



## ANNUAL REVIEW 2016/17

the very best care for  
every patient, every day



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# Welcome to our annual review 2016/17

We are delighted to report that West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust has made huge improvements during 2016/17 in our quality of care and patient facilities.

**This review of the year covers the highlights and includes some great stories of individual and trust-wide achievements.**

**Thank you to all our staff, volunteers and partners for helping to achieve our vision – the very best care for every patient, every day.**

We are particularly proud that our waiting times for cancer treatment are shorter than the national average, that we have the highest rating possible for stroke services, and that our mortality rates continue to be lower than predicted.

Our Care Quality Commission ratings have improved and we have opened fantastic new facilities for endoscopy, cardiac screening and simulation training and we are delighted that we have been awarded £1m to expand our A&E facilities.

We also welcomed the opening of a new road, Thomas Sawyer Way, which provides improved access for ambulances to Watford General Hospital. It also represents a step towards the creation of Watford Riverwell, a major scheme which will include a trade park, green spaces, housing and a school – we are very pleased to be at the heart of this regeneration initiative.

Like every other health and social care organisation in the country, we are looking carefully at how best to meet people's changing needs within our budget. In partnership with the county council, other NHS and social care organisations, we are scoping how to deliver services to local communities with more complex health and care needs. Our shared aim is to provide services more

effectively to respond to these challenges and to make sure that local people receive the right care, at the right time and in the right place.

We have ambitious plans to redevelop our hospital sites and provide first class health facilities for all the patients we serve across our sites at Watford, St Albans and Hemel Hempstead. During this year we took a big step forward by submitting our strategic outline case (SOC) to NHS Improvement. Our SOC sets out our plans for new and improved hospital facilities. At the time of writing, we are awaiting approval from NHS Improvement.

We hope you find this review interesting and inspiring – if you would like to find out more or get involved in supporting our work, please see the back page for contact details.



**Professor Steve Barnett**  
Chairman




**Katie Fisher**  
Chief Executive



# West Herts Hospitals in numbers 2016/17

Over **500,000 people** are in our catchment area

**40,700** emergency patients admitted

**140,000** people attended our A&E, Urgent Care Centre and Minor Injuries Unit

**4,900 babies born** at Watford General Hospital

**460,000** attendances at outpatient departments

**46,900** planned (elective) operations



West Hertfordshire  
Hospitals  
NHS Trust

**99.9%** of our diagnoses were on time – better than the national average

**5,800** followers on Twitter

**87.7%** of cancer referrals were **on time** – better than the national average

**4,660** staff,  
**59** apprentices and  
**339** volunteers

**94%** of patients said they “would **recommend** our hospital”

We had the **third lowest** HSMR (Hospital Standardised Mortality Ratio) in the East of England

We made a record  
**£14.7m** savings



# Our vision

**Our vision is to provide the very best care for every patient, every day.**

**Our four strategic aims are to:**

- Deliver the best quality care for our patients
- Be a great place to work and learn
- Improve our finances
- Develop a strategy for the future.

## Highlights

### Cancer waiting times

We are meeting six of the seven cancer standards and are better than the national average in all. We have significantly improved on waiting times for breast cancer symptom appointments – 94.7% of these patients are now seen within two weeks.

### Bowel cancer screening

We achieved the highest performance in the region on a number of measures for bowel cancer screening. We are the only centre in the region to achieve 100% on providing diagnostic test results within 14 days.

### Stroke services

We are now consistently achieving AA star (the highest rating) for our stroke services and we are in the top 16% of trusts nationally.

### Cardiac imaging

A new MRI/CT scanner means we now offer both CT coronary angiography and cardiac MRI to enable definitive assessment of cardiomyopathy and structural heart disease. We are one of very few district general hospitals in England to offer both modalities of cardiac imaging which means our patients no longer need to travel to London.

### Mortality rate

Our impressive mortality rates remain 'lower than expected'. This is a very positive indicator of the importance we place on patient safety.

We are now being benchmarked against the Shelford group (the top 10 teaching trusts in England) which is a great sign of our progress. We have maintained our 'lower than expected' status for more than two years now.

# Continually improving our services

**Our mission is to provide excellent local services, integrated across care settings and delivered in partnership. Across the trust, there are many examples of excellent care so we can only feature a selection of them here.**

## Maternity care goes from strength to strength

During 2016/17 we decided to take action to improve the retention rate of our midwives to provide better continuity of care to mothers and babies. We reviewed the structure of our maternity services to create career opportunities and we developed new teams:

- **Phoenix team – specialises in care for women with low risk pregnancies**
- **Lavender team – looks after vulnerable women, especially focusing on mental health issues.**

To make best use of midwives' skills and time, we introduced a new associate nurse support role. Our maternity healthcare assistants are encouraged to apply for this role to improve career development opportunities.

A new rotational post of support risk midwife gives clinical midwives more insight into risk and governance and is intended to have a long term impact on clinical practice.

These changes have led to reduced spend on agency staff and a much better retention rate for midwives with even more improvements expected next year.

In recognition of their achievements, our maternity services have been shortlisted for a Health Service Journal award.

## Live from West Herts neonatal unit

Bonding with a newborn baby is universally understood to be important for mother and child. But sometimes medical needs make this much more difficult when mum and infant are being treated in different parts of the hospital.

Now, new mothers who need hospital treatment after giving birth can see their babies in the neonatal unit without leaving their beds, thanks to a little bit of technology and some clever thinking from staff.

The 'iSeeU' project is like Skype or FaceTime and uses a tablet to connect clinical areas, creating a link between mother and baby in those precious first few hours.

Rachel Coffey, a mother who used iSeeU, said: "This has been a very emotional experience for me. My baby had to be moved to the neonatal unit, but with the live screen, I was able to see him and be involved in his care as I could speak with the nurse and get updates."





# Everyone's a winner

## Patient safety

**We won the Patient Safety award in the 2016 NHS Innovation Competition organised by Heath Enterprise East, a leading NHS innovation hub.**

Our hip fracture team won the award for their project 'Living in comfort, cherishing life', which has "dramatically improved outcomes" for elderly patients following hip fracture surgery.

The team's innovative approach led to a dramatic reduction in mortality from 12% in 2012/13) to 3% in 2015/16. Patients

also experienced less delirium resulting in a reduction in one to one nursing and the use of antipsychotic agents. Patient, carer and staff satisfaction all improved.

Dr Latha Thangaraj, our lead for hip fracture said: "The passion and commitment of the team has enabled the trust to move on from being a statistical outlier for high mortality rate to statistical outlier for low mortality rate. The award of £2,500 will go towards improving care for the frailest of our frail patients."

## Our purple stars

**West Herts was awarded another two prestigious purple stars this year by Hertfordshire County Council. These awards recognise teams who adapt their settings and practice to meet the individual needs of patients with learning disabilities.**

## St Albans Day Surgery Unit

Helen Burnett, senior sister, Day Surgery Unit said:

"We've been working extremely hard to ensure that our services are accessible to all our patients and visitors. We have introduced better, bigger signage, user friendly, easy read information leaflets, a meet and greet named nurse, pre-op visits to the unit, plus much more. We celebrated with the Purple All Stars performing a dance routine and lots of purple cakes!"



## Vascular ultrasound team

Our vascular ultrasound staff completed training on making reasonable adjustments for people who visit the laboratory. They created better signage for their clinics and an easy read information leaflet. The team also gained a licence to use Makaton, a language programme that uses signs and symbols to help people to communicate.







# Paediatric team is the 'jewel in the crown'

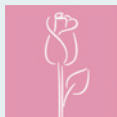
**Our paediatric team was described as the "jewel in the crown of paediatric education" following a visit by Health Education England (HEE).**

Dr Wilf Kelsall, head of School of Paediatrics, HEE East of England, said the learning at Watford was the "lynchpin of paediatric medicine in the East of England".

The inspection highlighted some great examples of good practice for trainees including having their voices clearly heard, being offered a range of developmental opportunities including management and getting involved in the creation of their rota.



## A matter of life and death



**We aim to give the very best professional and compassionate care to patients who are facing death.**

Our end of life strategy covers individualised care plans for the dying person as well as providing care and support for the friends and relatives of dying patients. We want to ensure that people are enabled to die comfortably in a place of their choice with their symptoms controlled and with dignity.

Liz Sumner, Macmillan palliative care team leader, says: "The very best care for every patient, every day is the trust's vision and we think it's doubly important that this applies to our dying patients. Our aim is to promote awareness of end of life care and to make the point that end of life care is everyone's responsibility."

The palliative care team regularly receives thanks and praise from relatives who have lost loved ones. For example, one card read: *"Thank you for all your help and expertise that you provided to my Gran, ensuring her end of life was peaceful and dignified. Words cannot truly express my gratitude for your kindness, compassion, thoughtfulness and advice. I left knowing your team gave my Gran the very best care possible at the end of her life."*

We created a rose symbol which we use to promote dignity and respect at the end of life. The rose is displayed on the wards when it is recognised that a patient may die within the next few hours or days, and also after the death of a person. It is an essential part of our commitment to promote dignity, respect and compassion at the end of life.

Joseph Mpoza  
healthcare assistant,  
Bluebell ward

Bluebell ward provides  
care to frail elderly  
patients with dementia  
who benefit from their  
own secure garden just  
next to the ward.

"I believe in showing compassion to  
patients, listening to them, involving them in  
decision-making, and respecting their dignity."



# Caring for frail patients

We have invested in a new integrated frailty service to provide comprehensive geriatric assessment to frail adults attending the hospital as an emergency. The service has improved the quality of care we provide to frail adults by better identification and awareness of people living with frailty, as well as early proactive assessment and management.

A multidisciplinary team comprising a frailty nurse specialist, physiotherapist, occupational therapist and social worker assess patients jointly and produce a comprehensive geriatric assessment. This includes the medical, psychological, and functional capabilities of the person and describes a coordinated and integrated plan for treatment and follow-up.

Our frailty team helps to reduce unnecessary hospital admissions by thoroughly assessing whether hospital admission is needed, rather than admitting people to hospital for an

assessment. Patients who would not benefit from hospital admission are provided with alternative support including care packages at home, transfer to a community bed or social respite care, or voluntary sector support.



# Bake Off star visits children

The winner of the 2015 Great British Bake Off, Nadiya Hussain, and the Starlight Children's Foundation (a wish granting charity) brought a ray of sunshine to our Starfish children's ward at Watford Hospital.

The Starlight Foundation launched a new in-house hospital service called Captain Starlight and chose Starfish ward to introduce it. The new initiative will help to improve and support children's stay in hospital through entertainment, arts and crafts and play.

Nadiya said: "As a child I spent a lot of time in hospital because my brother and sister were unwell. I've experienced first-hand how boring, and at times scary, growing up in a hospital can be. The in-hospital services that Starlight provides are game changers for sick children and their families. The Captain Starlight programme will help hospitalised children,

young people and their families by distracting them from their illness and pain by using entertainment and engagement."



# Fabulous facilities

## Endoscopy

Our endoscopy unit has doubled in capacity in recognition of the importance of early diagnosis and increased demand for bowel screening. Clinical lead for the bowel cancer screening programme Dr Bruce Macfarlane said: "This expansion and the full roll out of the bowel scope programme and the enhanced facilities for advanced therapeutic endoscopy will provide a great service for our local population."

## Cardiac Centre

The trust's new cardiac centre is staffed by an increased number of consultants and more than double the number of specialist nurses. It includes clinics for chest pain, arrhythmia, heart failure, elective diagnostics, echo cardiology and pacemakers. Nearchos Hadjiloizou, clinical lead for cardiology, said: "Our patients are benefitting from enhanced care on site thanks to the arrival of state-of-the-art cardiac scanning equipment."

## Simulation suite

Our new simulation suite replicates an acute care environment, providing realistic clinical training. Multi-disciplinary staff can take part in simulated scenarios, such as management of acutely unwell patients, and improve technical and communication skills. The suite includes a 'sim man' who can cry real tears and scream when in pain.

Suraj Kadiwar, a medical student, said: "Simulation is an amazing educational experience that provides a realistic and interactive setting to practise clinical skills."

## Discharge lounge

We have refurbished and improved our discharge lounge so that it is a more pleasant place for patients to wait once they are well enough to be discharged. Patients can watch TV, listen to the radio, or read books and magazines. We have also created two trolley spaces which means that patients who aren't able to sit can still benefit from leaving a busy ward and waiting in the lounge instead. Up to 50 patients pass through the lounge every day, making it an invaluable part of the hospital and freeing up beds for emergency patients.



**Sim man in action**

# Listening to our patients

## What you say about us

The Friends and Family Test is a quick and anonymous way for patients, their relatives and carers to give their views after receiving care or treatment. It helps us understand whether patients are happy with the service provided, or where improvements are needed. We are pleased to report that 94% of patients completing the test said that they would recommend our hospital.

We are also keen to get feedback via NHS Choices, Twitter or PALS.

## Patient advice and liaison

Our Patient Advice and Liaison service (PALS) is a vital channel for feedback for patients, relatives and carers. PALS provides a

professional, friendly, sensitive service and tries, wherever possible, to offer on-the-spot support to help resolve any problems.

See back page for contact details.


## # hello my name is...

We continue to support the national # hello my name is... campaign to make sure all our staff introduce themselves properly to patients.

The campaign was created by Dr Kate Granger, a doctor who was diagnosed with terminal cancer. She was concerned by the number of staff who didn't introduce themselves to her when she was a patient. We promote this approach, reminding existing staff and promoting it to new joiners – it might seem like a small thing but it makes a big difference.





A portrait of a woman wearing a black hijab and glasses, smiling at the camera. The background is a collage of various images, including butterflies, a large orange flower, and a banner that partially reads "the gi".

Intisar Abdul-Kader,  
patient information  
and involvement  
coordinator

"Our information for patients and carers is available in a range of languages and formats to meet people's diverse needs. The Patients' Panel is a great source of feedback and helps us to keep improving."



## Patients' Panel

The Patients' Panel is a fundamental part of our trust. It is made up of a dedicated group of patients who help us deliver the very best experience during each and every patient's visit. The panel is not only instrumental in helping us to drive and improve patient experience, but also acts as the voice of patients. This means we are able to improve patient care by listening to the patients themselves.

Patient experience is formed by what we do, how we do it and how we deliver. The Patients' Panel helps us evaluate what we do, assess how we do it and informs how we deliver all aspects of patient care.

During 2016/17 the panel has contributed to the production of new and updated patient leaflets and the updated patient's bedside folder to ensure that it is user friendly and informative.

The panel supports the trust in our annual patient-led assessments of the care environment (PLACE) audits across the three hospital sites, in liaison with Healthwatch and other external organisations.

Panel members also contributed to developing the trust's Patient Experience and Carer Strategy: Communicate, listen, involve, along with other external stakeholders.

## Let me see you, let me hear you

Set up in January 2016, this panel has been very 'vocal' in its support of both patients and staff who have experience of blindness/sight impairment and/or are deaf/hard of hearing or deaf/blind.

The panel is chaired by an occupational therapy team member who experiences sensory and hearing difficulties and members represent the Herts Hearing Advisory Service, Disability Watford, audiology and ophthalmology departments, service users and trust staff.

The panel has highlighted the need to continually focus on the needs of people with sight and hearing impairments and has carried out an audit of hearing loops across the trust. Herts Hearing Advisory Services will be following this up with a training programme for reception staff to ensure that they know how to use and maintain the loops.



# Our plans

## Transforming our hospitals

We have exciting plans to redevelop our hospitals so that we can provide patient care from first class facilities. Over the next decade we hope to see Watford General Hospital transformed and major improvements to St Albans City Hospital, where we plan to provide more services, particularly surgery.

We are also considering what services can move off the Watford site and we will be developing some exciting options for our services in Hemel Hempstead. We are committed to providing a wide range of services in the town and we are working with GPs, our own clinicians, CCG colleagues and community representatives to scope these.



**Our buildings may look run-down but we have some great facilities inside, including new state-of-the-art cardiac scanning equipment.**



**In November 2016 we welcomed the opening of a new road, Thomas Sawyer Road, which makes it easier for ambulances to access Watford General Hospital.**

**It also represents a step towards the creation of Watford Riverwell, a major regeneration project. Left to right: Leigh Thomas from Kier construction company; Dorothy Thornhill, Watford Mayor and Katie Fisher, chief executive of West Herts Hospitals NHS Trust.**

We developed a comprehensive strategic outline case which sets out our ambition for new and redeveloped hospital buildings and the rationale for Watford remaining the location for emergency and specialised care. Ahead of new buildings for clinical care at Watford, there will be a much-needed new car park – removing the need to hike up the hill.

In the surrounding area, work continues on Watford Riverwell – previously known as Watford Health Campus. The clean-up of the River Colne and adjacent land is well under way as are plans for a trade park, shops, green spaces, housing and a school. We are pleased to be part of this major regeneration scheme.

Our plans have been submitted for review by national NHS bodies and we are awaiting their response.

The next stage will be a very detailed business case and design for our new and improved hospital facilities. We are looking forward to seeing this major project get off the ground.

## Our hospital sites at a glance



**Watford General Hospital**



**St Albans City Hospital**



**Hemel Hempstead Hospital**

## Reviewing health and social care services together

We are continuing to work alongside health and social care partners in West Hertfordshire as part of *Your Care, Your Future*, a system-wide review of services. The review is designed to transform the way we jointly deliver services to meet people's changing needs and to live within our financial means.

In west Hertfordshire local services are catering for a changing population with more complex health and care needs. *Your Care, Your Future* looks at how health and social care services can be provided more effectively in the future to respond to these challenges and make sure that local people receive the right care, at the right time and in the right place.

At the same time, health and care organisations across England must now produce a sustainability and transformation partnership (STP). These plans, covering large geographic areas, show how local services across each area will evolve and become sustainable over the next five years to deliver better health, better patient care and make health and care services affordable for years to come.

The *Your Care, Your Future* plans feed into the sustainability and transformation partnership plan for Hertfordshire and west Essex, called *A Healthier Future*. This sets out the challenges and opportunities facing NHS and care services and outlines action to improve health and care in the area. Key areas of focus are: helping people to live healthier lives and avoid preventable illnesses; providing more health and care services at home or in local communities so that people only go to hospital for specialist and emergency treatments; and making services more efficient by improving the way that health and care services work together.



Antonio de Martino, staff nurse,  
and Ann Rouse, junior sister  
emergency department



*Antonio*

"We see people in life-changing and life-threatening situations. Every single day we do our very best for our patients"



# Our people

## Clinical leadership

We are committed to achieving consistently great outcomes for patients – we focus on embedding strong and safe systems and we review practice robustly to make sure we keep learning and improving.

Senior clinicians attend executive and board meetings to keep clinical excellence at the heart of everything we do and we regularly survey junior doctors and consultants to get their feedback on further areas for improvement. We have been very successful in engaging clinicians and this is clear from our very low consultant vacancies – to the point where they are the envy of other trusts.

Our commitment to patient safety is evident in our impressive mortality rates, our halving of post-hip fracture surgery deaths and a swift rise in stroke service ratings. These results are changing patients' lives and making staff feel proud to work here.

Michael van der Watt, medical director comments: "The trust punches above its weight as a district general hospital – we have facilities and ambitions beyond our size and a clinical workforce that believes it is right to question the status quo in the pursuit of excellence for our patients."

## Nursing workforce of the future

Our healthcare support workers can now train as nursing associates – a new bridging role designed to support staff to become regulated nurses. As one of 24 pilot sites, we are among the first in the country to launch the training programme. The University of Hertfordshire delivers the curriculum and organises placements in acute, community, mental health and care settings.

Chief nurse Tracey Carter said: "It's an exciting time for us as we're helping to develop the workforce of the future and providing career options for our healthcare support workers."



## International recruitment

We have continued to recruit very successfully from across Europe, India and the Philippines.

Lucian Miron, a 24 year old from Romania's capital city Bucharest, is working with acutely ill patients on Croxley Ward at Watford Hospital and says he loves his job. He added: "All the staff here are friendly and co-operative. They are good people here and I want to continue my career here at the hospital."

## Engaged staff

In 2016/17 our overall staff engagement score in the national staff survey improved for the third year running. We are now in the top third of UK trusts for staff engagement and we are determined to do even better next year!

## A lifetime of service and more new starters

Our staff are exceptionally dedicated and this year five people received an award for 40 years' service to the NHS. Choon Eng Hodgson (pictured with chairman Professor Steve Barnett) received a 45 year award!

At the other end of the career ladder, we are looking forward to growing our apprentice numbers – in 2016/17 the trust had 59 apprentices, and we plan to increase this to 120 next year.



## Pyjama party

Our staff came to work in their pyjamas as part of #endPJparalysis, a national campaign to encourage patients to get up, get dressed, and get moving. Getting patients moving if they are able to helps them to get better more quickly and reduces the length of time they spend in hospital.



## Health and wellbeing

Looking after the wellbeing of our staff is important to us because if they are happy at work, it will show in the way they do their jobs and look after our patients. We recognise that dealing with life and death matters and trying to help people in pain can be mentally and physically demanding. So we provide a range of support including: understanding stress and building resilience sessions, mindfulness courses, back care awareness, counselling, and fitness and weight management classes.

## MasterChef 2017 winner in the house!

We're all very proud of our junior doctor Saliha Mahmood-Ahmed who triumphed in the BBC's MasterChef 2017 competition!

Saliha said: "The love and support, especially from the NHS and hospital, is absolutely fantastic.

"The only reason I got through is because my husband, my mum and mother-in-law were really supportive and helped with childcare. I also had really supportive colleagues who did lots of swapping of shifts for me."



# Our friends

## Thank you to all our volunteers and supporters

We're very grateful to the many individuals and organisations who donated to the trust during 2016/17 – we're only sorry we can't mention everyone who has helped!

Herts against Cancer (HaC) pledged £30,000 towards the cost of an endoscope for vital diagnosis work at Watford Hospital.

The League of Friends has supported us with an impressive donation of £117,000 which has contributed to the costs of our new discharge lounge and simulation suite, and to much-needed equipment, including resuscitation trolleys, phlebotomy chairs and specialised couches for outpatients. They have also supported two projects, a 'breaking bad news' room and the Rose Project for end of life care and families to support patients at the worst of times.

The Michael Green Diabetes Foundation's fundraising activities, including wine tasting, bingo, a half marathon and the 10k London Run, led to a donation of £12,000 this year. To date, the Foundation has donated an amazing £46,000 to our diabetes services. This has helped to fund a dietician and specialist couches in the centre for the assessment and treatment of diabetes-related foot problems.

Staff and guests got the chance to get glamorous at the Paediatric Christmas Ball held at Watford Hilton and raised £5,000 which was used to decorate the children's wards and buy equipment.

Bollywood came to Watford with an evening of spicy food, bhangra beats and stunning saris. Bollywood Nights was organised by the Woodland neonatal unit, friends and families. The event raised over £2,000 to buy mannequins for teaching neonatal resuscitation.

Many of our staff also go the extra mile to raise funds for charity. For example, a team from the trust completed the Three Peaks Challenge –



**Sister Mariama Clark with Mavis and Norman Tyrwhitt from the League of Friends at the opening of the discharge lounge.**



**Bollywood Nights fundraising event.**



**Professor Steve Barnett, chairman, thanks Joanne Green of the Michael Green Diabetes Foundation for supporting the trust's diabetes service.**

climbing Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon in 24 hours. After a very, very long day they raised over £7,000 for our neonatal unit.



# Hearing Aid Clinic Reception



*Alan Stevens, volunteer*

“Volunteering makes me proud and – it benefits me so much and makes me feel lucky. It’s the best thing I’ve ever done!”

## Six year old donates gym equipment

Staff on Starfish ward at Watford General Hospital were delighted to be treated to gifts from a six year old patient and his mother.

Billy Hughes, who has cystic fibrosis, visited the hospital with his mum and older brother to donate gym equipment to the paediatric physiotherapy team.

Billy and his family and friends host an annual event to raise money for us and The Cystic Fibrosis Trust. This year, the event was called 'Billyfest' and they managed to raise a whopping £4,000.

Dr Amanda Equi, consultant paediatrician, said: "Exercise is an important part of the treatment for our cystic fibrosis patients and not only will this donated equipment be used on a daily basis, but it will help to make the exercise more enjoyable and bring some fun to what is a very long hospital admission. We are so grateful for this very generous donation and we know that the children on the ward will be really happy with all the new equipment."



## Kissing It Better

We continued to work in partnership with the Kissing It Better charity which creates links between local schools and colleges and frail and elderly patients. An art therapist made weekly visits to Bluebell and Winyard wards to run activities with our dementia patients.

Pupils from Watford Boys, Watford Girls Grammar School and Kings Langley hosted a summer garden party in the Bluebell ward garden. They also spent time with patients on our care of the elderly wards reading poetry and hearing reminiscence stories.

Pets in Therapy dogs Sheeba, Poppy and Lolita brought a smile to the patients, carers, visitors and staff when they arrived on the wards, together with singers who entertained our patients and visitors with wartime songs and well-known musicals that got everyone joining in.

Over 120 National Citizen Service students spent time in Watford General Hospital during July and August delivering gift bags to patients and initiating conversations about the weather, summer holidays, their memories of being young and school exams.



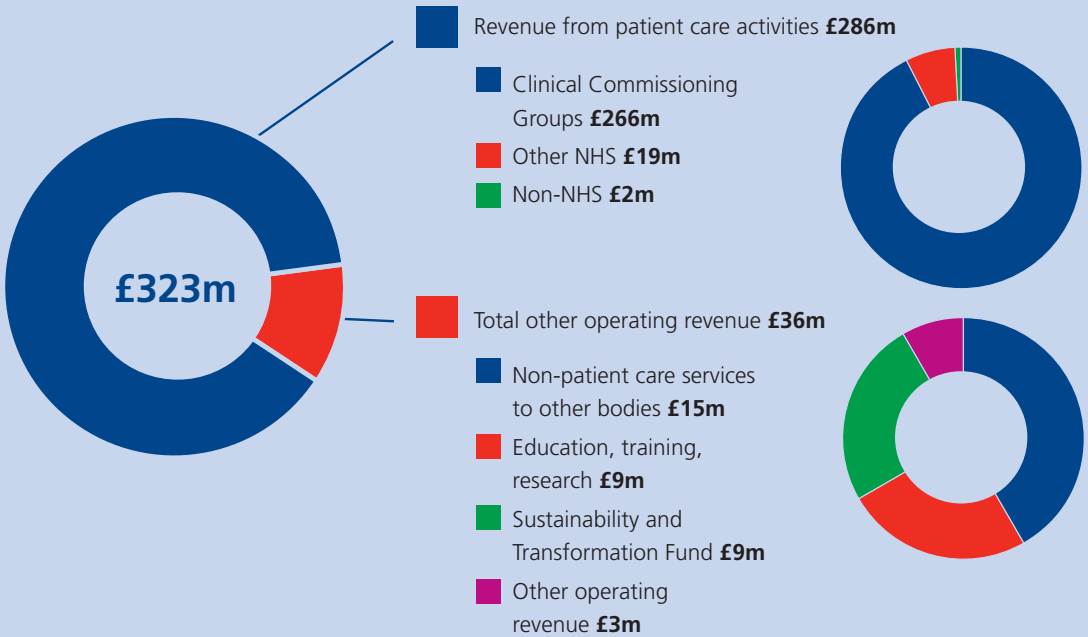
## Our invaluable volunteers

West Herts is supported by a dedicated band of volunteers who play a hugely important role. They help our patients have a better experience in our hospitals by generously giving up their time and skills. Our amazing volunteers are involved in many aspects of the hospital including: helping on reception, looking after patients in the discharge lounge, feeding patients on the wards, and supporting assessments of our services.

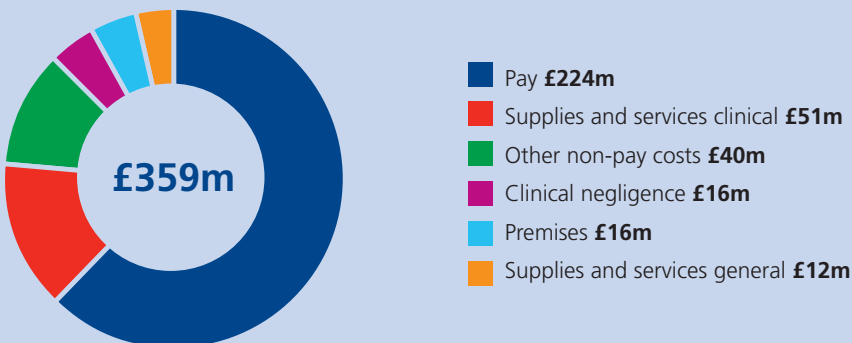
If you would like to get involved as a volunteer, please see back page.

# Our budget

## Income 2016/17: £323m



## Operating expenditure 2016/17: £359m



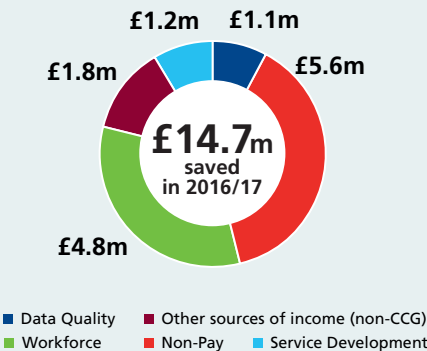


# Record savings

During 2016/17 our staff made record financial savings – an impressive £14.7m. We achieved this through a combination of efficiency improvements and new ways of working including:

- Agency nursing premium reductions: £2.4m
- A review of non-pay costs in every budget: £2.3m
- Reworking VAT for theatre staff: £500,000
- Enhanced theatre productivity: £475,000
- Counting and recording changes in Women’s and Children’s Services: £404,000
- Savings on drugs (better stock management and using cheaper alternatives): £375,000
- Improved coding of neonatal activity (meaning we get paid for all we do): £362,000
- Renegotiation of utilities contracts: £240,000
- Reduction in medical agency premium in unscheduled care: £238,000
- Establishing a new portal for booking medical staff: £232,000

## Efficiency savings 2016/17



## Cutting agency staff costs

The Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Agency Consortium – health trusts across Herts and Beds which collaborate to save money – has won a British Medical Journal Careers Award for ‘working smarter’ and saving staffing costs. Judges said they were “really impressed with the collaborative approach” of the consortium which works together to get the best deals when using agency staff. In total it has saved nearly £1m for our trust with combined savings of more than £6m across trusts in the two counties.



# Get involved!

## Make a donation

Have you or your loved one received treatment which you would like to recognise? Can you help support the care of other patients?

If so, please send a cheque made out to 'West Hertfordshire Hospitals Charity' to Watford General Hospital, Vicarage Road, Watford WD18 OH.

Donate via our website at:  
**[www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk/about/fundraising\\_donations.asp](http://www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk/about/fundraising_donations.asp)**

or through our justgiving page at:  
**[www.justgiving.com/westhertfordshirenhs](http://www.justgiving.com/westhertfordshirenhs)**

Contact: **[WestHertsCharity@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:WestHertsCharity@whht.nhs.uk)**

## Legacies and in memoriam

Would you like to mark the passing of a loved one in a meaningful way? Would it comfort you to know that you were supporting other patients?

Talk to us about setting up an in memoriam page for your loved one, or about making a provision in your will for our charity.

Contact: **[WestHertsCharity@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:WestHertsCharity@whht.nhs.uk)**

## Corporates and companies

Would you like to get your staff involved in team building or volunteering activities?

Contact: **[WestHertsCharity@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:WestHertsCharity@whht.nhs.uk)**

## Fundraise

Follow us on Twitter or like us on Facebook to find out how you can get involved in our events. Or for ideas on running your own fundraising event see:

**[www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk/about/fundraising\\_donations.asp](http://www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk/about/fundraising_donations.asp)**

## Volunteer

Our volunteers help make a difference for our patients. From being a 'meet and greet' guide to getting involved on our wards and during meal time, our trained volunteers complement the work of our paid staff across our hospitals in Watford, Hemel Hempstead and St Albans.

Volunteers are required to commit to a minimum of two to three hours per week for a period of six months. The minimum age for most roles is 18 years.

For more information see:  
**[www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk/patients/patientservices/volunteering/](http://www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk/patients/patientservices/volunteering/)**

Contact: **01923 217307** or  
**[wherts-tr.Volunteers@nhs.net](mailto:wherts-tr.Volunteers@nhs.net)**

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you need advice or have a query about any aspect of your care, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on **01923 217198** or **[pals@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@whht.nhs.uk)**

For more information about the work of our hospitals please contact us: **01923 436281**

**[communications@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@whht.nhs.uk)**

**[www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk)**

If you would like a copy of this document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01923 217198** or email **[pals@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@whht.nhs.uk)**



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