Media attention for cancer reports

Two reports published about alleged manipulation of cancer waiting lists – pages 3 & 14

“in none of these cases could the reviewers establish intent to deliberately falsify figures”

“no evidence that staff instructed to manipulate cancer data”

“It gives reassurance to our patients, their relatives and our local community”

Dr Lucy Moore

@ColchesterNHSFT

Colchester General Hospital
Essex County Hospital

www.colchesterhospital.nhs.uk/mainstream.shtml

www.cohoc.org.uk

Cancer Centre Campaign
A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR MID & NORTH EAST ESSEX

www.cohoc.org.uk

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

at our best.

Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust
Doctor gives up Christmas for Ebola front line

A doctor has swapped working at Colchester General Hospital for being a volunteer on the Ebola front line in West Africa.

Dr Neil Studd left from Heathrow on Sunday 7 December at the start of a journey to the Sierra Leonean capital of Freetown where he is spending a month at an isolation unit run by the King’s Sierra Leone Partnership. He is using annual leave for the trip and will miss out on a family Christmas before returning next month.

“When I was watching the Ebola story unfold on the news, I realised that I had some skills to offer which might help,” he said.

“I approached a couple of aid agencies and was interviewed by the King’s Sierra Leone Partnership which has opened an isolation unit there. They made it clear that the work will be physically and psychologically challenging, dealing each day with the catastrophic effects of the virus and seeing families torn apart.

“It makes missing a Christmas back home seem like an irrelevance compared with the suffering people are going through in Sierra Leone. I’m also in the fortunate position of being able to go at short notice and I’ve had fantastic support from the hospital.”

His duties in Freetown will include treating infected patients who arrive at the isolation unit and designing processes to manage them as effectively as possible.

Dr Studd, who qualified at Barts & The London, is working at Colchester General Hospital for a three-year period.

After working in the Emergency Department for six months from August last year, he spent another six months in the Emergency Assessment Unit and is currently undertaking a year-long placement in anaesthetics. He will return to the Emergency Department in next August to continue his emergency medicine training.

Read the full story on our website, under “Latest News”: www.colchesterhospital.nhs.uk

Our new Macmillan Lead Cancer Nurse

A n experienced cancer nurse has returned to her native Essex to become Macmillan Lead Cancer Nurse/Head of Cancer Nursing at the Trust. Emma Elliott joined the Trust in early November.

“I’m extremely enthusiastic about this patient-centred role,” she said. “I’ve made my leading priorities working with colleagues to improve services and our patients’ experience. My passion for cancer nursing really began back in 1999 at St Thomas’ Hospital in London when I took on my first job as a qualified nurse on a surgical ward and cared for patients with cancer. I’m also looking forward to working closely with other organisations, such as St Helena Hospice and North East Essex CCG, as well as with all my new colleagues in Colchester, including our 24 cancer nurse specialists.”

Read the full story on our website, under “Latest News”: www.colchesterhospital.nhs.uk
Cancer reports

Two reports have been published about alleged manipulation of cancer waiting lists at the Trust.

A retrospective review of 822 cancer patients treated at the Trust between 2010 and 2014 has concluded that there is no evidence of systematic data manipulation at the Trust. The review follows a report from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in November 2013 which raised “serious concerns” about staff being “pressured to change data... to make it seem people were being treated in line with national guidelines”.

Following publication of the CQC report, the Trust commissioned a retrospective review of the experience of a number of its cancer patients who may have been affected by misreporting.

Over the period covered by the review, the Trust treated approximately 33,000 cancer patients. The review examined approximately 3,000 data points for 822 of the patients most likely to be affected by the allegations. It found 16 cases of possible deliberate and inappropriate data entry but in none of these cases could the reviewers establish intent to deliberately falsify the figures.

The review found a number of small discrepancies between recorded and actual patient data and concluded that these were most likely the result of minor, but erroneous, interpretations of the Cancer Waiting Times (CWT) guidelines. These discrepancies sometimes made waiting times appear longer than in reality and sometimes shorter.

The East of England Strategic Clinical Network conducted an external review of a 10% sample of the work conducted by the retrospective review team and concluded “the overarching impression was there was evidence of inaccuracies in the cancer waits data but this was as likely to negatively impact on the trust’s performance statistics as enhance them. This suggested the issue was one of effectiveness and competence in the cancer management team rather than a deliberate manipulation.”

“in none of these cases could the reviewers establish intent to deliberately falsify figures”

The independent investigation into concerns about the manipulation of cancer waiting lists at the Trust has found no evidence that staff were instructed to manipulate cancer data. The authors of the report also say they found no evidence of a systemic culture of bullying in the Trust, and that interpersonal relationships were considered to be good.

The report does, however, say that the preliminary investigation into concerns raised by staff was mismanaged and it says a senior manager did not adequately explain data validation decisions to more junior staff which led to concerns that were never properly resolved.

The independent investigation was undertaken by Carole Taylor-Brown, a former Chief Executive of NHS Suffolk and former Chair of the Anglia Cancer Network, and Professor Pat Troop, a former Deputy Chief Medical Officer of England. The investigation was commissioned by the Trust’s Senior Independent Director and the terms of reference were agreed by Monitor, the health care regulator for England.

The investigation arose from a chain of events that began in 2011 when a patient contacted the Trust’s then chief executive alleging that he (the patient) had been told that cancer waiting lists at the Trust were being manipulated. The Trust’s finance director, with support from the director of HR, conducted a preliminary investigation into these allegations but the Trust later conceded that this investigation was inadequate and the Trust apologised.

“no evidence that staff instructed to manipulate cancer data”

In November 2013 the CQC published the report of a Trust inspection that it conducted which identified concerns about cancer patients who had suffered delays in receiving appointments or treatment.

As a result of the CQC report, the Trust was placed into special measures and the Trust’s then Senior Independent Director, Sir John Ashworth, commissioned the Troop/Taylor-Brown investigation.

Independent review (Troop/Taylor-Brown report)

Dr Sean MacDonnell has decided to stand down as Medical Director and return to full-time practice as a consultant anaesthetist at Colchester General.

Sean’s three-year term of office ended on 31 October. He agreed to stay on to oversee the retrospective review of cancer services and has clinical sessions planned from January but will continue as Medical Director until his successor is appointed. When Sean took up the post on 31 October 2011, he divided his time equally between that role and as a consultant anaesthetist with a special interest in intensive care medicine.

However, since the CQC cancer report last November, he has worked full-time in the Medical Director role.

Chief Executive Dr Lucy Moore said: “I would like to put on the record my gratitude for the huge amount of support Sean has given me personally since I came into post in January. I also know from talking to colleagues both in and outside the Trust that he is quite rightly held in the highest esteem for his professionalism, commitment and, above all, for his resilience during what has been an extraordinarily challenging time for the Trust. He has made an invaluable contribution over the last three years as Medical Director and I look forward to working with him through to the transition to his successor.”

---

1. Read the report and releases in full on our website, under “Latest News”: www.colchesterhospital.nhs.uk

2. See also Chief Executive Dr Lucy Moore’s comments on page 14
The Portal goes live!

In December, the Trust replaced its patient administration system (PAS) with The Portal, the name for the system that will form the basis of the Trust’s clinical information systems, leading ultimately to electronic patient records. PAS was turned off forever on Friday 28 November and data migrated over that weekend. The Portal went live on the Monday (1 December).

There was a huge amount of work involved in the preparation for the “go-live” involving Trust staff and staff from System C – the software manufacturer – who worked 24/7 to support as smooth a cut-over as possible.

More than 30 years ago the first computerised patient administration system (PAS) was installed at the hospitals in north east Essex – there was no “Trust” then. The Trust’s Outpatients Manager Carol Findley (pictured), started in 1982 as a data entry operator at Essex County Hospital. Her role was solely to input the manual index cards onto the new PAS. Carol recalls her very bizarre interview which entailed having a hearing test, providing a specimen and being interviewed by five people, including the hospital chaplain. There were seven candidates who were then bussed to Harold Wood to do a typing speed test, as there were no facilities at Essex County. It was estimated that the first wave of data entry would take 18 months to complete but it actually took 12. The index cards were gender colour coded – blue for males and pink for females. Data entry operators had to enter the patients’ hospital number, name, date of birth, address, ‘D’ if they were deceased and ‘M’ for microfiche – in case the new computerised system failed, it was decided that microfiche would be the back-up option.

PAS came into being on 26 April 1982. The first computers were a sealed unit encased in metal, which were already out-of-date when they were installed. Eventually these were upgraded to individual terminals with separate keyboards. This also meant that PAS could be rolled out to Clacton, Harwich and Halstead hospitals. The second wave of data entry was to input the information from x-ray cards. Carol recalls that they had the same problems back then as now: double registrations, even triple registrations, information out-of-date and some patients with more than two sets of medical notes. Outpatient clinics were recorded in books and this information had to be transferred to PAS. If additional slots were required, they were just written around the edge of the page. It was hard for staff to adjust to the new electronic system which had a pre-set template for each clinic. Staff were concerned that having a computerised system would put jobs at risk. However, they knew there was nothing they could do other than to adapt to the new way of working.

Eventually from 1987, data on inpatients and outpatients, including elective admissions, started being migrated to PAS. During this time of change there were no floor walkers, just Carol. Eventually she became the staff trainer for Essex County, St Mary’s, Black Notley and Clacton hospitals, and Colchester Maternity Home. Although this was a mammoth task, Carol said you just seemed to have the time to spend supporting and training staff. Carol agreed it is time the PAS system was replaced and is looking forward to using The Portal.

ONE “floorwalker” during data migration

Message to patients

- We are improving the computer system that records patient information.
- The new system – known as “The Portal” – is a significant change which is why we have trained more than 2,500 staff how to use it.
- Please bear with us if we are a bit slower processing your details as you book in or make an appointment.
- We apologise for any inconvenience. Thank you for your understanding.
More than 600 Father Christmases took part in the Santa Fun Run on 7 December to raise money for Colchester Hospitals Charity (CoHoC). It is hoped £20,000 will be raised for its £4.5m Cancer Centre Campaign. Teams from Essex University, Colchester Academy, Clacton Bootcamp amongst many others took part.

CoHoC fundraising manager Caroline Bates said: “It has grown every year since 2010 when 115 people took part, raising £6,000. To see so many people come out and support us was fantastic. It made me very happy to see all the fundraisers with their red outfits on going around the park. In a few weeks we will be able to total all the sponsorship. Some people raised hundreds of pounds themselves.”

CoHoC is the charitable fund of Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust, which manages Colchester General Hospital and Essex County Hospital.

See also centre pages for more information about CoHoC

A convoy of more than 50 scooter riders and bikers – including Father Christmas – rode to Colchester General Hospital on 6 December to deliver 190 presents for youngsters on the Children’s Ward and patients on the care of the elderly wards, so that staff there can distribute them nearer to 25 December. Gary Youngs, a member of the Mod n Casuals Scooter Club, said: “Quite a few scooter and biker clubs organise toy runs to hospitals at Christmas but it has not been done in Colchester for a number of years. Local businesses have been tremendously generous in donating gifts. Although Christmas is a time for children, we were also determined to do something for some of the older patients, so it was good to go to the care of the elderly wards.”

Gary added that the event was run in association with Colchester Trinity Rotary Club.

Giving festive cheer

The Trust is transforming the emergency assessment and short-term care of patients. In the Emergency Assessment Unit (EAU) work is underway to establish a Medical Day Unit (MDU). Its purpose is to deliver care to acute medical patients who require urgent assessment and treatment on a day case basis without the need of a lengthy inpatient admission. The area will have eight extra trolleys for emergency assessment, a seated area for walk-in referral patients, with the remaining 10 beds for patients requiring a short stay of under 24 hours. The recruitment of additional staff is underway. Meanwhile, the former pharmacy area next to A&E is being turned into a purpose-built Clinical Decision Unit (CDU) with six beds and three recliner chairs. It will be a designated area where certain patients can be managed for a short period of time. The unit will be staffed by the Emergency Department and it will provide care for patients needing observation, investigations or treatment who otherwise would be admitted to an inpatient ward. This scheme will not only avoid unnecessary admission for the patient but will support the work being undertaken to reduce bed occupancy.
Briefly for staff

Essex County update
The Trust has put the Essex County Hospital site onto the market, courtesy of our agents, Colliers International. Stay up-to-date: www.colchesterhospital.nhs.uk/EssexCountyTransfer.shtml

New NHS Pension Scheme
From April 2015 a new NHS Pension Scheme comes into effect. All pre-1 April 2015 benefits will be unaffected for all members. Subject to the protection arrangements, members of the existing 1995 and 2008 sections of the NHS Pension Scheme will move to the 2015 scheme. For an overview of the features and benefits of all the schemes, please visit this website: http://bit.ly/1ugpll2

Bin your wipes – don’t block the pipes
Blocked drains – an ever-increasing nuisance in our hospitals.

The Estates Team is frequently called to deal with blocked drains as a result of people flushing paper towels down toilets and sluices. This photo was taken on a ward on 19 November, showing the result of just such an incident.

More news for staff, page 12

Surgeons take part in Movember
Surgeons are refamiliarising themselves with their upper lips this month after taking part in the global Movember initiative.

Six urologists grew moustaches in November in order to promote awareness of prostate cancer and testicular cancer.

Mr Gerald Rix, the clinical lead for urology, said all six participants had now shaved off their facial hair.

“We’re all passionate about men’s health because that’s the trade we’re in so we thought Movember was too good an opportunity to miss to increase awareness,” he said.

“What was encouraging was that many patients already knew about

From left: consultant urological surgeons Mr Rajiv Pillai, Mr John Corr, Mr Zafar Maan, Mr Sam Datta and Mr Gerald Rix, and uro-oncology fellow Mr Murthy Kusuma

From left: Teresa Clarke, Theatre Practitioner; Sister Luminita Hodea, Urology Team Leader; Mr Zafar Maan, Consultant Urological Surgeon; Mr Gerald Rix, Consultant Urological Surgeon; Francesa Smy, Nurse; Mr Aniket Deshpande, Fellow in Urology

Colchester General Hospital became only the third UK hospital to trial a state-of-the-art laser used in urological surgery.

Shining a light on Colchester’s expertise
Surgeons say the hospital has been chosen to test the new high-powered laser because it is renowned for its expertise in a modern technique to treat a non-cancerous condition called benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) in which the prostate gland enlarges, making it difficult to urinate.

The procedure is called Holmium laser enucleation of the prostate (HoLEP) which causes less blood loss, removes more tissue and involves a shorter stay in hospital than other techniques.

Access to HoLEP is limited in England but it has been available in Colchester since 2005, where it has been carried out more than 1,000 times.

The Trust has three surgeons who use the technique. Colchester General Hospital is also a training centre for surgeons in the UK and Europe wishing to learn it.

A retinal suite has been created and two nurse specialists appointed in a major investment in hospital eye services.

The Retinal Suite at Essex County Hospital is a “one-stop shop” service for the growing number of patients with retinal disease, the most common of which is age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

The new facility is used by an average of 50 patients every week.

From left: Chris Ellis, Imaging Associate Practitioner; Lynda Nicolson, Imaging Associate Practitioner; Lynn Barker, Glaucoma Nurse Specialist; Francesa Smy, Nurse; Nicola Hopkins, Retinal Nurse and Giles Baggioni, Ophthalmic Photographer
Movember so clearly the message is getting through."

From humble beginnings in Australia in 2003, Movember has mushroomed into a leading global organisation committed to changing the face of men's health. The Movember Foundation helps raise awareness and helps funds programmes working to improve the lives of men affected by prostate cancer, testicular cancer and mental health issues.

Its supporting partners include Prostate Cancer UK and The Institute of Cancer Research.

In memory of Claire

Lead Radiographer Natacha Clarke writes: “The Radiology Department has raised money to buy a bench in memory of a dear friend and colleague who sadly lost her fight against cancer in June this year. Claire Bigg was 37 and trained at Colchester General Hospital some 18 years ago to become a radiographer. Although she has worked elsewhere, she most recently worked as the deputy manager for the Alliance Medical MRI scanner, up until her illness was diagnosed in June 2013.”

The bench has been installed in the quiet garden area between the main building at Colchester General Hospital and the Radiotherapy Centre. The Trust’s Senior Chaplin, Reverend David Flower led a blessing on 4 December, attended by Claire’s husband, parents, friends and colleagues from the radiology and MRI departments.

Sonographer Catherine McKenzie spoke at the blessing about her friend and colleague (pictured below). You can read what she said in full on the hospital’s Facebook page: www.facebook.com/ColchesterGeneralHospital

Welcome

SANDY SPENCER has jstarted as the interim Chief Operating Officer, taking over from Evelyn Barker who leaves on 19 December. SHANE MORRISON-MCCABE has also joined as Deputy Chief Operating Officer and will report to Sandy with a key focus on emergency care.

Farewell

REES MILLBOURNE, Head of Information Governance, has left the Trust. Responsibility for information governance (IG), records management, Freedom of Information (FOI) and police requests has been transferred to BARRY MOULT, who has become the Head of IG & Health Records. FOI Manager LIZ MASON and the IG Assistant Manager (under recruitment) have moved to the Health Records Centre. Data quality, registration authority (Smartcards), ICT training, Datix, Patient information and integrated care pathways and the staff who maintain these services remain in Villa 1, reporting to DARREN ATKINS, Associate Director of ICT.

Deputy Director of Nursing and Patient Experience KATHY FRENCH has undertaken a secondment to a Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in Hertfordshire as a deputy nurse director. And AMANDA HALLUMS, Divisional Director – Women and Children’s Services, left on 8 December.

Congrats!

A group of associate practitioners has graduated from Anglia Ruskin University after completing their two-year foundation degrees in Health and Social Care. They follow several other cohorts of HCAs who have undertaken this degree as part of the Trust’s long-term strategy to grow its nursing workforce. A new cohort of HCAs started the foundation degree in October.

More People News on the intranet under Info About > P > People News
In March, the Trust agreed to invest £1.5m on recruiting an additional 31 nurses. Some of the new money was earmarked to create three Associate Director of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals (AHP) posts, a new role to lead nursing and therapies across the Trust. In the summer, the people appointed to the four divisions were announced. Here are their backgrounds:

**Jo Tonkin: Cancer and Clinical Support Services Division**

Born and educated in Colchester, she trained in Cambridge and qualified as a nurse in 1987, spending the next two years on the haematology unit at Addenbrooke’s Hospital, which is where her passion for cancer nursing began. She then worked in London, including at the Royal Marsden, and helped to set up and run a bone marrow transplant unit at Charing Cross Hospital. Jo has also worked as a Macmillan funded palliative care nurse at West Suffolk Hospital, Bury St Edmunds; as the lead cancer nurse and as the cancer services manager at Ipswich Hospital; and as the Nurse Director for the Mid Anglia Cancer Network. Before taking up her current role, she worked at the Trust for 10 years as a nurse consultant in haematology.

**David Thorpe: Surgery Division**

David has completed 20 years in the nursing profession after previously working in engineering. He trained in his native Preston and worked on various wards at Preston Royal Infirmary before beginning to specialise in critical care, where he became a charge nurse. He then spent two years in the same role at Cumberland Infirmary, Carlisle, before working for five years as the lead nurse for intensive care at the Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary, during which time he visited the U.S. to pursue his passion for patient safety. He spent the five years before starting in Colchester in August at Scarborough Hospital, where he was the Matron for critical care, theatres, orthopaedics, general surgery and ophthalmology.

**Carole Broadbank: Medicine Division**

Carole has returned to Colchester after an absence of 24 years. She originally came to Colchester in 1986 to train, qualifying in 1989 and then staying on to work as a staff nurse on two wards and in the A&E department at Colchester General Hospital. Between 1990 and 2006, she worked at North Middlesex Hospital, London. In London, she worked in A&E, ran a medical assessment unit, became a site manager and then a matron for diagnostics and ambulatory care. Her last 3½ years in London were spent as a divisional manager. Carole then worked eight years in both the private and state health sectors in Ireland, which included three years as chief executive of the 240-bed South Tipperary General Hospital. She gained a masters degree in strategic quality science from the University of Limerick.

**Louise Notley: Women’s and Children’s Services Division**

Louise has spent her entire 26-year nursing career in Colchester, qualifying in 1991 after training for three years. She started off working in the specialty of cardiology/coronary care before being promoted to Sister. She then worked as a practice development nurse (PDN), where she became involved in adult resuscitation and teaching. She spent two years as Matron for Specialist Medicine, which included the care of the elderly specialty. In 2010, she became what was believed to be the first “Nurse Consultant for Older People” in the NHS East of England area. She then spent 12 months as Acting Assistant Director of Nursing before taking up her current role.
Colchester General Hospital was a winner at the Building Better Healthcare Awards (BBH) on 5 November for investing in a system which enables waste heat from its boilers to be used to provide heat and hot water for the Elmstead Day Unit and Mary Barron & Haematology Day Unit, saving £200,000 a year.

As well as a heat recovery system winning the “Best Product for Improving Sustainability and/or Reducing Energy” award, the hospital’s £25m state-of-the-art radiotherapy centre was short-listed in three categories too.

Nick Chatten, Projects Director, said: “It was good to be able to attend the awards ceremony in London with colleagues because our staff were closely involved in both projects. What was particularly gratifying was that the award we did win gives some well-deserved recognition to our backroom engineering team who are usually very much unsung heroes. I am thrilled for them and enormously proud of their achievement.”

The BBH Awards celebrate innovation, architecture, people, products and services that are helping to transform patient care in the UK.

Less than a month later the system was commended in the “Estates & Facilities Innovation Award” category of the Health Business Awards on 4 December.

Vall Rasaratnam, Energy & Sustainability Manager, and Terry Robertson, Head of Maintenance, were presented with a certificate at an awards ceremony in London. Terry said: “It’s pleasing that an innovation which reduces the Trust’s energy consumption and carbon emissions while at the same time putting £200,000 back into the health economy is winning so much recognition.”

Michelle Biggins and Kathryn Burke were finalists in the Health Education East of England “Celebrating Success” awards in November.

Michelle is the Quality Nurse Lead while Kathryn was a former Practice Development Nurse at the Trust, but is now an adult lecturer at the University of Essex.

Michelle said: “We were entered into to the Patient Safety Poster of the Year category. This was a joint submission acknowledging the ViVA project (Vital Signs, Vital Action), an in-house education programme for nurses and health care assistants in adult areas and for junior doctors.

“Unfortunately, Kathryn was unable to attend and so staff nurse Helen Hodkinson from the Emergency Assessment Unit accompanied me to the awards event. Judging was on the night and I was questioned at length by the judges. There were three finalists in my

Celebrating success at awards!

Staff are celebrating their success in a range of different awards recently. On this page and overleaf we share their achievements and congratulate them all!
We offer a wide range of healthcare services and we want to know which interest you as a Trust member. Please circle up to 10 choices, complete the form, and return it to the Freepost address on the back page.

**Continued from previous page**

category. Unfortunately we did not get first prize but the whole experience for myself and Helen was enlightening and inspirational. The quality of improvement work being undertaken across the East of England is remarkable.”

Macmillan Information Manager Debbie Farthing has been recognised for her and her team’s inspirational work supporting people affected by cancer.

The Macmillan Excellence Awards were developed to celebrate the outstanding work carried out by Macmillan health and social care professionals across the country.

Debbie, based at Essex County Hospital, was nominated for the Service Improvement Excellence Award category, and was considered to have demonstrated tangible improvements to the services offered to local people affected by cancer.

“I am surprised and delighted to have won this award,” she said. I find my job extremely satisfying and feel a great sense of achievement whenever I see a visitor leave the centre looking like a weight has been lifted off their shoulders. It’s an honour to do this job so winning the award is just the icing on the cake.”

Debbie and the team have worked determinedly in ensuring that the Macmillan Information and Support Centre is a single point of contact and support for local people affected by cancer. The team deliver an innovative holistic, seamless cancer support service, ensuring that the centre offers support covering all aspects of a patient’s life, from counselling and help at home to benefits advice, carer support and wellbeing workshops.

On 23 October PALS Officer Sandra Gates (pictured) was recognised as an outstanding leader and awarded the Jack Petchey Leader Award for Outstanding Service to Young People. She said: “The event was at the Charter Hall in Colchester and I met many dignitaries including Nicholas Charring, High Sheriff of Essex. It was a brilliant evening with over 54 achievement awards presented. I am very proud to receive the award.”

Last month, 21 staff achieved the level 3 Award in Health and Safety for Supervisors in the Workplace.

The course studied numerous pieces of legislation, starting with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and moving onto 30 other pieces of supporting regulations. The course is 25 hours of guided learning – however, without at least another 25 hours’ home study the individuals would not have had the underpinning knowledge to tackle the exam.

*Left: Some of the successful health and safety candidates with Director of Nursing Barbara Stuttle, who presented the certificates*
Feeling under the weather?
Our Trust is supporting the NHS winter campaign, “Feeling under the weather?” which urges older people to seek early advice from their pharmacist for minor winter illnesses. It is targeted at the over 60s, and also at those aged 45 and above who often look after an older friend, neighbour or relative. Our webpage www.colchesterhospital.nhs.uk/winter.shtml also leads to a website designed to help people find the right health service, as A&E might not always be the fastest choice.

Safeguarding advice
Neglect is the most common form of abuse and both this and emotional abuse have damaging and long-term effects on a child’s development. The NSPCC has produced a leaflet summarising what is known about children aged 5-14 years who have been emotionally abused and neglected. It explains how this abuse affects behaviour relationships with other children, emotional or self-perception issues, school performance and relationships with parents. The leaflet is on the NSPCC website at www.nspcc.org.uk or directly via this link: http://bit.ly/1wS1Y8f

New rehabilitation service open at Clacton Hospital
More help is now available for people who need rehabilitation after illness or injury to get back to living at home. A brand-new service, the Durban Rehabilitation Centre, has opened at Clacton Hospital for any adult who needs more time and support and who does not need nursing care. People will be looked after in a bed so they are safe while they work with staff at their own pace to re-gain their skills and abilities to live safely in the community. Some people will need rehabilitation after they have been in hospital, but others may be admitted directly from home after a referral by their GP or the new Rapid Assessment Service.

North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group agreed the project with Essex County Council, Anglian Community Enterprise (ACE) and the Clacton Hospital site’s owners.

ACE’s trained rehabilitation staff will run the Centre, supported by a GP and ACE’s community nurses. It has 15 beds and will have a minimum of three staff on duty at any time. It will run until at least April, when it will be evaluated and compared with other ways of providing similar care, to ensure the NHS can offer the best quality and most efficient service to local people in the future.

CASH move
The Contraception and Sexual Health Service based at Essex County Hospital moved on 15 December to the town centre. The service, known as CASH, offers both sexual health and contraception services. The phone numbers have changed too.

N early 60 people attended a study day to learn how to help children with additional health needs.

“Managing health conditions in schools” was organised by the children’s clinical nurse specialist (CNS) team and 58 school nurses, teaching assistants, special educational needs co-ordinators, school personnel and nursery staff gave very positive feedback on the day in October and afterwards.

Martina Thomas, children’s urology CNS, said: “As most children spend much of their day in school, those responsible for children with additional health needs need to be educated and competent to deal with any health issue or treatment intervention that may arise. The CNS team are frequently asked to provide education and training to school staff. This time we were able to provide education to a larger number of people over a broader area and on multiple health topics. We were successful not only in raising awareness of the variety of health needs that children may have but also the services available at the Children’s Unit.

“With the support of our matron Lynda Pearce, we plan to provide more study days.”

From left: Jenny Stanley children’s epilepsy CNS, Sandy Birkett children’s asthma and allergy CNS, Martina Thomas, and Natalie Jordan children’s diabetes CNS. Jen Vincent, children’s epilepsy CNS, is not pictured

Full story on the CCG’s website, under “Latest News”: www.neessexccg.nhs.uk

December 2014 | page 11
From the Chairman

It is easy to look back over the past year and remember only the difficult and disappointing events that have occurred and to forget that there is much that we can be proud of and celebrate.

We have a new state-of-the-art Radiotherapy Centre and a new modern oncology ward. We have made improvements in our midwifery department, built a new Surgical Assessment Unit and extended the Emergency Department. All of these changes will enable us to offer an improved service for our patients.

Our stroke and vascular departments continue to gain momentum and we have an excellent paediatric centre. These facilities would not be any good without good people – and we have these in Colchester. Our At Our Best Awards are a continual reminder of how so many of our staff are prepared to “go the extra mile” to provide outstanding service, and we should not forget that the plaudits received by the Trust outnumber the complaints by 20:1.

This is not said to make us complacent. We must recognise our failings and learn from them, but as we look forward to Christmas with its message of hope and new beginnings and as we look forward to the opportunity to relax with family and friends, let us also look forward to a new beginning for us as a Trust and the “hospital family”.

We have over the past year, in the face of adversity, demonstrated our resilience and this will strengthen us for the future. Working together, clinical and non-clinical staff, we have the capability, energy, drive and determination to succeed, and not only to remove our Trust from special measures, but to put ourselves back again among the best hospitals in the country.

My very best wishes to you and your families for an enjoyable Christmas and a happy New Year.

Peter Wilson
Chairman (acting)
Good news on the dementia front

Our Dementia Care Nurse Specialists rolled out the first Advanced Dementia Workshop in October for nursing and therapies staff. The interactive two-day, programme included speakers from a range of specialties. There were practical sessions about how to care for patients within acute hospitals, covering subjects such as understanding dementia, managing challenging behaviours, nutrition and managing pain in dementia. Feedback was very positive and so the workshop will run quarterly.

Age UK has joined the weekly dementia drop-in support sessions, run every Tuesday on Birch Ward at Colchester General Hospital. These sessions enable patients, families and carers to obtain information about community support services. Age UK has joined forces with the Alzheimer’s Society which has been offering support and signposting information since February.

In October, the Trust achieved 99.6% dementia screening of all patients admitted over the age of 75 years within 72 hours of admission – another excellent month.

Find out more from the Dementia Team on 01206 746549

THIS MONTH’S GRAPH

Colchester is one of the most difficult place in England to get around without a car, according to the Campaign for Better Transport’s car dependency report. It rates towns and cities on public transport provision and facilities for cycling and walking. Source: www.bettertransport.org.uk

IN THE DIARY

Join the staff choir!
Love singing? Sing in the car, the shower or even at work? Then why not join the Trust’s staff choir which is currently practising singing Disney songs? It meets every Tuesday at 5.30pm in the Postgraduate Medical Centre.

Council of Governors & Board of Directors meetings
The Council of Governors works closely with the Board of Directors to influence decision-making and strategic planning. The public and staff are represented by their governors.

Every Tuesday
Love singing? Sing in the car, the shower or even at work? Then why not join the Trust’s staff choir which is currently practising singing Disney songs? It meets every Tuesday at 5.30pm in the Postgraduate Medical Centre.

IN THE DIARY

December to April
“Exec Team’s” Staff Briefing
The Executive Team briefs senior managers in the Postgraduate Centre. The next set of meetings are being opened up to any member of staff who wishes to attend, subject to their line manager agreeing it.

Every month
Colchester Hospital Book Club
Meets once a month in the library in the Postgraduate Medical Centre (all welcome). Details: Andy Richardson, Library & E-Learning Lead, on 01206 742146
On 17 December, two reports were published about alleged manipulation of cancer waiting lists (see page 3). I am very pleased there appears to be no evidence of systematic data manipulation at the Trust. It is important that we now rebuild confidence in the cancer services we provide. We apologise unreservedly to any of our patients who suffered delays in treatment or diagnosis or who received poor care. We have scrutinised the care of any patient where we think there might have been imperfect care and are in contact with all of the patients who have suffered significant sub-optimal care.

The second report – the independent investigation into concerns about the manipulation of cancer waiting lists – is an important step towards rebuilding public trust and confidence in the Trust. It gives reassurance to our patients, their relatives and our local community that the authors found no evidence of manipulation of cancer data or of a systemic culture of bullying within the Trust. We have been making improvements to our cancer services and we are now implementing a comprehensive Cancer Improvement Plan. Although this report found no evidence of a systemic culture of bullying, we take bullying very seriously and will take prompt action wherever and whenever bullying is identified.

This month saw The Portal (see page 4) go live and I’m very pleased to report that the highly complex changeover plan went very well. It involved a major effort on the part of many people and I’m very grateful to all those who made the changeover so successful. There are a few issues to be resolved but I am very pleased with progress and our task now is to stay on top of anything else that may arise.

I am very pleased to say that the follow-up visit by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to A&E and Emergency Assessment Unit (EAU) two weeks after their first visit on 12 November was much more positive. Initial feedback suggests a significant improvement with better staffing levels in EAU and a generally improved atmosphere and environment. The team also examined our recording of data in A&E and despite checking 60 sets of case notes they found no irregularities. I am pleased this was the case but we all need to remember that getting things right the first time round should be the standard. I have written to the Chief Inspector of Hospitals to confirm what actions we’ve taken to address the CQC’s concerns and I have assured him that at the heart of these actions is our commitment to ensure that we have appropriate staffing and that we are confident that staff have the capacity to care for patients safely and with dignity and respect every time.

Dr Lucy Moore | Chief Executive
ext 2586 lucy.moore2@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk

Describe your job
Seeing patients in the Outpatients Department clinics and Emergency Department (A&E), as well as consultations on inpatients under care of other colleagues. Operations (“open” and laparoscopic), day surgery and inpatient surgery, on all general surgical conditions in the elective and emergency situations. Undergo endoscopy sessions, both diagnostic and therapeutic. Teaching theoretical and practical surgical and clinical skills to junior staff at all levels as well as to medical students.

How does your role improve patient care?
Provides continuity of care in the present climate of shift work by other medical colleagues, as well as teaching and improving skills of my junior colleagues and supporting nursing staff in their work.

What would you change in the Trust?
Make it more efficient with use of current facilities and improve safety awareness by positive engagement of staff in all aspects of safety. Increase utilisation of Datix reporting.

Best part of your job?
Looking after patients and teaching colleagues and working with very active and hard-working nursing staff.

Dr Lucy Moore | Chief Executive
ext 2586 lucy.moore2@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk

More on the intranet:
http://bit.ly/PeopleN
Letters | Emails

Your views

A glow in writing
I have never in my 68 years had such a glow in writing the following: it is sad when all you read and hear are damning and negative reports of the NHS. I have been attending your ophthalmology unit (Mr Patel) for almost a year, culminating in a visit to your Sanders Ward Theatre admissions unit in October for an eye operation to correct and repair a damaged retina together with a cataract procedure.

What a wonderful team, what a wonderful atmosphere! From your very, very cheerful and uplifting receptionist, to Jackie, after already meeting her last week for a pre op chat, and later for her re-assurance just before and after my operation, making me her delicious coffee, she was so very professional, kind and inspiring; through to Vickie, who was again, so very reassuring, held my hand throughout and is just such a lovely lady. Finally Mr Patel, his voice, presence and skill were just awesome. A very big thank you to all. It really is a true joy to find such people.

CG by email

“Compassion and dignity”
I have been meaning to contact you since my father was treated in your hospital between 22 October and 26 October when he passed away.

He was admitted to A&E and then treated in the Emergency Assessment Unit (EAU). During his time with you we felt he was treated with compassion and dignity and real care for his comfort. When it was realised you could do no more for him, we were called at midnight, and the situation was explained professionally by Emma from ICU and Jenny from A&E, and later by other colleagues. The nursing was very caring and with a personal touch, we never felt Dad was just another patient. He was truly cared for as an individual and we were given consideration as a family.

The latter days and hours are a bit of a blur, but special mention must be made of nurse Laura; we felt she treated him as if he was her own family and will forever remember her caring; she really made a difference to our family.

It was also very considerate to ensure a Macmillan nurse was there to comfort my mother on the final morning.

I am aware from the publicity that Colchester General Hospital has problems, but I can only report from our personal experience, and you deserve to know there is another more positive side to the story as well.

Thank you to all the staff who treated my father; it wasn't possible to save him, but it was a great comfort to his family that he passed away with dignity in peace and comfort, knowing that his family were with him.

DB by email

“Help and understanding”
We have had the unfortunate loss of our father in November. We would like to point out the exceptional help and understanding of the staff on duty in the stroke department during our time there.

I personally have never had the attention we received in any hospital before, be it NHS or private care. Please would you pass our sincere gratitude to all the staff on duty at that time. A very big thank you from all our family.

GH sent from iPad
Players from Ipswich Town visited the Children’s Unit on 8 December. Goalkeepers Bartosz Bialkowski and Dean Gerken and midfielders Kevin Bru and Luke Hyam gave out presents to children, chatted with them, signed autographs and also met parents and staff.

They were joined by Blues legend Simon Milton, who made 332 appearances for the club and scored 55 goals in a 10-year career that finished in 1997. The former player is now the club’s academy sponsorship manager.

Ipswich Town’s captain Luke Chambers said: “Visits to local hospitals and hospices have become a real Christmas tradition throughout football and one that my team-mates and I very much enjoy doing.

“We can’t wait to see the smiles on the children’s faces when we hand over the presents that the players have bought for them.”

The footballers spent more than an hour at the Children’s Unit, handing out gifts for patients. They also delivered items from a list supplied by staff which will remain in the hospital for the benefit of children all-year round, such as toy pushchairs, bath toys and board games.

Lynda Pearce, Matron, Children’s Services, said: “I know how much the children, parents and staff look forward to our Christmas visit from Ipswich Town. We really appreciate it, and it gives us all a real lift and marks the start of the Christmas season.”

Photos on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ColchesterGeneralHospital