them to me at the Breast Unit. We have a lady, Sheila Gibbs, who has a contact at the bank who exchanges them and the money is donated to the breast charitable fund. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sheila for her ongoing efforts over many years in raising funds for the unit. We are very aware of the time and effort and hard work that goes into fundraising and are very appreciative!

Karen Reeve
Breast Care Nurses Secretary
Essex County Hospital, Lexden Road, Colchester CO3 3NB.
01206 744408

Get Cycle Colchester’s e-newsletter
Cycle Colchester (represented by the Colchester Travel Plan Club team) releases a monthly e-newsletter, containing updates about cycling in Colchester. It informs readers about one-off events, regular activities organised by cycling clubs and infrastructure updates, etc.

To get your free copy, please let me know.
Claudia Ene
Colchester Travel Plan Club
claudia.ene@colchester.gov.uk

“I will never forget my friends”
I would like to take this opportunity to say a very big thank you to all my friends and colleagues at the Trust for the wonderful good wishes, cards and presents received on the occasion of my retirement on 6 September.

I have enjoyed immensely working with many kind, caring and dedicated colleagues within the Trust and value with pride their support, guidance and encouragement to me over the years, both professionally and personally.

The past 12 years in Orthopaedic Pre-Admission have been the most rewarding and challenging for many reasons, and at this point I would like to thank the special team who have travelled this path with me and made the department what it is today – a centre of excellence.

I wish the department continued success under its new leadership in these changing times, and as I look forward to the next chapter in my life, I know I will never forget my friends at the Trust.

Best wishes to you all.

Linda Bullen
Orthopaedic Pre-Admission Sister
See also page 5 and cover

WRITE TO: Mainstream Editor
Trust HQ, Colchester General Hospital

EMAIL: info@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk
The inaugural health care student innovation award ceremony was held at Anglia Ruskin University on 26 July. Colchester students Hannah Porter, Sophie Shutter, Louise Weaver and Supriya Thakali (pictured left to right), attended and were presented their award by Professor David Humber, Pro Vice Chancellor and Dean of the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education.

During their final year of training, the students were required to undertake a project examining a particular aspect of patient care that will improve the patient experience. The innovations were varied and included scheduling of ward rounds to ensure nurses are available to participate, the promotion of volunteer support at mealtimes and improving accuracy of fluid balance documentation via the patients’ weight chart.

Led by consultant orthopaedic surgeon Mr David Moore, the Colchester Foot and Ankle Clinical Team (cFACT) visited Colchester Garrison this summer.

“With a population of over 3,000 troops on base at any time and a regional rehabilitation unit serving 10,000 people, we set out to build on their relationship with our Trust and see how we can further ‘help our heroes’”, said fellow consultant Mr Tim Williams.

“A guided tour of the facilities by Colonel Andrew Mills and Major TP ‘Nobby’ Clarke was fascinating and really inspiring. This young population place their bodies through such rigour during training and on the frontline. It was quite apparent that even seemingly minor injuries they sustain can affect their very careers when they are expected to carry huge weights over rough terrain in hostile environments. The effort made by this local and regional rehabilitation team to reestablish the function of our injured troops is truly impressive. We came away with a very positive sense that we too can add to their journey for our skills and multidisciplinary team.

“All the staff who visited served as great ambassadors to the Trust, building on lines of communication and friendship, from clerical to medical.

“We would like to thank all the Garrison staff who took the time to talk and show us around. We look forward hugely to a return visit and working more closely in the future.”