Sister says goodbye after 30 years

Rosemary began her nursing career at Mount Vernon in 1959 and left in 1966 to start a family. She returned to work for the Trust as nurse and then team leader for the Chest and Cardiac clinic and was appointed Outpatients Sister in 1999.

Maria Nicholson, Outpatients Clinical Services Manager said: “Sister Graver has overseen many changes in the NHS throughout her long career and has always responded to the challenge - as many nurses do - with enthusiasm and the determination to ensure patients’ needs come first. Over 1,500 patients a week attend the Outpatients Department and it was Rosemary’s organisation and team management that endeavoured to ensure that the clinics ran smoothly. That is quite an achievement. Although we will miss her calm presence, we wish her every happiness in her retirement.”

In her spare time Rosemary plans to take part in more embroidery exhibitions, catch up with the gardening, indulge her passion for cooking and look after her two grandchildren, twins Jack and Jessica, who were born on February 25 this year.

Among her many retirement gifts was a beautiful amethyst and diamond necklace and matching earrings from all her friends and colleagues at Watford.

Friends and colleagues gathered to say a fond farewell to Sister Rosemary Graver who retired after 30 years service at Watford General.
National Childcare Month

The first ever National Childcare Month takes place in June. To promote and celebrate it, the Trust plans to hold an ‘indulgence’ evening for all staff who currently use the services of a childcare worker.

Parents will be invited to come along with their children on the evening of Friday 21 June, and a number of therapists will be on hand to give mini treatments.

Trust staff’s children are also invited to enter an art competition. The artwork will be displayed in the various staff canteens and will be judged at the end of June, when prizes will be awarded for the best pictures.

If you are a parent who uses a childcare worker, or for further details on either of the above, please call Barbara Leon-Hunt, Childcare Co-ordinator, on x7356 at WGH, or email barbara.leonhunt@whht.nhs.uk

Staff changes in Surgery

The following staff changes have taken place in the Surgical Clinical Management Unit:

Adam Horsborough has been appointed Service Manager for Theatres, replacing Sue Fennell who left earlier this year to take up a new post.

Maxine McCvev has been appointed Head of Nursing for the Surgical CMU.

Alison Pirfo has been appointed Services Manager for Theatres, replacing Sue Fennell who left earlier this year to take up a new post.

The following staff changes have taken place in the Surgical Clinical Management Unit:

Adam Horsborough has been appointed Service Manager for Theatres, replacing Sue Fennell who left earlier this year to take up a new post.

Maxine McCvev has been appointed Head of Nursing for the Surgical CMU.

Alison Pirfo has been appointed Services Manager for Theatres, replacing Sue Fennell who left earlier this year to take up a new post.

Have your say about roads and footpaths at Mount Vernon

A Health and Safety Sub-committee has been set up to look into the problems of roads and footpaths within the grounds of Mount Vernon Hospital.

Do you know of any problem areas that need attention? Please put all suggestions in writing to one of the following:

NAME JOB TITLE SITE TELEPHONE/CONTACT NO.
Sharon Andrews Breast-feeding Advisor WGH x7366
Diane Edghill Medical Secretary WGH x7506
Pat Jacobs Specialist Nurse WGH x7363
Sarah Jones Resuscitation Officer WGH x7218/Bleep1447
Daisy Peets Medical Secretary WGH x7271
Elizabeth Jones Secretary WGH x7271
Susan Shipp Chaplain WGH x3134/Bleep1028
Yvonne Beaumont Site Services Manager HHHH x2130
Wendy Fowler Radiographer HHHH x2330
Lynn Heather Assistant Quality Assurance Facilitator HHHH x2227
Evelyn Jones Staff Nurse HHHH x2121
Paula Moore Educational Advisor HHHH x2576
Carol Nolan Chaplain HHHH x2600
John Salsbury Medical Technical Officer HHHH x2154
Marie Souter Clinical Assistant HHHH x2391
Michael Griffin ODP SACH x4825
Gwilym Roberts Gay Men Sexual Health Team Leader SACH 01727 831047

Alternatively, you may prefer to contact a member of the HR or Occupational Health Department. Whatever you decide, the support is there should you need it.

Golfers sign up for charity

The Genitourinary Medicine Clinic at Watford General Hospital is looking for keen golfers to enter its annual golfing competition to raise funds for the Genitourinary Medicine Foundation. The competition will take place on Friday 28 June at the West Herts Golf Club.

Mary Harris, Fundraising Co-ordinator said: “Last year 28 teams entered the competition and raised nearly £4,000 which was a fantastic achievement. This year we are hoping to exceed this amount so we need people to “pull out all the stops” to help us achieve this. We are also looking for organisations to donate raffle prizes or advertise in the event programme.”

Anyone can sign up for the day either as an individual or in teams of less than four at a cost of £60 per person or £240 per team.

For further information contact Mary Harris on x7207

Enterprising staff ideas

The first batch of awards for Enterprising Ideas has been announced. Ideas included the use of the Intranet Bulletin Board to ‘recycle’ and share items of stationery and an increased recycling system for the Trust. The Enterprising Ideas Committee meets again on 12 June to consider the next set of ideas. Please keep your ideas coming. For further information contact Jean Hickman, Communications Department on x 7806 or email jean.hickman@whht.nhs.uk
Staff raising concerns

The Trust is committed to achieving the highest possible standards of quality, openness and accountability in all of its practices.

To achieve these ends we would like to encourage staff to raise concerns they may have about:

- Health care matters
- Working practices
- Standards of service delivery
- Health and safety
- Bullying, discrimination, harassment or victimisation in the workplace

If you want to raise a concern you can do one of the following:

- Speak to your manager
- Contact Human Resources
- Approach a Trade Union representative
- Contact the Chief Executive or Director of Nursing
- Telephone the NHS Fraud Hotline on 08702 400 100
- Contact Public Concern at Work for independent advice on 020 7404 6609
- Telephone the Trust’s 24-hour Whistleblowing Hotline on 01923-244366 x3105

The Whistleblowing Hotline is a 24-hour answerphone where you can confidentially leave a message any time of the day or night about an issue that concerns you. The answerphone is cleared on a daily basis by the Whistleblowing Hotline co-ordinator. If you use the Hotline you will be asked to give your name and contact details to help us to look into the matter. You should indicate if you want confidentiality to be maintained, in order that we can make the appropriate arrangements.

Remember, if you have concerns we would rather hear them sooner than later.

Obituary

It is with great sadness that the staff of the Outpatients Department at Hemel Hempstead Hospital learnt of the death of Mr Bihari Shrestha on the evening of April 25, 2002, after a long illness. Bihari was well known to the Outpatients staff: not only was he the husband of Neema, a much loved member of our nursing staff, but he was also a well liked and respected Orthopaedic Consultant who worked at Hemel Hempstead and St Albans for a number of years until ill health forced him to stop work.

Staff who worked with him will remember him for his politeness and courtesy and his infectious giggle. Neema has nursed Bihari devotedly while he has undergone a liver transplant at the Royal Free Hospital and then latterly when he developed renal failure and then oesophageal varices.

Bihari leaves behind three adult children, a daughter and two sons, one of whom has followed his father into medicine. Bihari died peacefully at the Royal Free Hospital with Neema and his children around him. His body has been taken home to Nepal for his funeral.

I am sure you will join with the outpatients staff in extending heartfelt condolences to Neema and her children.

Have your say

The annual staff attitude survey will be sent out to all members of staff in June. The survey is completely anonymous – no one in the Trust will ever see your response, only the data collated from all respondents. Your views are important to us and taken seriously by the Trust Board. Last year over 1,600 people responded to the survey and this year we hope that even more staff will take part in the survey so that their views can be heard and improvements can be made.

For further information contact Susan Fay x7707 or Suzanne Emerson on x2233.

Long Service Awards

Long service award ceremonies will be taking place throughout June and July to celebrate the commitment and dedication of long serving staff. Awards will be presented to staff who have achieved 10 years service, followed by every 5 years served with the Trust after that. Staff who have reached one of these milestones during the year 1 April 2001 to 31 March 2002 will be invited to an award ceremony where either lunch or afternoon tea will be served, and there will be a chance to mingle with other long servers and managers.

Happy 25th Birthday Michael Sobell House

Michael Sobell House, the specialist palliative care unit at Mount Vernon Hospital, celebrated its 25th anniversary on February 14, 2002. Staff and friends attended a celebration tea party which included a special “cutting the birthday cake” ceremony. The star of the afternoon was Sovereign, a shire horse. Last year his owner, Robert Mackenzie, travelled along the Grand Union Canal from Rickmansworth to Milton Keynes in a longboat drawn by Sovereign. En route they collected a magnificent £366 for the benefit of Michael Sobell House.
The Trust Board is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation ensuring quality of care and that financial targets are achieved. Membership of the board includes the chairwoman, chief executive, seven executive directors and five non-executive directors. The role of the non-executive directors is to provide a local voice and external expertise in helping to shape healthcare for the local community.

Barbara Saunders OBE
Non-Executive Director
Barbara was a non-executive director with the St Albans and Hemel Hempstead NHS Trust for six years. She works as a consumer consultant regulating general insurance providers, architects and solicitors, advising on food policy and standards. Until January 2001 Barbara was Chair of the Financial Services Consumer Panel. Her passions for tennis and rugby compete with her daughter’s horse riding and support for Watford’s football team.

Ritu Chabra
Non-Executive Director
Ritu manages the Multi Racial Community Centre in Watford and is a member of the executive team of the Racial Equality Council, the Council for Voluntary Services and is also a Governor at Westfield Community School. Ritu has ten years management experience in the hotel industry and is also a trained beautician and aromatherapist.

Rosie Sanderson
Chairwoman
Rosie was Chairwoman of Hertfordshire Social Services before her two and a half years as Chairwoman of the St Albans and Hemel Hempstead NHS Trust, which led to her current job at West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust. She is a County Councillor and a company secretary for an IT business where she used to be a consultant. She is also a Governor of two schools and the Chair of a local charity, which provides a drop in centre and health information for young people. Rosie has two teenage children aged 16 and 12 and in her spare time enjoys gardening on her allotment and walking.

Val Harrison
Chief Executive
Val joined the Trust in October 2001 from Eastern Regional Office, where she was Director of Performance and Development. Val joined the NHS in 1979 and has since worked in a variety of roles including Chief Executive of South Bedfordshire NHS Trust and Director of Planning and Information at Islington Health Authority.

Neil Mrshall
Non-Executive Director
Neil joined the Trust from the Mount Vernon and Watford Hospitals NHS Trust. He is now retired after more than 40 Years in the financial sector. He is Chair of the Audit Committee, of the Charitable Funds Committee and of the Facilities Management Group who oversee the Medirest contract. He is married with two daughters and two grandchildren, one of whom was born recently at Watford General.

Said Namdarkhan
Non-Executive Director
Said was born in Mauritius and moved to the UK in 1961 where, he began his career in nursing, in Colchester, eventually taking on a management role. He joined the Trust board from the St Albans and Hemel Hempstead NHS Trust where he was a non-executive director for over one year. Said enjoys gardening, harvests his own organic produce and is an avid supporter of Manchester United.
Robin Douglas  
Non-Executive Director  
Robin was a fellow of the King’s Fund, he is now a director of the Office for Public Management, an independent development organisation specialising in public services. He is currently Chair of both the National Health Advisory Service and Who Cares? a charity providing support for children in care. His wife is a consultant psychologist and worked at Great Ormond Street Hospital for over 20 years. Away from work he tries to convince his two daughters of the joys of messing about on a narrow boat.

Gillian Hooper  
Director of Nursing/Deputy Chief Executive  
Gillian has been in the NHS for 26 years. She qualified at the London Hospital, specialising in critical care, prior to taking on a range of management roles. She became Associate Director of Corporate Affairs at West Hertfordshire Health Authority and spent five years as Director of Nursing and Quality at North Devon Healthcare, an integrated acute/community Trust. She’s now glad to be back in Hertfordshire where she enjoys spending time with her friends and family.

David Law  
Director of Strategic Planning  
David has been in West Hertfordshire since 1998, previously having a joint planning role covering acute and community services. He has been in the NHS for 17 years and has spent most of his career in London, where he still lives. He has recently been able to renew his interest in art, books and theatre now that his two young children are a little older. Time with the family is important outside work and provides a welcome focus for attention.

Howard Borkett-Jones  
Medical Director  
Howard was previously the Medical Director for Mount Vernon & Watford NHS Trust and has been a consultant (for 12 years) at Watford in A&E. He still retains an interest in that area, particularly in teaching and in the minor injuries unit at Mount Vernon. His wife is a GP and they have two daughters at Watford Girls Grammar School.

Ken Sharp  
Acting Director of Finance  
Ken Sharp is acting as Director of Finance pending a permanent appointment to the post. No stranger to the NHS he has 20 years experience of NHS boards from both Trust and Health Authority perspectives. Since 1996 he has been a partner in Blackett Sharp Associates providing a wide range of health consultancy and interim management support. He is keen to improve management processes and information to support clinical services, and would love to see less time and energy needing to be spent on managing financial deficit.

Ann Donkin  
Director of Modernisation  
Ann joined the NHS in 1974 has held a variety of roles in London and Eastern Region. She gained an MBA with distinction from Leeds University in 1997 and studied organisational learning at Harvard/MIT in 1999. A founding council member of the Society of Organisational Learning (UK) which has global links with public and private sector corporations, Ann is also a member of the Institute of Directors and a founding member of the Lincolnshire TEC Business Women’s Link.

Rob Allan  
Director of Human Resources, (from June 2002)  
Rob began his career in the NHS in 1979 when he joined Suffolk Area Health Authority. He has been a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development since 1992 and is currently Executive Director with responsibility for Human Resources and Support Services at the Thameside & Glossop Acute services NHS Trust.

Nigel Coomber  
Director of Operations  
Nigel joined the NHS is 1989, as an NHS Management Trainee. He has had a range of general management roles in acute hospitals in Newcastle and Kings Lyn. Most recently he was a Service Improvement Manager, working for the Modernisation Agency. In his spare time Nigel likes to relax with a glass of good wine and is an avid Cambridge United supporter.
trust passes CNST level 1 with flying colours

The Trust has recently undergone its CNST (Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts) assessment and has passed at Level 1.

The Trust scored 100% in eight out of nine of the standards and the assessors plan to use some of our work as an example of good practice. The Trust will now be eligible to work towards Level 2. This is an outstanding achievement for the Trust and the culmination of the exceptional teamwork and productivity of all those involved in working towards the individual standards. Congratulations to everyone who played a part in working towards this assessment. Their commitment and hard work are very much appreciated, and have paid great dividends in improving the quality and standard of patient care, putting the Trust in great stead with the Commission for Health Improvement review fast approaching.

Lynda Jackson Macmillan centre grows

Val Harrison, Chief Executive, West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust; Amanda Bringans, Macmillan Cancer Relief; Avril Goodwin, patient and fundraiser.

Work has started on an extension to the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre at Mount Vernon Hospital to provide the Centre with much needed extra rooms and space. The £150,000 extension is being funded by Macmillan Cancer Relief and will help more people living with cancer.

Rosemary Lucay, Clinical Support Co-ordinator at the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre said: “When the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre started its work in 1993, the importance of emotional support, information and complementary therapies as part of caring for people with cancer was not as widely recognised as it is now. The excellent work at the Centre has helped demonstrate what a huge difference these services can make to a patient’s quality of life and their sense of well-being.”

The specialist centre for information, support and complementary therapies was set up in 1993 with funds from the Lynda Jackson Appeal, Macmillan Cancer Relief and the fundraising efforts of many supporters. Over the last nine years it has helped thousands of people with cancer and their families.

Temporary transfer goes ahead without a hitch

The Special Care Baby Unit and inpatient obstetrics and gynaecology services transferred smoothly from Hemel Hempstead to Watford on April 29, thanks to the hard work of staff involved.

The Chairman of the new Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority has, at the request of Lord Hunt, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Health, convened a taskforce which is working to restore appropriate maternity services at Hemel Hempstead Hospital as rapidly as possible. Membership of the taskforce includes senior representatives of local trusts and PCTs and midwifery and GP representatives. The taskforce is working on the establishment of a low-risk, midwifery-led unit in the autumn as a step towards returning these services to Hemel.

For further information contact Susan Fay on x7707.

CHI Review - update

The West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust is participating in an NHS programme that examines progress and good practice of clinical governance structures and processes by the Commission for Health Improvement (CHI).

All Trusts - primary care, ambulance and acute - take part in the CHI Clinical Governance Review (CHI Review). Its focus is on key components that make up clinical governance - patient information and involvement, clinical risk, IM&T, etc. The CHI Review recognises that each aspect is vital in its own right as well as supporting the development of the other components.

The Review officially began in the Trust in February and culminates in July with a CHI Team visit to two or more hospital sites. The Trust is currently compiling documents, information and data for the CHI Reviews. The Review Team will comprise a lead CHI Reviewer, a data analyst and professional colleagues from other NHS Trusts. The non-CHI part of the team usually includes a dental worker, nurse or midwife and manager, and on occasions a lay member.

Trusts that have already completed the Review process have found it helpful as it provided an independent and fair appraisal of what worked well and where their services needed support or attention. The process is also an opportunity for the Trust to review its own performance against the CHI Requirements. The information gathering process - the first ten weeks - shows up where working practices or data collection are Trust-wide or applied differently at departmental levels or not at all.

The CHI Review provides an external analysis of Trust practices and procedures but it is the preparative work where staff look hard and extensively at internal and departmental systems that will benefit.

A set of posters and an information pack on CHI are available and newsletters are being issued regularly.

For more information or to obtain copies of the regular newsletter, please contact Veronika Segall, Watford General Hospital, x7960, email: Veronika.Segall@whht.nhs.uk.
Focus on recruitment

Recruitment has become one of the biggest issues in the NHS and nowhere more so than in the Home Counties.

The Trust decided that its normal recruitment routines of advertising in the trade press, word of mouth and open days were not producing enough candidates. For three days in March we went “mobile” and took the recruitment bus to local supermarket sites at Jarman Park (Hemel Hempstead), London Colney and Watford. The weather was less than hospitable on the Thursday and Friday, but the sun shone on the Saturday. During the three days, 157 potential candidates expressed an interest in joining the Trust. These were mostly non-qualified healthcare assistants and administrative candidates, but during the three days some qualified clinical staff expressed an interest, including a dentist.

James Moore, Recruitment Manager and Sean Mallon, Nursing and Midwifery Recruitment and Development Manager would like to thank all the members of the team who helped over the three days, especially those that have since developed mild hypothermia from the weather.

Mount Vernon Cancer Centre held a “recruitment” day at the Harlequin Centre in Watford on Saturday April 13, which proved to be a success.

Sarah Payne, Clinical Nurse Manager/Modern Matron, Mount Vernon said: “I would like to thank all the staff that helped with the recruitment day for their enthusiasm and tireless energy. We had a number of enquiries from people who were interested in working at Mount Vernon, including 15 responses for healthcare assistants and ten responses for radiotherapy helpers which made all the hard work worthwhile.”

The first pan-Herts recruitment fair in Hemel Hempstead, sponsored by the Hemel Hempstead Gazette, was very successful and gave all the Trusts in Hertfordshire an opportunity to promote their services and job opportunities.

Trust receives disability award

The Trust’s commitment to employing disabled people was officially recognised when we received the prestigious Disability Symbol award in London on Friday 8 March.

The symbol is a nationally recognised award, which helps organisations inform the people they employ and other disabled people who might be interested in working for them, that they have a positive approach to people with disabilities in employment.

The Disability Symbol identifies that the holder has turned five commitments into action. These commitments are:

- To interview all job applicants with disabilities who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on merit.
- To ensure that there is a mechanism in place to discuss with employees with a disability at least once a year what can be done to ensure they can develop and use their abilities at work.
- To make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment.
- To take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness to make these commitments work.
- To review these commitments and what has been achieved each year and plan ways to improve them, and to inform all employees about progress and future plans.

Claire Dawson, Human Resources Advisor said: “Being awarded the two ticks symbol strengthens the Trust’s ongoing commitment to valuing the skills and abilities of disabled employees. It demonstrates that the Trust recognises the need to eliminate the barriers faced by disabled people in employment wherever possible, so that they have the same opportunities for career development and achievement as their non-disabled colleagues.”

Congratulations

to Rachel Cullen and Kim Sheraton on successfully completing the conversion course and gaining a diploma in nursing studies.

Dawn Bailey, Senior Sister, Day Surgery, Watford said: “We are very proud of all their hard work and achievement; we knew they could do it. Everyone from the unit wishes them well.”
Pharmacists take new approach

Rekha Shah, Lead Pharmacist, Surgical Services presented a paper on ‘a practical approach to medicines management of elective surgical patients’ at a recent national Hospital Pharmacists’ Conference.

The programme, which has been developed with this Trust, enables pharmacists to be more involved with elective surgery patient’s medication from pre-admission to discharge. Patients are advised to bring all their medicines, including over the counter and herbal preparations, to the pre-admission clinics where the pharmacist takes a comprehensive drugs history and advises on any changes to medication, if required, before and after surgery. Allergies and intolerances are fully documented, pharmaceutical problems are highlighted and the GP contacted if there are any queries.

Rekha said: “It really helps the patients to talk through their medication with the pharmacist at the pre-admission clinic where we can advise them on their medication. Many other hospital trusts have expressed interest in our programme. Delegates at the recent conference suggested it should be used as a national standard for pharmacy services to surgery.”

Letters to editor

We are very keen to hear your views.
Send in your comments or letters for the next edition to:
Eileen Whitehouse
Press Officer
Communications Department
Trust Offices, H Block
Watford General Hospital
Vicarage Road
Watford, Herts
WD18 0HB

Calling all football enthusiasts

Would you like to own a unique piece of soccer memorabilia and help the CT scanner appeal at Hemel Hempstead? You can by taking part in the postal auction for a superb “one-off” album of signed colour photographs of soccer managers and soccer heroes. Amongst the 30 signed photos are football legends like Hoddle, Wenger, Robinson, O’Leary, Ranieri, Souness, Tigania, Keegan, Vialli, Kinnear and Martin O’Neill of Celtic and Alex McLeigh of Rangers. Luton fans can bid for a signed Luton F.C. shirt donated by the club to help raise funds for the appeal.

Send your bids for the album or shirt, in a sealed envelope, to arrive by Friday July 12, 2002 to: Pat Schofield, Voluntary Services Department, Hemel Hempstead Hospital. The highest bid for both items will be accepted.

ON THE PULSE  The next issue of On the Pulse will be published in September.
Copy for the next issue, marked On the Pulse, should be sent to the Communications Department; alternatively telephone Eileen Whitehouse on 01923 217818 or email eileen.whitehouse@whht.nhs.uk