

herts minds+

winter 2018/19



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**Staff at West Herts
have been on an
amazing journey
since the trust was
placed in special
measures, and
have made some
incredible
improvements.**

Professor Stephen Powis
National medical director of NHS England

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herts minds⁺

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story to share?

If you've got a story to tell, we want to hear it. Whether it's a good news story or an event you want to share with other staff, don't miss the opportunity to be featured in our next edition.



communications@whht.nhs.uk



01923 436280

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Message from our acting chief executive



Hello

We started 2018 off in great style – exiting special measures!

And then came ‘the beast from the East’ and your amazing efforts as you trekked through snowstorms to get to work. Thank you.

Roll on a few months and we had the reverse – a scorching hot summer where you again showed just how committed #TeamWestHerts is to providing the very best care for every patient, every day.

The uplifting NHS70 celebrations in July were a real treat and cheered us up after saying our farewells to Katie Fisher.

And, talking of chief executives; you will have read that our new CEO Christine Allen joins us in March.

So, what else did 2018 bring?

- Our emergency care service had an £11m windfall which will help us increase our capacity and assessment areas in ED over the next year or so. Plus, we now have eight additional cubicle spaces in our ED which helps with the all-important patient flow
- Our figures for flu vaccinations and response rates to the staff survey were up on last year (but PLEASE get your jab now if you haven't already had it)
- We heard from regulators that our case for investment in our estate is clear, but that we need to present proposals that are more affordable – there will be updates on this in January 2019
- Our charity got a rebrand – it's called Raise and its Christmas appeal to encourage donations of gifts for adult patients has been a great success. What a lovely way to round off the year

Thank you for making my time as acting chief executive so much more enjoyable than I expected it to be. The support from colleagues across the trust has been very much appreciated. You're a remarkable bunch as our #StarsofHerts campaigns have shown, and it's your commitment and energy that makes West Herts such a great place to work.

Best wishes,
Helen

West Herts is on the up

Our year got off to a fabulous start, when our exit from special measures was announced! This great news was the result of a full inspection at our three hospitals by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in the previous year.

Inspectors commented on the “strong, supportive and visible” leadership and noted “a positive culture” where staff are “proud to work at the trust.” As well as leaving our special measures status behind, we’ve also seen positive and dramatic changes in the ratings for our sites and services, despite the overall rating remaining ‘requires improvement’.

We were visited by the CQC again this autumn, when they visited a number of departments and wards. One inspector, who first saw us in 2014, said he was “totally bowled over” by our progress and that it was a “privilege to return” to witness such a distinct improvement in morale, culture, engagement and communication throughout the organisation.

We were commended by the CQC on our warm interaction with patients, as well as our understanding of risk and effective use of data to make improvements, good medicine management and good compliance with infection prevention and control measures... to name a few!

We should all be proud of the hard work of #TeamWestHerts this year, and how this contributes to providing the very best care for our patients.





Nominations and awards galore for #TeamWestHerts

It's been a busy year for #TeamWestHerts who, as well as celebrating the NHS's 70th birthday, have been busy racking up nominations and wins for a flurry of awards. Here are just a few:

We kick-started the year with our Schwartz Round leaders winning a Schwartz Community Award in the 'Shining Stars' category, back in January. Becky Platt and David Gaunt were nominated for their "commitment, compassion, credibility, people skills and indefinable magic." Schwartz Rounds provide a safe space for staff to talk about the emotional aspects of our jobs, share stories and better understand different roles within the trust. If you're interested in joining our Schwartz community, please get in touch with Susan Whiterod on 07979 456200.

Our stroke services team scooped the 'Excellence in Employee Engagement' award at the Healthcare People Management Association (HPMA) Awards in June.

In July, our integrated diabetes care service won a regional NHS70 Parliamentary Award as part of our 70th birthday celebrations. We work in partnership with Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation NHS Trust to provide integrated physical and mental healthcare for those living with diabetes.

Also in July, Dr Hala Kandil and Tejal Vaghela were highly commended at the International Antibiotic Guardian Awards in the 'Prescribing and Stewardship' category. This commendation recognised our significant achievements in our antimicrobial stewardship. This is a set of strategies to minimise the adverse effects of antibiotic use (including resistance, toxicity and cost).

In November, our carer support team was shortlisted in the 'Outstanding Health Volunteer Team' category at the Helpforce Champion Awards. Although they didn't win, the nomination marked what an amazing team they are.

And last but not least, our 'iSeeU' initiative in our special care baby unit and neonatal unit, which connects mothers to their newborn babies using technology, narrowly missed out on a HSJ Award this November. It was an honour for this amazing initiative to be nominated, and the team should be very proud of their achievements.

We look forward to next year, where the spirit of #TeamWestHerts will be bigger and better than ever!

Saying yes to organ donation at West Herts

Introducing the idea of organ donation to grieving relatives is a tough job. Despite the sensitivity, we have had an amazing track record in supporting the decision to donate and save lives.

Thirty-three patients have received life-saving or life changing transplants thanks to the hard work of staff who led delicate conversations with relatives about organ donations. We are one of the best performing trusts for the quality of care in organ donation when compared to similar trusts.

Holly Waterman, a specialist organ donation and transplant nurse, said: “This is a fantastic achievement by our dedicated staff. The more people who pledge to donate their organs after their death the more people stand to benefit from organ donation. There are 23 people currently on the waiting list in our area who need a lifesaving organ transplant. They need people to say yes to organ donation so they can get the organ they desperately need. Organ donation is one of the greatest gifts one person can give to another.”

Statistics from 2017/18 show that 374 people benefited from a life-saving or life-changing organ transplant in the East of England. Sadly, 36 people died on the transplant waiting list during this time and 457 people were waiting on 31 March 2018.

Fiona Loud, chair of the trust’s organ donation committee, who is also a recipient of a donated kidney, said: “The trust’s results show how collaboration between staff across the trust leads to successful donation. We would like to thank all the staff and all the families in Hertfordshire who have helped by donating organs to save lives.”

Join the NHS donor register and let your family know your decision. It takes no longer than two minutes to add your name and details to the NHS organ donor register.

Find out more at www.organdonation.nhs.uk or by calling 0300 123 23 23.





Harvey's Gang visits Watford General

We've had the pleasure of welcoming Harvey's Gang to Watford General Hospital twice this year. Harvey's Gang aims to demystify blood sample analysis for young hospital patients, and was launched in memory of eight year old Harvey Buster Baldwin who visited the pathology labs at Worthing Hospital where he was treated for leukaemia.

Back in April, five-year-old Lucy Mitchell became the first child to take a tour of the labs. Lucy and her older brother Charlie were given their own lab coats and invited to meet the specialist scientists who test Lucy's blood. They got to look through microscopes, see where blood was stored and follow the journey of Lucy's blood through the lab. After two and a half years of treatment at both Watford General and Great Ormond Street, Lucy rang our end of treatment bell in December!

Ten-year-old Nyah and her grandad also visited the labs in October, learning from our biomedical scientists how her blood samples are tested and how a machine analyses the compounds in her blood. Ben Sheath, a specialist transfusion practitioner here at the trust, said: "Families can spend a lot of time waiting for blood results, and this helps them to understand what happens in the labs. The initiative is great for lab staff too, as it helps them see past the sample in their hand to the patient at the other end. It also opens up the labs to the rest of the hospital by improving links with wards."

A huge thank you to everyone who supported Lucy and Nyah's visits, and we hope to welcome more trainee biomedical scientists to our labs in the future!



Celebrating our 70th birthday

The NHS celebrated its 70th birthday on 5 July this year, and #TeamWestHerts had a whole week of celebrations. We held tea parties across all three sites to thank our amazing staff for all your hard work, and over 1,500 of you showed up! We even made up special trays of treats for those who couldn't leave the wards, so no one was left out.

We had bunting, balloons and NHS history display boards, as well as our superb party frame which featured pictures drawn by children from Starfish ward and the Safari day unit at Watford General.

Our diabetes and mental health team were regional winners for the 'Celebrating Excellence in Mental Health' NHS70 Parliamentary Award, and representatives went to the Houses of Parliament for the award ceremony.

On our actual birthday, Thursday 5 July, three members of staff went to Westminster Abbey for a special service to celebrate the day. All babies born at Watford General Hospital on 5 July received a special #NHS70 baby grow – check out the photo of adorable baby boy Harley wearing his. Everybody say “aahhhh!”

Also on 5 July, our Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place. It was preceded by our staff award ceremony which celebrated staff who have truly excelled in living our values of 'care', 'commitment' and 'quality'. The event was held at Watford Football Club, which kindly gave us free use of the venue as the biggest of birthday favours!



Even Watford Town Hall got involved in the celebrations by lighting up blue at 8.45pm on Thursday 5 July to show support for the NHS. Our acting chief executive Helen Brown joined Watford mayor Peter Taylor in front of the Town Hall as part of the national #LightUpBlue campaign.

It was an absolutely fantastic week, and a wonderful way to celebrate our 70th birthday. Here's to many more birthdays to come!



Our World Sepsis Day

#ChainofAction



On World Sepsis Day, Thursday 13 September, staff, patients and carers linked up to form a #ChainofAction to raise awareness of the signs of sepsis.

Measuring over 100 metres in length and filled with words and phrases associated with sepsis, the chain provided a vivid visual trigger for staff and the public to ask – ‘could it be sepsis’?

Former ITU nurses Moira Surridge and Sarah Lafbery, who came up with the idea of the chain, have been working relentlessly to improve the recognition and early treatment of sepsis, teaching hundreds of members of staff through ward-based sessions or one to one chats. You can often find them walking around the trust wearing bright orange ‘Think Sepsis’ t-shirts!

Through their efforts, the number of patients who are screened on admission for suspected sepsis has risen from 46% in 2015 to 92% in three years. And the number of patients who receive intravenous antibiotics within an hour of a sepsis diagnosis is now at 94% compared with 58% in 2015.

“The support for this chain of action has been overwhelming. It’s come from all corners of the trust and we’ve been stopped time and again by patients and visitors who want to share their stories,” said Moira. “We can and we will save lives with this awareness campaign, of that I have no doubt.”

Raise a Smile this Christmas

Our charity has recently unveiled its brand new name by launching a very special Christmas appeal. After face to face consultations with over 500 patients, families and staff the charity, previously called 'West Hertfordshire Hospitals Charity', was delighted to unveil 'Raise' as its new name.

The charity's Christmas appeal, 'Raise a Smile this Christmas', wants every older patient spending the festive season in hospital to have a gift to open this year.

Charity director Samantha Sherratt said:

"Everyone wants to be home for the celebrations, but for some poorly, older patients this simply isn't possible. Staff work hard to make December a happy time, but to make it extra special we are asking local communities to support our appeal by giving gifts or making a donation."

To see the wishlist or to make a donation, please visit www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk/raise or call 07393 232313. Thank you so much for your kindness.



Rak-Su visit children's ward

Children on Starfish ward and the Safari day unit were treated to a surprise visit in December from boyband Rak-Su. The group, who shot to fame after winning the X Factor in 2017, arrived laden with Christmas gifts and spent time talking to the children on the ward.

Parents and staff were also delighted to see the band, and enjoyed taking photos - including lots of selfies!



Clinical partnership with the Royal Free



This October, we joined forces with the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust as part of a new clinical partnership. Ahead of the partnership being formalised, clinicians at both trusts have been working on a wide range of projects to improve patient care by sharing best practice.

As a starting point, staff have been collaborating on ways to treat pneumonia, urgent gall bladder problems, induction of labour, early pregnancy, prostate conditions, anaemia and symptoms of wheeziness in children.

The RFL is one of four trusts across the NHS to be chosen to develop a group model enabling it to share services and resources more effectively across hospitals in order to improve the experience of patients and staff.

Professor Steve Barnett, our chairman, said: “An appetite to keep learning is at the heart of our vision; to provide the very best care for every patient, every day. Our clinicians have gained a great deal from their work so far with colleagues at the Royal Free London, who have also been impressed with our ways of working. This is a great way to bring benefits to our patients and we look forward to sharing details of this as our partnership progresses.”

Dominic Dodd, Royal Free London chairman, said: “We are very excited about working with West Herts. Bringing our clinical and non-clinical staff together to share knowledge is essential if the NHS is going to continue to improve.”

Restart a Heart Day

The simplest actions can save a life, as shoppers found out in October! Restart a Heart Day took place on Tuesday 16 October, and staff from our resuscitation team spent the day at intu Watford teaching members of the public basic life support skills. Along with players from Watford FC, they manned a stand in the middle of the shopping centre and encouraged passers-by to get involved.

The efforts and dedication of the resus team mean that there are now an additional 178 people in Watford who are able to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

What an absolutely fantastic achievement, and a huge well done to everyone involved.

Would you know how to save a life? Is your training up to date? All clinical staff should complete the Adult Basic Life Support (ABLS) training, and non-clinical staff are able to attend 'Save a Life' sessions.



Watford cots for the next generation

Babies born in Watford General will soon have the comfort of brand new cots, thanks to fundraising phenomena Jackie Fitzsimons.

Jackie, a healthcare assistant on Katherine ward, launched her 'Watford Cots' appeal in May, taking on a series of challenges to raise the £13,000 needed for 26 new cots.

With almost 5,000 babies born at the hospital each year Katherine ward's cots were showing their age, so Jackie set out to replace them with more modern ones. Jackie has been working at Watford General in maternity for over 20 years, and has had the pleasure of supporting generations of new parents. Some of the old cots we had for our newborns even pre-date her!

Jackie got together with colleagues, friends and family and organised a cot dash through Watford, cake sale and a glittering ball. She also received support from local companies, nurseries and many other well-wishers.

The new cots, which are easier to steer, have a soothing rocking mechanism and are more practical for staff to clean, should be in place for Christmas. What a wonderful present for all the new families!

An update on our estate

There has been a lot of hard work going on behind the scenes to secure investment for our estate.

Our regulators – NHS Improvement and NHS England – have fed back with two key messages; firstly that our need for funding is acknowledged; and secondly, that public money for hospital redevelopment is limited, with strong competition from other trusts.

In response to this, we are working on a new strategic outline case (SOC) which sets out how funding for work on our estate could be phased and what is our preferred option in terms of number of sites and location of services.

Our team brief sessions and all staff messages from Helen have referred to an option that wasn't in the SOC we submitted last year. This is the potential option of a planned care centre between Hemel Hempstead and St Albans. It would provide all of the services (and more!) currently provided at St Albans and Hemel; planned surgery, diagnostics, urgent treatment services and a range of outpatient care for long term conditions.

As you can imagine, completing the SOC with a view to it being submitted in spring is a very demanding and complex piece of work. In addition to our own staff working on this, we will be using external experts to help us with costs, travel analysis and activity forecasts. We'll also take into account population sizes of the areas we cover and predicted growth.

Your involvement would be valued - we'll be asking staff to help us with the complex task of reducing a long list to a short list in evaluation sessions. Our patient panel will be represented and we will have four representatives from local communities alongside us at the options evaluation sessions in the New Year.

Public interest in our plans is high. We held a series of public meetings for local communities in Hertsmere, Hemel Hempstead, St Albans, and Watford. These were well attended and residents were invited to ask questions and share their views. Nominated representatives from our local communities will take part in the evaluation panels.

Missed **herts**
minds⁺
in 2018?

Our quarterly newsletter will return in 2019. Look out for the next issue in March.

Contact us with your stories and suggestions, or comments on this issue:

communications@whht.nhs.uk

Sue is a West Herts poundstretcher

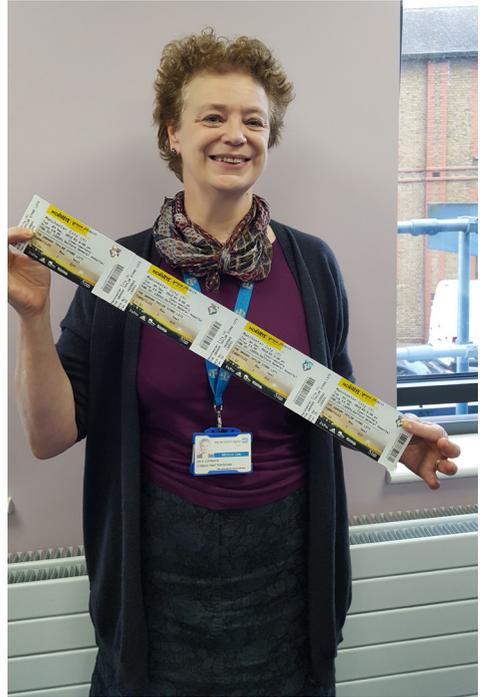
Sue Catnach, gastroenterology consultant, was the happy winner of our 'Save the West Herts pound' competition in December.

Chief financial officer Don Richards put out a call for staff ideas on how to be a West Herts pound stretcher so we can cut our costs and save income. We received lots of great suggestions but Don felt that Sue's money saving idea really cut to the heart of our efficiency challenge.

Sue suggested that we commission a study of the difficulties that junior doctors and advanced nurse practitioners face in assessing patients referred for medical admission by either A&E or the GP. This study could help them find ways to see and treat patients more efficiently. A methodology developed for this clinical pathway could also be developed for other pathways.

This year we need to save £15.9m, a huge sum BUT – we have already identified savings of £15.5m. Being more in control of our finances would mean we would borrow less in the form of loans. This is the foundation to continue delivering quality services and be seen as a self-sustaining organisation. Your success with savings in previous years has been incredible; in 2016/17 you saved £14.6m and in 2017/18 you saved £10.3m – a very impressive track record.

Do you have an idea that you think could improve our finances or help our hospitals work more efficiently? If so, we want to hear from you! Please get in touch with your ideas via communications@whht.nhs.uk



Your #StarsofHerts hall of fame

July was a month of celebrations. The NHS marked its 70th year and many of you scooped a special #StarsofHerts award, given to colleagues who were nominated by you for going above and beyond in their jobs or lives outside of work.

This campaign, which incorporated the #WeValueYou element of the staff survey, was so well received that your nominations spilt over into August! We were overwhelmed with your response, and received over 50 nominations telling us just how wonderful your colleagues are. Check out our #StarsofHerts hall of fame, which is just a small selection of the fantastic nominations you sent in, and keep your eye on our social media channels for our #XmasStarsofHerts throughout this December.



Jackie Fitzsimons, a kind-hearted healthcare assistant, was nominated for raising funds to buy 26 new cots for our postnatal award. She's overseen generations of babies born at Watford General, and is a familiar face for returning families.

You can read all about her incredible achievement on page 15.

The accounts payable and receivable team were nominated by their manager, Cathy Miller, for their dedication and loyalty to their department and to the trust as a whole.

They play an integral part in collecting our income and pay suppliers for the provision of goods and services.



In memory of...

This page is dedicated to much loved colleagues, who we sadly lost in 2018. They are deeply missed by their teams, and we thank them for everything they contributed to #TeamWestHerts.



Dr Ian Frankel
Associate specialist in
emergency medicine



Pauline Jenkins
PA to divisional manager and
divisional director for surgery



Jenny Horscroft
Payroll officer



Cecilia Jose
Occupational therapy assistant

what's in store for 2019?

New chief executive

Christine Allen, who is currently the chief executive at James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, will be joining us on 4 March 2019!

NEWS2 launch

The latest national observation chart, NEWS2, will be launched in the trust from 7 January 2019. Make sure to sign up to a training session on Acorn beforehand!

CQC inspections

The results from our most recent inspections will be published early next year, and we're expecting more inspections in 2019.

Staff survey results

The results of the staff survey will be published in March - look out for a new set of Big 5 actions based on your feedback.

ED expansion

There will be eight additional cubicles in ED before Christmas, and we have received £11 million in capital funding to boost emergency care at Watford General.

Car parking

Work will begin in 2019 on developing a multi-storey car park for staff, patients and visitors which we hope to see completed by summer 2020.

Quality commitment

We will be launching our quality commitment to build a culture of care and service. The commitment will foster a team working culture that will help to increase quality.

New IT supplier

We are investing in our IT infrastructure, and are selecting a new provider for a three year contract.