

Newsletter Issue 28  
January 2010

**News and views from  
St Albans,  
Hemel Hempstead  
and Watford Hospitals**

# on the **pulse**

**Newsletter Winter 2010**



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# Didn't we do well in 2009

**Throughout 2009 staff in the Trust constantly reviewed services and made great strides to improve the way we do things. This resulted in the Trust being recognised both locally and nationally.**



- The Care Quality Commission's Annual Health Check recognised significant improvements in the Trust's overall performance compared to previous years and awarded the Trust a rating of 'Fair' for the quality of its services and 'Good' for the use of its resources;
- The Trust was 'highly commended' in the prestigious Health Service Journal awards under the Acute Healthcare Organisation of the Year category. The Trust was also short-listed in two other categories, Using Data to Improve Care and Workforce Development;
- The design and construction of the Acute Admissions Unit won two prestigious building industry awards for its groundbreaking healthcare project;
- Four midwives from the Maternity Unit at Watford were nominated for the Mama's and Papa's Midwife of the Year 2009 Award, the only publicly voted midwifery award;
- An independent survey of hospitals published by Dr Foster in November 2009 awarded the Trust a band 4 rating for patient safety, with a 5 being the highest rating overall;
- Dr Val Page, Consultant Anaesthetist was awarded a prize by the European Delirium Association and she also won first prize at the West Herts and Watford Medical Society for her work around delirium;
- Dr Tammy Angel and Specialist Nurse Anne Carroll won acclaim from the Bupa Foundation for their work in decreasing the number of unnecessary catheterisations (*more on page 3*)

**..... and we're still working hard to continue to improve our services. Here are another two areas that have recently made some significant improvements.**

## Re-engineering Pharmacy Services



**Pharmacy Services have undergone some major changes over the past year, to significantly improve the services they provide, see below:**

- The Pharmacy Service centralised to the second floor of the new Acute Admissions Unit (AAU) at Watford in early 2009. The centralised department includes a new production unit, store and dispensary that incorporates a state-of-the art robotic dispensing system. The service has also extended its opening times to seven days a week;
- A new fast-track bleep system has been introduced for the AAU, which has helped to significantly reduce the time that patients wait for their medications when they are discharged from the hospital. The Pharmacy Service also has plans to reduce waiting times for other areas by managing a "first in, first out" dispensary system;
- A new pharmacy prescription tracker has been developed and introduced which enables ward staff to check via the intranet when prescriptions are completed. This has greatly reduced time wasting phone calls to the Pharmacy Department to enquire if a prescription is ready. The tracker also helps the dispensary to monitor and streamline the workflow;
- A Patient Medication Helpline was introduced in 2009 to answer any patients' queries about the medications they were prescribed when they were in hospital.

## Improving the Discharge Lounge

The Discharge Lounge at Watford General Hospital is an area where patients who have been discharged medically from a ward can go to wait for their transport home or their medications to be dispensed from Pharmacy.



**Patient feedback highlighted the two following issues that could be improved:**

1. On leaving the ward, patients were not expecting to wait for up to three to four hours in the discharge lounge, which was causing frustration for many of them
2. The lounge was new and purpose built, but offered little in the way of entertainment or distraction to while away the time; the television reception was poor quality and there was little reading material available

**A number of changes were made which cost very little, but made a big difference to the patients. The key changes included:**

- Daily newspapers and weekly magazines made available by the League of Friends for patients and relatives waiting in the lounge
- Improvements in the quality of the television reception by connecting an external aerial
- Display of posters for patients in the lounge giving clear information about the lounge and the length of time they could expect to wait
- Working closely with Pharmacy and the patient transport provider to reduce the waiting times
- Development of a discharge lounge information booklet given to patients before they leave the ward, explaining the process and the time they may have to wait in the lounge
- Involvement of volunteers to support patients in the lounge.

## Passport to Practice

From early 2010 staff have access to a new website which aims to bring together all aspects of staff development from induction to the senior leaders programme run by the Leadership Academy. This new site is called 'Passport to Practice'. As staff and managers become familiar with the concept it is hoped that this gateway to development materials and information will become an invaluable resource. Look out for more information on this over the next few months.

## Foundation Trust Update



The Trust is progressing well with its application to become a Foundation Trust (FT) and remains on track to be authorised around the spring of 2010. Many of you will have met with the FT team over the last few months as part of the drive to increase awareness of the FT process and to discuss your role in helping the Trust succeed in its application. There will be a formal launch of an FT Competency Framework for staff in early 2010, but until then....the three "**M's**" you need to know about are below:

**Money:** It is essential that you stay within your budgets and deliver your cost improvement programmes. Although the financial climate will be challenging over the next couple of years, the Trust has prudent plans in place to ensure that it increases productivity and, more importantly, continues to provide a safe and secure service to patients.

**Monitor:** Monitor, the independent regulator for FTs, will be coming to assess the Trust in 2010 and may talk to any one of you. The Competency Framework awareness sessions will provide you with an excellent platform of understanding, so please make every effort to attend.

**Membership:** The Trust already has over 8000 members (Public and Staff). Monitor will expect the Trust to continue to grow the membership from this point, so you have a vital part to play. For example, you can stand for one of the five staff governor posts and you can recruit your friends, family and neighbours to ensure that the membership is a true representation of the community we serve. *Can't wait?...*

*Need to know more?... Contact the FT Team on WGH 8280 or email [kelly.hickman@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:kelly.hickman@whht.nhs.uk)*

## Plans continue for the new hospital at Watford

Despite the credit crunch, the plans for the development of a new hospital at Watford are continuing. Two approaches are currently being considered, the original plan to develop the hospital as one building and a new approach to build it in three or four phases. This new approach would mean more flexibility and reduce the risk, as it would mean the Trust would not have to find all the money at one time.



If a phased approach were agreed as the preferred option, a multi-storey car park would be the first thing to be erected in the area close to Willow Lane and a heat and power plant would be installed, which would be more efficient and environmentally friendly. It is possible that both these could be established at no cost to the Trust.

The next phase would likely be the clearance of the current car park in order to build a new Maternity and Paediatric block. This would allow the area currently used by the Maternity and Paediatric service to be sold off to finance the remainder of the development.

A new main block would probably be next on the building schedule. The Acute Admissions Unit would stay in use and could be linked to a new A&E department.

The Trust's relationship with its other partners in the Watford Health Campus, including Watford Borough Council, Watford Football Club and other NHS Trusts, remains strong. This partnership working means that the plans for a new link road from the M1 are still a real possibility. Also the prospects have improved for the Croxley Rail link, which could be in place by 2014.

This is obviously very good news for the Trust as a new hospital at Watford would mean better care and surroundings for our patients, as well as being more economical and sustainable to run.

## Winning Medical Research Charity Award



Anne Carroll, Specialist Continence Nurse and Dr Tammy Angel won acclaim recently from leading medical research charity, Bupa Foundation, for their work to improve hospital care for older patients and cut the spread of MRSA, by decreasing the number of unnecessary catheterisations. They were presented with their award at a ceremony held in London on 19 November.

Anne and Tammy established the Trust's Continence Service three years ago and have been working to improve care for patients since then. Their excellent work has been recognised in the past with the team being awarded second place in the 2007 Hospital Doctor Awards and with Anne being a finalist in the continence care category of the 2008 Nursing Standard Nurse Awards.

Since establishing the service Anne and Tammy were becoming increasingly concerned that catheters were often inserted unnecessarily and noted that they tended to be associated with higher rates of infection and longer hospital stays, especially in the elderly. Together, they developed a business case for the purchase and use of bladder scanners to accurately measure bladder volume and assess whether a catheter was needed, or if less invasive measures could be used. They developed a care package, including extensive staff training and protocols for care to reduce the number of inappropriate catheterisations and more accurately identify those patients who would benefit from one. This resulted in a reduction in the number of inappropriate catheterisations and associated urinary tract infections, with related savings of over £100,000. Anne and Tammy received £15,000 from the Bupa Foundation to support their continued improvement of the catheter service at the Trust.

# What's happening on your site – Hemel Hempstead Hospital



## Contact us...

If you work at Hemel Hempstead and have any news you would like included in the next edition of this magazine, please email [jean.hickman@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:jean.hickman@whht.nhs.uk) or ring the Communications Department on WGH 8280.

## Hemel Hempstead Open Day

The new state-of-the-art Outpatients Department at Hemel Hempstead Hospital hosted an Open Day on Friday 11 December. In the morning, over fifty-five children aged 10-11 years from two local primary schools, Micklem and Gade Valley visited the hospital to see first hand how things work and to learn about different departments. The children enjoyed demonstrations and exhibitions, which fitted in with the school curriculum, such as demonstrations by Pathology and Audiology and finding out what happens in the Urgent Care Centre.

In the afternoon, the Trust's Chairman, Professor Thomas Hanahoe officially opened the new Outpatient Department and local people were invited to see around the new Outpatient Department, as well as have a tour of other newly refurbished areas and to talk to staff.

## What our patients say about us

The Trust regularly receives thank you letters from happy patients and relatives. Below is an extract from a letter received from a patient who was recently treated in the Urgent Care Centre.

*"I am writing to express my thanks for the excellent treatment I received at the Urgent Care Centre. The Nurse Practitioner who saw me was wonderful. She was efficient, comforting and caring and a great example of a member of staff prepared to go the extra mile. I also found the reception staff very helpful."*

*I felt genuinely looked after. It was good to experience how great the NHS can be when you need it"*

**Well done to the Urgent Care Centre**



## Events diary: Hemel Hempstead

### 19 January 9.30am - 12pm

Drop in session on VirtualGym; New online exercise sessions for staff (more info on page 9). Training and Education Centre  
(No booking necessary)

A diet and exercise class has recently run on the Hemel site which has proved highly successful. The class combined two sessions with a dietician with five sessions in the gym. If you should be interested in a further course, please contact Barbara Leon-Hunt on WGH 7356.

### 12 May 9.30am - 4pm

Pre-Retirement Planning course  
Training and Education Centre

### 2 November 9.30am - 12pm

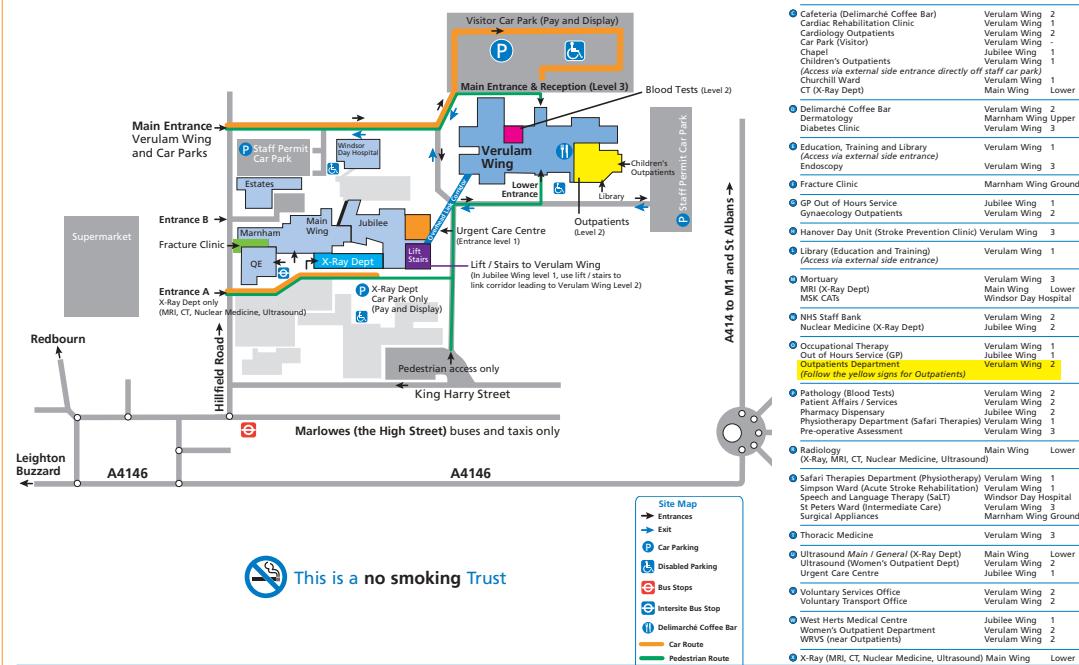
Mid-Term Planning course  
Training and Education Centre

*See staff support on pages 8 and 9 for more details and how to book on to these events*

## New map of the Hemel Hempstead site

A new map of the Hemel Hempstead site is now available. You can either download this from the Trust website and intranet site or contact the Communications Department on WGH x8280 to request a copy.

## Hemel Hempstead Hospital



## What's happening on your site – St Albans City Hospital

### Events diary: St Albans

#### 19 January 1pm - 4pm

Drop in session on VirtualGym; New online exercise sessions for staff (more info on page 9).  
Training and Education Centre  
(No booking necessary)

#### 3 March 1.45pm - 4.45pm

Mid-Term Planning course

#### 7 September 9.30am - 4pm

Pre-Retirement Planning course

See staff support on pages 8 and 9 for more details and how to book on to these events

### Staff at St Albans collecting for charity

Well done to Chris Dawes, Susan Kiely and Christine Blackwell in surgery who baked cakes and sold hand made cards and raised a total of £175 for Children in Need.



### What our patients say about us

The Trust regularly receives thank you letters from happy patients and relatives. Below is an extract from a letter received from a patient who was recently treated in the Minor Injuries Unit.

*"I visited St Albans Hospital with an arm injury following a motorcycle accident. I would like to record my thanks to all the staff who were absolutely fantastic, but in particular the receptionist on duty who was most pleasant and helpful. The lady concerned is a credit to your organisation."*

Well done to the Minor Injuries Unit

### Contact us...

If you work at St Albans and have any news you would like included in the next edition of this magazine, please email [jean.hickman@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:jean.hickman@whht.nhs.uk) or ring the Communications Department on WGH 8280.



### New state-of-the-art digital mammogram comes to St Albans

The Trust can now offer breast care patients the benefit of a new state-of-the-art digital mammogram. St Albans is one of the first hospitals in the East of England to use this new technology. This machine allows radiographers to detect smaller and subtler abnormalities in the breast tissue more easily and really reduces the time taken when having a mammogram. One huge benefit with this machine is the reduction in the need to recall patients for additional views. The Mayoress of St Albans City and District Council, Marion Oxley kindly agreed to officially open the new service in November last year.



## What's happening on your site – Watford General Hospital



### Contact us...

If you work at Watford and have any news you would like included in the next edition of this magazine, please email [jean.hickman@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:jean.hickman@whht.nhs.uk) or ring the Communications Department on WGH 8280.

## New Cancer Information and Support Centre Opens



### What our patients say about us

The Trust regularly receives thank you letters from happy patients and relatives. Below is an extract from a letter received from a patient who was recently on Cassio Ward.

*"While I was a patient on Cassio ward the nursing care was of a very high standard and the kindness was overwhelming. Without all these things my stay in hospital would have been a lot longer, so I thank you from the bottom of my heart."*

**Well done to Cassio Ward**

A Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service was officially opened by Claire Ward, MP on 14 December 2009.

This new service, run by Macmillan Patient Information Manager, Derryn Borley and supported by volunteers, is located in the newly refurbished main reception at Watford. It provides vital information and support for anyone living with cancer, their relatives and friends and gives free information and support in a relaxed and informal environment. Patients and their carers can also find out about available financial support, counselling, support groups and other local services. No appointment is necessary.

### Events diary: Watford

#### 18 January 9.30am - 2 pm

Drop in session on VirtualGym; New online exercise sessions for staff (more info on page 9).  
Terrace Meeting Room (No booking necessary)

#### 4 February 9.30am - 4pm

Pre-Retirement course

#### 3 March 9.30am - 12.30pm

Mid-Term Planning course

#### 24 March 12.30pm - 1.15pm

Lunch time talk by Migraine Action about the support provided for migraine sufferers.  
Medical Education Centre.

#### 14 April 12.30pm

Lunchtime talk by the Menopause Exchange offering information, help and support on the Menopause.

#### 2 November 9.30am - 12.30pm

Mid-Term Planning course

*See the staff support pages on 8 and 9 for more details and how to book on to the courses above*

### Something different in the Spice of Life

Medirest would like to say a big thank you to Trust staff who supported the Christmas lunch and also to let staff know that a new restaurant menu will be launched at Watford in late January. The new menu will include a wide variety of dishes, such as Balanced Choices, Zona Mexicana and Best of British, as well as a daily option from a "Why Pay More?" range. These meals will be produced using primarily fresh ingredients and priced at £2.50, so not only will they be great value for money, but nutritionally balanced as well.

## The King of the Jungle comes to Watford

Local celebrity chef, Gino D'Acampo who was the recent winner of the ITV programme I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here, came to Watford General in December to officially open a jungle mural. A local artist, Leigh Warman of Radlett, painted the fabulous jungle mural to brighten up the previously horrible, dark tunnel that runs between the Women's and Children's block and the Main block. This tunnel is used to take children from Starfish ward to the Radiology department and the main theatre.

After signing his name on the mural and cutting a ribbon, Gino handed out Christmas presents to excited patients on Starfish Ward and in the Children's Emergency Department. He chatted, joked and posed for photographs for over an hour with delighted patients, parents and staff. Gino's family live in the local area and his two boys were both born at Watford General and have used the hospital services on many occasions.



Work on the mural began in August when the walls were repaired and cleaned before the design with a madagascar theme which includes zebras, hippos, lions, penguins and giraffes was sketched out and painting began. It was completed in November and is loved by patients and staff alike.

Many thanks to Leigh Warman for giving up his time to paint the mural, as well as to Johnstone's Paint who donated the paint and to Michelle Davis who raised money to cover expenses.

## A big thank you !!!

A big round of applause for all those staff at Watford who have been doing their bit for charity over the past few months. Here are just a few examples:

### Staff get walking for charity

Congratulations to the Maxillo-Facial team at Watford who pulled on their walking shoes in September 2009 and raised money for mouth cancers. The team took part in the 4th Mouth Cancer Foundation 10k walk in Hyde Park in London and were part of a 900 strong team of people from all over the UK who took part in the walk to generate awareness and raise money for this worthwhile charity.



### Watford Nursery

The TLC Nursery at Watford General recently raised £117.20 for Children in Need and would like to thank all parents for their support. Donations were made when staff and many children came to the nursery in their pyjamas and all participants received a free recipe book.

The nursery currently has spaces available for children on Mondays and Fridays and if you should be interested, please call them direct on 01923 236801 to arrange a visit.

### What a great idea!

This Christmas the staff in the Microbiology Department found a great way of not only helping the environment, but also giving money to a good cause. Instead of giving Christmas cards to each other they collected the money they would normally have spent on buying Christmas cards and donated it to the Special Care Baby Unit at Watford. The team signed one large Christmas card to each other and raised a grand total of £76.

## Stress Busting

Did you know that stress is one of the main causes of employee sickness absence in the NHS and our Trust is no different? In fact, of the known reasons why staff are off work due to sickness, stress was the reason cited in 13% of cases in the last three months.

Some pressure and stress in a working environment is unavoidable and for many of us is a positive thing because it helps us feel challenged and stretched. However, the effect of too much stress can be damaging. The Trust has been looking at how to better support staff that find themselves in that position.

## So what's new?

**We want to promote a more open and responsive approach and the measures below will help to support individuals with stress related issues:**

**1)** Staff are encouraged to be as open as they feel they can about sharing any concerns they have regarding their work and any stress they are feeling as a result of their working environment

**2)** Once a manager knows one of their team is experiencing some degree of stress they must make time as soon as is reasonably practical to sit down with that person and discuss their concerns in confidence. The manager should give the member of their team time to talk through what is giving them concern and also discuss any realistic actions that can be taken to help reduce the feelings of stress and anxiety that the employee feels. This is a critical conversation and should be handled with sensitivity and compassion.

**Advice for managers is available in the Stress Policy which is available on the intranet:**

**3)** For staff who indicate that they are feeling stressed and that this is having an impact on their emotional and physical wellbeing, an early referral to the Occupational Health department should be made. This should be done using the normal management referral form. Please be assured that the input from Occupation Health is intended to be supportive and this is not about managing a member of staff's absence, but rather working to help them improve their wellbeing.

**4)** Once Occupational Health receive a referral they will contact the member of staff to arrange an appointment. The appointment will normally be with an Occupational Health Adviser who will talk through with the member of staff what their concerns are, what support has already been put in place by their manager and what the employee is doing to help alleviate their stress.

**5)** The Adviser will also be able to signpost the member of staff to other avenues of support, such as the Employee Assistance Programme, free counselling and possibly referral to appropriate policies and resources depending on the nature of their concerns.

**6)** Following the appointment, the Adviser will write to the manager and the appropriate HR Adviser with recommendations on what actions may be taken to support the member of staff at work.

## And looking to the future...

In 2010, the Trust will launch a new employee wellbeing intranet site with lots more information so keep an eye out for this exciting development!

## But that's not all...

The Trust also has other sources of support available for more stress busting! Our Employee Assistance Programme which includes free counselling and help and advice on all matters can be contacted on 0800 3281437 or visit the website [www.employeeassistance.org.uk](http://www.employeeassistance.org.uk). Staff support offers various classes, including yoga, pilates, diet and exercise; and the next Take a Break Day is on 13 April. Or perhaps you may be interested in attending the lunchtime talks in the Trust – previous topics have included parenting for teens, migraine and the menopause. There is a staff support guide available by clicking on 'Staff Support' in the 'Staff Area' of the intranet homepage.

Staff may also want to speak to someone in the Spiritual and Pastoral Care department. The primary telephone number for this is 01923 217994. In cases of harassment, staff may speak to Harassment Adviser – again contact details are available on the Staff Support pages of the intranet.

## Bikes for the NHS

Almost 50 people took advantage and bought bicycles when the Trust launched its Cycle to Work Scheme with Bikes for the NHS during September and October last year. The offer will be available again to staff between 1 March and 23 April 2010.

The scheme means that staff can take advantage of the opportunity to acquire a tax free bicycle to ride to work and aid in reducing congestion and environmental pollution, as part of the Trust's, and the government's Green Policy.

### You could:

- save up to 40% on Income Tax
- save up to 6% on National Insurance
- save up to 8.5% on NHS Pension contributions
- gain discounts compared to the High Street
- take advantage of no finance charges or credit checking
- set-up monthly payments direct through payroll

The Trust provides a bicycle and in return the member of staff agrees to a monthly reduction in their gross salary for the use of the bicycle during the 12 months loan period. At the end of the loan period, the member of staff is offered the option of either buying the bicycle for a nominal payment or returning it.

If you would like to find out more or would like to request a brochure pack to order a bike, please contact Bikes for the NHS on Tel: 0870 3606323 or by email: [bikes@smehci.com](mailto:bikes@smehci.com)

## VirtualGym



From January 2010, Trust staff will be able to access online exercise sessions by the UK's top instructors, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at a cost of only £8 for the year (this will be deducted from your salary). Sessions include dance, spinergy, step aerobics, circuit training, relaxations and much more. Unlimited access to the ever-growing classes is available at your convenience. So, whether you fancy losing weight, toning up or just exercising for fun, the service will accommodate your needs!

Getting started is easy. Just register at the <http://whht.virtualgym.tv>, where you will be required to enter the User ID: 'whht' and password: 'whht123'. A self-registration page will then appear requiring you to enter your personal details and unique staff number (found on your payslip).

To find out more, a drop-in session will be held on each site in January, please check out the 'What's Happening on Your Site' pages of this magazine.

## Childcare Vouchers have changed

### What does this mean for you?

In September 2008, Busy Bees Childcare Vouchers was acquired by Computershare, the world's largest share registry, and in October 2009, they officially rebranded to become Computershare Voucher Services.

With that in mind, we would like to inform you of some changes that might affect staff who currently use the voucher scheme service.

#### Existing Parents

- If you use paper vouchers, the process remains unchanged. You will see that additional information now appears on the Childcare Voucher – this is to help your carer reconcile payments. Simply hand your Childcare Voucher to your carer as before.
- If you currently have an online account you will notice that the screen images and navigation has changed. Below are the common questions parents ask about the layout of the new system:

#### *Where is my balance?*

You will find your balance on the e-Voucher Payments screen

#### *How do I make payment?*

This is also on the e-Voucher Payments screen, click on 'new auto pay' and then select 'one-off' or 'recurring payment'

#### *Auto Pay:*

This can only be set up for 12 months, then you must reinstate if needed

#### *Scheme details:*

You can now amend their order via the e-Voucher Payments screen

You can now manage your account completely online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, enabling you to add and remove carers, make multiple carer payments and pay carers direct online. It also gives you an online view of current and historic paper and e-Voucher orders.

If you are a parent using paper vouchers or Redeem Direct (Standing Carer Payment) and wish to switch to an online account, please visit [www.computersharevoucherservices](http://www.computersharevoucherservices) or call our Customer Service team who will be happy to help.

#### **Please note, the new number for Customer Services is 0845 002 1111.**

**New Parents:** To register online you will need to quote the West Herts Hospitals NHS Trust scheme ID, which is 0000008395 (please key all the zeros of the 10-digit number). You will also need a recent payslip to hand. If you don't have internet access you can call a Customer Service Representatives on 0845 002 1111.

## Benefits of Childcare Vouchers

All of the existing benefits of Childcare Vouchers remain the same; you can still save up to £1,196\* by exchanging up to £243 of your monthly salary for tax-free and National Insurance exempt Childcare Vouchers.

Childcare Vouchers can be used for children up to the age of 16 and can be used at any registered childcare setting including nurseries, nannies, childminders, au pairs, crèches, playgroups, out of school clubs, holiday schemes and some school-based activities.

To join the scheme visit [www.computersharevoucherservices](http://www.computersharevoucherservices) or call customer services representatives on 0845 002 1111.

\*Subject to individual circumstances

## Pennies from Heaven



Last year the Trust adopted the Pennies from Heaven scheme, which allows staff to donate the spare pennies from their salaries. For example, if your net pay were £100.34 then 34p would be donated to charity. Staff voted for the Herts Air Ambulance Service to be their chosen charity during 2009 and donated approximately £700 over the course of the year.

This year staff have voted to donate their pennies to Help for Heroes, the charity set up in October 2007 to support wounded servicemen and women returning from Afghanistan and Iraq.

Help for Heroes spends every penny possible on making grants that aim to provide practical, direct support for our wounded. Their current focus is to create a series of regional recovery houses to be built across the UK and serve as the last stage of rehabilitation before a serviceman, or woman, returns to their unit or transits back into civilian life. The current target for this is to raise £20 million by October 2010 and while the support has been amazing, there is still a way to go.

There are of course running costs but for their first year they managed to ensure that 98p from every £1 donated was available for grants and their aim is to keep operating at a similar level.

If you haven't signed up already to the Pennies from Heaven scheme, and would like to donate your pennies to this very worthy cause, application forms can be found on the home page of the intranet or alternatively call Barbara Leon-Hunt, Staff Support Co-ordinator on WGH 7356 for a hard copy. Further information on Help for Heroes can be found at [www.helpforheroes.org.uk](http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk)

## Planning Your Future

The Trust offers two types of course designed to help staff with planning for the future. Below is some information that may help with choosing which course is right for you.

### *Pre-retirement courses*

The pre-retirement course is for everyone approaching retirement and explains how to get the best advice and what it may cost. It explains in detail the NHS and State pensions, your entitlements and how to claim them; the pros and cons of equity release, different types of saving and investment and the potential risks involved. The course also covers why making a will is not enough to protect you and your family from inheritance tax and long term care costs.

### *Mid-Term Planning Courses*

The mid-term planning course covers NHS and State pensions but with more emphasis on longer term retirement planning. It briefly touches on equity release and also conventional mortgages, but covers income protection and life assurance in more detail beyond that available from the NHS scheme. It also looks at saving and investing for the longer term. Wills and estate planning are covered in-depth, as is Lasting Power of Attorney as applicable to younger people. Finally, how to get financial and legal advice, what it may cost, your rights and how to complain if things go wrong.

To find out when these courses are running on your site, please see the 'What's Happening on Your Site' pages of this magazine.

**To book places on any of the above courses, or a lunchtime talk, please call the Training Dept on WGH 7247 or 7964.**

## Roll of Honour 2009

### Exceptional Patient Care/Service Award

**Winner: Muruguppilla Velpillai, Associate Specialist A&E, Watford General Hospital**

- Day Surgery, St Albans City Hospital
- Pauline Wingate, Medical Secretary, Watford General Hospital
- Jackie Townsend, Healthcare Assistant, Watford General Hospital

### Unsung Hero of the Year

**Winner: Cheryl Atkins, Infection Control Support Worker, Watford General Hospital**

- Yvonne Pearcy, Antenatal Clinic Receptionist, Watford General Hospital
- Molly Thomas, Neonatal Nurse, Neonatal Unit, Watford General Hospital
- Lyndsay Slater, Equipment Administrator, Hemel Hempstead Hospital

### Volunteer of the Year

**Winner: Mary Gater, Pre-operative Assessment Clinic, Watford General Hospital**

- Sylvia Webb, Colposcopy Clinic, Hemel Hempstead Hospital
- Ted Lewis, Cassio Ward, Watford General Hospital
- Roy Bird, Endoscopy Clinic, Hemel Hempstead Hospital
- Ruth Bell, Antenatal Clinic, St Albans City Hospital

### Team of the Year

**Winners: Delivering Single Sex Accommodation Team, Trust Wide**

**And**

**Transition Coordination Team, Trust wide**

- Sarratt Ward, Watford General Hospital
- Simpson Ward, Hemel Hempstead Hospital

### Employee of the Year

**Winner: Jackie Dick, Sister, Langley Ward, Watford General Hospital**

- Val Wilders, Housekeeper, A&E, Watford General Hospital
- Carol Brazil, Healthcare Assistant, Antenatal Clinic, Watford General Hospital
- Claire Grogan, Sister, Urgent Care Centre, Hemel Hempstead Hospital



## An afternoon of celebration

The Trust once again held an award ceremony in December to thank and celebrate staff who were nominated in the Staff Awards for Excellence scheme during 2009 and also to recognise staff who had achieved long service with the Trust of between 15 to 40 years.

Over 120 members of staff and invited guests attended the award ceremony and enjoyed an afternoon of tea, cake and stories of dedication, professionalism and commitment.

Throughout 2009 hundreds of staff were nominated in the five award categories, many of them by patients with heart-warming stories to tell.

Following the award ceremony, Trust Chairman, Thomas Hanahoe said, *"It is such a pleasure to be able to recognise those staff who have shown years of dedication to the Trust and those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in helping our patients. Well done to everyone who received a long service award and also all those who were nominated for an award in 2009."*



## 2009 Monthly Awards



### July

#### Employee of the Month

**Claire Grogan, Senior Sister  
Urgent Care Centre  
Hemel Hempstead Hospital**

#### Team of the Month

**Katherine Ward  
Watford General Hospital**

### August

#### Employee of the Month

**Muruguppilla Vetpillai  
(known as Mr Vet)  
Associate Specialist, A&E  
Watford General Hospital**

#### Team of the Month

**Delivering Same Sex Accommodation  
Project Team  
Trust wide**

### September

#### Employee of the Month

**Paula Styles, Midwife  
Watford General Hospital**

#### Team of the Month

**Letchmore Ward  
Watford General Hospital**

### October

#### Employee of the Month

**Jean Hickman  
Head of Communications and  
Corporate Affairs  
Trust wide**

#### Team of the Month

**Outpatient Nurses  
Hemel Hempstead Hospital**

Congratulations and well done to all the staff and volunteers who were nominated throughout 2009 and please continue to send in your nominations.

The deadline for monthly nominations is 15 of each calendar month. To nominate please complete a nomination form available via the Trust website [www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk) or contact the Workforce Department on 01923 217388 to request a form.

## 60 second interview with Linda Loader, Clinical Nurse Specialist for Acute Pain

### **How long have you been with the Trust?**

I have been in my present post for 8 years, but have worked for the Trust for many years.



### **In one sentence describe your role in the Trust?**

I am the Lead Clinical Nurse Specialist for Acute Pain Management and the Lead Non-Medical Prescriber for the Trust.

### **What's your average day like?**

A mixture of clinical, educational, audit and research, but there is always something new to be learnt.

### **What's the best thing about your job?**

The satisfaction of helping patients manage the level of pain they are experiencing and being able to prescribe pain relief for them.

### **How do you see yourself developing over the next few years?**

By increasing and developing my skills relating to my present post and developing my management skills.

### **If you had three wishes what would they be?**

First of all, I would like to see all clinical staff reviewing their patients' pain management and treating it when needed.

Next off, I would like to see the new hospital built and lastly, I'd love more time to ride my motorbike.

## NHS Constitution consultation on new patient rights – Have your say!

A consultation, which runs until 5 February 2010, is seeking the views of patients, staff and the public on new patient rights. The right to treatment within a maximum of 18 weeks from a GP referral and the right to being seen by a cancer specialist within two weeks from a GP referral. Where this is not possible the NHS would have to take reasonable steps to offer alternative providers.

It is also suggesting a new right for NHS Health Checks for those aged 40 to 74 to assess their risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease

To have your say on this important debate on the future of the NHS click on the link on the homepage of the Trust website or contact the Communications Department who would be happy to send you a hard copy of the response document.

Next issue:  
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on the  
**pulse**

If you have any articles or information you would like to see in the next edition of this magazine, please contact the Communications Department on WGH 8280.

## Come and talk to us over a cup of tea

Are there aspects of the Trust that you think can be improved upon? Is there something you have always wanted to discuss with a member of the Executive Team, but never had an opportunity? Well here's your chance to air your views, influence and help us to make improvements.

If you can spare 5 - 10 minutes, pop along on any of the dates below and have a cup of tea and an informal chat with David McNeil, Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs and members of the Communications Team.

Some of the topics covered in earlier Open Door sessions include the problems with wayfinding signage, changes to the intersite bus timetable, and a number of Estates issues:

22 January	9.30am to 11.00am	Delimarchè Coffee Bar, Hemel Hempstead
16 February	2.00pm to 3.30pm	Spice of Life Restaurant, Watford
29 March	2.00pm to 3.30pm	Spice of Life Restaurant, St Albans
22 April	2.00pm to 3.30pm	Delimarchè Coffee Bar, Hemel Hempstead
19 May	11.00am to 12.30pm	Spice of Life Restaurant, Watford
25 June	9.30am to 11.00am	Spice of Life Restaurant, St Albans

