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Welcome

Welcome to the spring edition of our staff and patient magazine – Trust Talk.

Dear patients and colleagues,

Welcome to a special edition of Trust Talk – my last one before retirement.

After nearly 20 years here, and some 36 years as a Chief Executive in the NHS, it's going to be very hard to say a final goodbye at the end of this month.

There have been many challenges in those two decades, but I have enjoyed my time here immensely and made many friends.

I'm proud to say that the final edition of my tenure is packed full of stories of innovation and our staff excelling with fantastic care and practice.

From our now-completed solar farm, to our award-winning breast care dressings team, and the new Radiology facility at the Community Diagnostic Centre at Cannock Chase Hospital and much more besides, there is so much to celebrate and be proud of.

Speaking of which last month, I was privileged to attend my final Royal Awards last month as Chief Executive along with 200 staff and special guests. Again we saw our colleagues honoured for their outstanding care and service.

I would also like to welcome Caroline Walker, my interim successor for the next six months, and wish her every success in the role.

But I must end my final Trust Talk notes with a huge thank you to the people who have made me so proud for the last 20 years – our staff.

In massively improving infection prevention – from the third worst in the country to one of the best – and stopping the use of agency Nurses, we made the Trust a much safer place for patients to be treated and stepped up standards.

At New Cross Hospital, we have built an Emergency Department, and a Pathology centre to host and centralise that service for the Black Country, as well as developing the Heart and Lung Centre into one of the leading facilities of its kind nationally.

We have successfully amalgamated Cannock Chase Hospital and more latterly partnered Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust and seen improvements at both.

It's been a blast and I wish every one of you all the best.

Take care

Professor David Loughton CBE
Group Chief Executive

Interim Chief Executive appointed

An interim Chief Executive with “a track record of improving patient care” has been appointed at RWT and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trusts for the next six months.

Caroline Walker will take over on 1 May, replacing Professor David Loughton CBE, who is retiring after 40 years in the NHS.

She will steer the two organisations while recruitment for a permanent replacement continues.

Caroline retired from her role as Chief Executive at North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust (NWAFT) last year and has a wide portfolio of NHS acute experience.

Prior to joining NWAFT, she worked at the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust,

Great Ormond Street Hospital Foundation Trust, and Barts Health NHS Trust. She was also Chief Operating Officer at Loughborough University.

Sir David Nicholson CBE, Chair of RWT and WHT, said: “Caroline has operated at Board level for 25 years and has a track record of improving patient care.”

Caroline said: “I am delighted to be joining two Trusts that have exceptionally positive patient feedback and dedicated staff.

“I am looking forward to meeting teams across the sites, as we work together to continue to deliver high-quality patient care for all. I hope Professor Loughton enjoys a well-earned retirement.”



Caroline Walker, our new interim Chief Executive

Spring date set for solar farm

A solar farm which will power New Cross Hospital for three quarters of the year is set to be up and running this spring.

RWT in partnership with City of Wolverhampton Council has built the solar farm at a former landfill site the size of 22 football pitches, adjacent to Bentley Way, Wednesfield.

The facility will power the entire hospital site with self-generated renewable energy for around 288 days a year.

This will save the Trust around £15-20 million over the next 20 years – money which will be put back into frontline healthcare.

It will produce 6.9MWp of renewable energy to New Cross Hospital and will generate an estimated carbon saving of 1,583 tonnes of CO₂e per annum.

More than 15,000 electricity generating solar panels have been installed at the site by main contractor Vital Energi.

Work to secure the 40-plus acre brownfield site included protecting badger setts, and removing methane.

The project, combined with existing green technologies, allows the Trust to move away from reliance on the national grid and to reduce its exposure to rising electricity costs in the next two decades.

It also supports the Trust's goal of reducing its carbon emissions by 25 per cent by 2025, and of reaching 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2040.

Stew Watson, Director of Estates Development at RWT, said: “This investment is a huge boost to help us achieve that.

“Our primary focus is always on the patient and these works ensure the Trust saves money on future energy bills, which we can then subsequently invest across other healthcare services.”



From left: Jon Gwynn, Project Director, CEF, Ashley Malin, Professor David Loughton CBE, and Stew Watson at the solar farm inspecting one of the 15,000 solar panels

Professor David Loughton CBE, Group Chief Executive at RWT, said: “As the largest employer in Wolverhampton, we take sustainability very seriously and are committed to continually working to reduce our carbon footprint.

“We have taken a number of steps to reduce and better manage our energy consumption and operate in a sustainable manner.

“One of these steps is to look at using renewable energy so we are very pleased the development will be opening soon and delighted at the way the partnerships have worked out.”

Ashley Malin, Managing Director at Vital Energi, added: “We're delighted to have transformed a former coal mine and landfill site into this impressive solar farm, which is the largest single source of green energy on a hospital site within the UK.

“The clean energy will power the air source heat pumps within the hospital, and significantly reduce the hospital's carbon footprint.”

Work has also been completed on the underground cabling to connect the hospital to the solar farm.

RWT has received around £15m in grant funding for the project. This comprised contributions from the government's Levelling-Up fund, the NHS and Salix Finance, a government-funded body.

The Trust also received a further £33m to carry out green energy works as part of the Department of Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.

David Mackey, Chief Executive of the Carbon and Energy Fund (CEF) which was co-created with the Department of Health allowing different parts of the public sector and NHS to work together, said: “From the initial concept with the City of Wolverhampton Council to viability and Trust approval, contractor procurement, funding acquisition, technical assistance, project management and successful completion of the scheme, it's been a pleasure to support the Trust in achieving its net-zero goal.”

During the council's climate change consultation, 82 per cent of residents said they would welcome solar farms in Wolverhampton.

ROYAL AWARDS

Inspiring colleagues celebrated at our annual staff awards

Dedicated, compassionate and inspiring teams and individuals were formally recognised for their hard work at this year's Royal Awards.

The glitzy event – held to honour and recognise RWT colleagues for their hard work – took place at Grand Station in Wolverhampton, and was attended by around 200 staff, plus special guests from across the NHS and beyond.

The 38 finalists across 12 categories – from 'Rising Star' to 'Lifetime Achievement' – were nominated for their many successes and hard work from the last 12 months.

Almost 400 nominations were submitted by colleagues from across the organisation, as well as from patients and carers in the 'Patient's Choice' category.

Professor David Loughton CBE, Group Chief Executive, and Sir David Nicholson KCB CBE, Group Chair, also personally awarded two individuals who stood out to them.

The event was Professor Loughton's last awards ceremony as Chief Executive, as he is due to retire in April after 20 years leading the Trust.

He said: "I am merely the conductor of this band – each and every one of you in this room plays the instruments and makes an incredible difference to your colleagues and the population we serve across the Black Country.

"I sincerely thank all of you for everything you have done over the last two decades, and for what I know you will continue to do."

He was also presented with a 'This is Your Life' book by Dr Cheryl Etches OBE, former Chief Nurse.

The book outlines key achievements from his NHS career, alongside special messages from those he has worked closely with.

Our Royal Awards 2024 winners are:

- Rising Star Award: Ashleigh Key, Volunteer Co-ordinator
- Compassionate Leadership Award: Lesley Burrows, Performance Manager
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Award: Sunita Banga, EDI Lead Midwife and Diane Davies, Service Efficiency Project Manager
- Excellence in Research Award: Dr Shameer Gopal, Integrated Critical Care Unit (ICCU) Consultant Anaesthetist

- The 'Green' Award: Asad Atiq, SEN and Vision Screening Lead
- Healthcare Heroes – Clinical Individual: Stephanie Friedl, Paediatric Oncology Specialist Nurse
- Healthcare Heroes – Clinical Team: Pharmacy Team
- Healthcare Heroes – Non-Clinical Individual: Jessica Bannister, Domestic
- Healthcare Heroes – Non-Clinical Team: Data Security and Protection Team
- Trust Values Award: Cardiology Ward
- Patient's Choice Award: Trisha Mahon, Paediatric Advanced Clinical Practitioner
- Lifetime Achievement Award: Dr Stuart Hutchinson, Elderly Care Consultant, Dr Rosalind Leslie, Chief Allied Health Professional (AHP) and Dr Michael Norell, Consultant Cardiologist
- Chief Executive's Award: Dr Stuart Hutchinson, Elderly Care Consultant
- Chair's Award: Professor David Loughton CBE, Group Chief Executive

Congratulations to all our winners and finalists!

A big thank you to our sponsors: System C, Vital Energi, and the RWT Charity, for their support in making the evening possible.

A raffle hosted by The RWT Charity raised an additional £1,200, which will be used to further support staff and patients at the Trust.



Lifetime Achievement Award winners, from left, Dr Michael Norell, Dr Stuart Hutchinson and Dr Ros Leslie with Professor David Loughton CBE, Group Chief Executive



Compassionate Leadership Award winner Lesley Burrows



Excellence in Research Award winner Dr Shameer Gopal



EDI Awards winners Sunita Banga and Diane Davies



Green Award winner Asad Atiq

Our Royal Award winners 2024



Healthcare Heroes Clinical Individual Award winner Steph Friedl



Healthcare Heroes Non-Clinical Award winner Jessica Bannister



Healthcare Heroes Clinical Team Award winner Pharmacy Team



Healthcare Heroes Non-Clinical Award winner Data Security and Protection Team



Rising Star winner Ashleigh Key



Sir David Nicholson KCB CBE, Group Trusts' Chair embraces Professor David Loughton CBE

Baby feeding trial recruits most in UK

More than 400 first-time mums in Wolverhampton have volunteered for a study into whether extra support helps families feed their babies more confidently – the highest number of participants across all of the sites taking part.

They have joined the national assets-based feeding help Before and After birth (ABA-feed) study which has been running across 15 sites throughout the UK, including RWT, since January 2022.

The ABA-feed intervention study aimed to optimise local support to see if this can help improve breastfeeding rates.

Poppy Davies, Breastfeeding Peer Support and Engagement Co-ordinator for RWT, said: "We have been delighted with how the study has gone,



First-time mum Abbie Brown

and feedback from parents who have been supported by our Infant Feeding Helpers has been fantastic.

"Whilst we have to wait until March 2025 until we have the published results from the study, we have felt the model of support has been really successful, so we are planning to continue with the study's model.

"We will offer this as part of our standard volunteer support pathway so that a wider range of mothers can access this support."

Sharn Taylor, Volunteer Infant Feeding Helper, said: "I have thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the study from the very beginning.

"I have really felt I have supported these mothers during their first time of becoming a mother, and during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The mums have said they have really benefitted from having another person being there on hand to talk to."

First-time mum Abbie Brown, 27, took part in the study and was supported by volunteer Robin Norton, 35, from Wolverhampton.

She said: "As a first-time mum, the main thing I was worried about was feeding my baby.

"The trial itself was really easy to take part in; I answered a few simple questions online and I even got some vouchers at the end.

"My infant feeding helper, Robin, offered me information, encouragement and a shoulder to lean on without any pressure and I am so grateful that I had her to support me.

"I'm so glad that I signed up to take part – not only do I feel content with the way I've fed my baby, I feel like I will have helped women the future too."



Volunteer Robin Norton and baby Axel

"The mums have said they have really benefitted from having another person being there on hand to talk to"

Gold award for innovative team

A team that set up a breast dressings clinic to better support cancer patients following surgery has beaten international contenders to win a gold award in a contest dubbed "The Olympics of Wound Care."

Ann Harvey, Rachael Longdon and Emma Lewis – all Sisters at New Cross Hospital – established the clinic six years ago.

They were "thrilled and proud" that the team, which also includes Chrissie Duley, Sister, and Staff Nurses Liz Blything, Ann Haynes, Jenny Potts and Cayte Hopton, struck gold in the Surgical Site Infection accolade in the Journal of Wound Care Awards 2024 event at The Imperial War Museum in London.

The RWT team was put forward by Muskaan Khosla, Senior Clinical Fellow in breast care, who was impressed at the service being offered.

Around 500 patients a year use the clinics, which run twice a week in the Outpatients Department.

Clinics are available for anyone who needs help and support with any aspect of their wound care following breast surgery.

Ann, who has worked for the Trust for 18 years and in Outpatients for eight, said: "A group of us Nurses identified the need for this type of clinic.

"We wanted to give the best, timely support possible to

patients after their surgery, knowing wound care can cause anxiety after an already significant event.

"We are so thrilled and proud to have been recognised with a gold award – and still slightly shocked as well.

"Muskaan put us forward and she has been a wonderful support because she is as passionate about the clinics as we are.

"We knew we were shortlisted but to get the gold was out of this world, especially as we were up against international teams. It will take us a while to come back down to earth!"

The Journal of Wound Care Awards was open to individuals, teams, organisations, societies, companies, charities and government organisations whose work has made a huge impact to patients' lives around the world over the last year.

Mr Seni Mylvaganam, Clinical Lead for Breast Services, added: "The dressings clinic initiative has been an invaluable addition to the breast service and rightfully a spotlight has been placed on this innovative service.

"Through initiative and endeavour it has significantly improved the support provided and enhanced the patient experience.

"The service and our patients are very thankful and I look forward to continuing to work with and support the breast dressings team as we look to build on this success."



Ann Haynes, Staff Nurse, Liz Blything, Staff Nurse, Emma Lewis, Sister, Ann Harvey, Sister, Winston Williams, Senior Charge Nurse, Rachael Longdon, Sister, Chrissie Duley, Staff Nurse, Jenny Potts, Staff Nurse and Cayte Hopton, Staff Nurse

Our charity

The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity

Tesla cars for kids awaiting surgery

Donations of two miniature versions of the electric cars mean children will “drive” themselves to theatre in style.

The Tesla Owners Club UK donated the cars to The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity to make the experience of undergoing surgery and scans less daunting for younger patients.

One of the first patients to try out the shiny new wheels was six-year-old Stanley Cochrane, who was diagnosed with leukaemia in December.

Stanley has to frequently come into New Cross Hospital for procedures, blood transfusions and appointments.

He said: “I always get worried when I go for surgery, but now, I won’t feel as nervous by driving the car. I love how fast it is. Thank you so much for letting me drive one.”



From left, Matron, Kirsty Lewis, Shayne Ihedoro, Anthony-Hugh Selormey, Stanley Cochrane and Amie Rogers testing out the new Tesla cars for our younger patients

Anthony-Hugh Selormey, from Tesla Owners Club, said the donation was thanks to the generosity of the club members and the charity events they run.

“To give back to the community is

fantastic and a lot of fundraising has taken place to be able to make this donation,” said Anthony.

“To bring a bit of fun into what can be a traumatic experience is what we aim to do with these cars.”

City's healthcare history shaped by local voices

People were transported back to 1849 during a highly-anticipated spoken word performance through the Care, Create, Conserve project, led by the Charity's Arts and Heritage Group.

The performance took people through a historical journey of healthcare, exploring themes of gender role stereotyping, facilities, and access to healthcare, based on their perspectives.

The event, at the Health Hub in the Mander Centre, was led by poets Sophina Jagot and Emma Purshouse.

They shared a potted history of Wolverhampton's former Royal Hospital followed by a unique soundscape performance collated through listening activities during residency sessions within the hub. The Royal was founded in 1849 and closed in 1997.

The poets took inspiration from current and former NHS staff, local historians and residents' memories and experiences of healthcare throughout the years to craft their unique performance.

Following the performance, attendees got a sneak peek of a wider collection of healthcare heritage items.

These will form part of a fascinating exhibition in a new Healthcare Heritage Centre and co-creation space, coming soon.

This project has been made possible thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.



From left, Emma Purshouse and Sophina Jagot recite poetry

'Razor' has a Wolves tattoo for a good cause

He was used to giving opponents the needle on the football pitch but Neil “Razor” Ruddock was on the receiving end when he received a Wolves tattoo!

It was all for a good cause as the former Liverpool and Tottenham defender had the wolf emblem inked on his right arm to raise money for a special project.

The 55-year-old was at New Ink in Tetterhall to have the artwork to help The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT) Charity towards a target of £30,000 to renovate its garden in the Children's Ward at New Cross Hospital.

Neil is good friends with Wolves fanatic and serial fundraiser Jason Guy, who has raised more than £400,000 for good causes, including The RWT Charity.

Jason's daughter Olivia, has 1p36, a disorder that typically causes severe intellectual disability.

“We saw the difference it made to us



Neil “Razor” Ruddock having his tattoo, with, from left, tattooist Craig James from New Ink, Jason Guy and Amie Rogers and Amanda Winwood from The RWT Charity

as a family to have that outside space and my wife Aimee used to come home and say ‘it’s a lovely space but it could do with a bit of work’”, said Jason. “So

I asked the Charity and the ladies told me about the garden. It’s something everyone can get involved with raising money for, and help the community.”

Heart patient's thank you hike

A grateful dad who underwent major open-heart surgery has vowed to keep raising money for the Wolverhampton hospital which saved his life.

Jon Madden was 37 when he was diagnosed with a bicuspid aortic valve 12 years ago, after being tested following his father's diagnosis with the same condition at 70.

After his diagnosis, Jon was told by Professor James Cotton, Consultant Cardiologist at New Cross Hospital, that he would need an aortic valve replacement in seven years' time.

The 49-year-old car salesman added: “Nikos Nikolaidis, Consultant Cardiac Surgeon, told me I needed the surgery as soon as possible or I would not survive longer than a few months.

“Before I knew I had a date for the surgery – January 15, 2019. I was very nervous the night before but the operation was a success and saved my life, as I only had three to six months left to live.

“The surgery, care, physiotherapy, and aftercare I received was exceptional. The service I had was amazing, all the staff was superb from start to finish and so helpful.”



Jon Madden celebrating his return to health with son Hughie

For further information about the charity or how to support it, please contact our team on 01902 694473 or email rwh-tr.fundraisingteam@nhs.net

CDC Radiology facility scans its first patients

History was made as the first patients were scanned in the new £15m Radiology facility at Cannock's Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) – and the proud verdict was: "It's beautiful".

The purpose-built-modular building hosting the first of four state-of-the-art scanners – two CT and two MRI – costing around £1m each, is now



From left: Kelly Taylor, Imaging Assistant, Lucy Willcox, Head of Operational Radiology, Glen Whitehouse, Group Manager: Diagnostic Services, Diane Lee, Sam Abbott, Superintendent Radiographer, Stacey Aulton-Birch, CT Advanced Practitioner, Leonard Gonzales, Senior CT Radiographer, and Paula Reed, Imaging Assistant

available at the CDC at Cannock Chase Hospital, part of RWT.

The new facility will take around 30,000 images per year and will employ 70 new staff, with 100 patients a week being scanned – which will increase.

Patients in Cannock and South Staffordshire, as well as Wolverhampton and Walsall, will use the facility, easing the burden on New Cross Hospital and Walsall Manor Hospital.

Diane Lee, 60, from nearby Hazel Slade, was the first to be surveyed when she underwent a CT scan on her kidneys and bladder because of pressure on her bladder.

The retired Personal Assistant was thrilled to be the town's first patient.

"It's great for the local community," said mum of three Diane, also a

grandmother to five-year-old twin boys.

"The treatment was excellent – first class. The staff were so friendly and made me feel really comfortable and relaxed.

"I'd felt quite uptight because of having an injection but they reassured me I'd be all right.

"The surroundings helped too because

replacement looked at.

Glen Whitehouse, Group Manager: Diagnostic Services at RWT, was excited to welcome the first patients, adding: "It was incredibly rewarding for the team to see all their ideas and efforts behind the CDC come to life as they start scanning on the first Trust-run CT scanner in Cannock.

"The unit will now gradually start seeing increasing number of patients as the two MRI and second CT scanner become operational over the coming weeks, and the site moves to 12-hour days, seven days per week."

Manisha Chandlar, Deputy Superintendent Radiographer (CT), was one of two staff to scan Diane, with Stacey Aulton-Birch, Advanced Practitioner in CT.

She said: "I've had a lot of exciting opportunities in my career so far, but to be able to scan the very first patient in a state-of-the art facility has to be one of the best!"

The integration of the Canon Aquilion Prime SP CT scanners and Medrad Centargo injector systems – which puts the dye into patients – ensure faster and more precise imaging.

Designed and delivered by Health Spaces Limited, the project was under construction from May 2023.



Manisha Chandlar, Deputy Superintendent – CT, Deborah Mercer, Sarah Brown, MRI/NI Superintendent Radiographer, and Jane Crutchley, CT Advanced Practitioner

Focus on our Apprentices

Second intake of Radiography Apprentices welcomed



Looking smart in their new uniforms, the Radiology Apprentices smiling for the camera as they start their RWT careers. From left: Sana Malik, Charlotte Purcell, Nick Bird, Mawahib Mohamed, Davina Abbott, Lead Clinical Educator, Simon M Kimberley, Emily Blackwell, Sharon Dhadda, Radiology Workforce Lead, Amy Babb, Aleema Bibbi, Keely Walker and Avinder Bansal

A second group of apprentices have been granted a "golden ticket" to help form the next generation of Radiographers and continue a major investment in the sector.

Six recruits have started a three-year course at RWT which will enable them to graduate with the equivalent of a BSc honours degree in Diagnostic Radiography.

All of different age groups and backgrounds, the latest intake comprises five mature students and one A-level graduate.

The lucky six were whittled down from 160 applicants which were shortlisted to 30, with 24 interviewed.

Sharon Dhadda, Radiology Workforce Lead, said: "This apprenticeship is like a golden ticket because it's so popular – it trains people for a career and it helps us to attract and retain staff because people can see an investment in them.

"Also, if they work towards and gain a qualified position here, they are more likely to stay. If we put the effort in,

I know we're going to have fantastic Radiographers, and we can see that with our second years."

First-year apprentice Aleema Bibi, 25, from Dudley, swapped her career as a nursery nurse. She said: "I always wanted to go into healthcare and work with machines.

"I have a background of working with people and meeting their individual needs so I felt Diagnostic Radiography was a good way to combine both with patient care."

Second year Nick Bird, 34, from Fallings Park, was a Healthcare Assistant for seven years in the Emergency Department at New Cross Hospital.

"It was a big opportunity for me," he said. "It's been tough going back into education but I really enjoy the work. To anyone starting this, I'd say 'be assertive, speak up and get stuck in' – once people can see you're there to work they're really keen to help you."

Eighty per cent of the apprenticeship is done in a hospital setting, with

placements at New Cross, Cannock Chase Hospital and Nuffield Health Wolverhampton Hospital.

The remainder involves studying at Keele University, with online lectures supplemented by six face-to-face sessions per year.

Sharon and Davina Abbott, Lead Clinical Educator, Radiology Department at RWT, have helped create the content of the apprenticeship.

"We're not only making sure they are well-rounded Radiographers but we're nurturing them to become leaders," added Davina.

The six people follow half dozen who started RWT's first Radiography apprenticeship a year ago and are all into their second year.

More than 100 staff have been recruited to RWT's Radiology department in the last 18 months following substantial investment in the service, doubling the workforce.

Focus on our Apprentices

Grandad Lee proves there's no age limit for apprenticeships

A grandad is proving age is no barrier to career development – at the age of 54.

Lee Pearson, Facilities Support Officer, started his Level 3 Facilities Management Apprenticeship the RWT in September 2023 with support from GLP Training and RWT Apprenticeship Team.

The father of three, of Bilston, joined RWT more than seven years ago. He previously worked in IT, fixing hardware and software issues before joining Facilities and Portering Team at the Trust.

Grandfather of five, Lee is juggling his time between family life and his professional development. Support from his wife of 29 years Karen, 54, who also works at RWT as a Healthcare Assistant, is enabling him to keep a work-life balance.

Karen is also keen to grow her skills and is receiving support from the Training and Development Team at RWT.

The Level 3 Apprenticeship with GLP Training consists of monthly virtual sessions, usually followed up by assignments to complete in certain topics.

Knowledge

Eager to grow his career in Facilities, Lee is looking forward to completing his level 3 qualification in March 2025.

He said: "I've always tried to keep my knowledge up to date with various short courses available in the NHS, but starting an apprenticeship is possibly the biggest educational commitment I have made in more than 20 years.

"My role is varied and covers everything from training staff, wellbeing, health and safety to running reports, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and various projects in the department. The module in this apprenticeship supports my day-to-day duties.

"I've already got more confidence which is enabling me to fill the gaps in my knowledge that I need to do the role more successfully."

And his message to others is: "You are never too old to learn new skills or even progress in your current role. Don't let age be a barrier and apply for that course you have been looking at – you won't regret it."

David Hannon-Homer, Skills Coach at GLP Training, has supported Lee since the start of his apprenticeship.

He said: "Lee is a pleasure to work with and is always engaging well and contributes great ideas at our group sessions.



Lee Pearson, Facilities Support Officer, at work

"The workshops are always followed up with excellent assignments and pieces of work. With regards to his functional skills, Lee has tackled these head on and is regularly engaging with his English and Maths tutors and has recently take his exams."

Lee says he has been inspired by his boss, Lee Cooper, Portering Manager, who has just graduated with a BA Honours degree in business management – chartered manager degree apprenticeship.

"I'd like to thank Lee. He has become my mentor and without him, none of this would have been possible," he added.

The Apprenticeship Team at RWT offers opportunities to those who want to start their career in the NHS, as well as those who are already in the NHS. It offers 62 different apprenticeships from Level 2 to Level 7.

Danielle Wilkes, Apprenticeship Promotion and Information Officer at RWT, added: "Lee is a great example of how age is not a barrier, having said it is one of the most informative and educational courses he's ever taken part in."

Focus on our Apprentices

Inspirational Amy wins award



Proud Amy being presented with her award by Louise Nickell

After vowing to "give back" to the NHS, Amy Sharkey's determination and innovation has led to her receiving an award to kick off her dream career at Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital.

The Nursing Associate Practitioner at RWT, Amy is the Trust's Apprentice of the Year 2024.

She was inspired to turn to Nursing after seeing the care given to patients when her nan was diagnosed with bowel cancer seven years ago.

The 38-year-old's ambition to be a Nurse is well on its way to becoming a reality as she has nearly completed her level 5 degree and is halfway to becoming a qualified Nurse.

Her commitment to the service saw her introduce weekend working to support patients' post-surgery and facilitate faster discharge.

She wanted to be there to provide physical and psychological support, not just during weekdays.

The mother of four also keeps motivating her children to become the best they can be.

She said: "I struggled when I was younger trying to juggle three jobs and

looking after my children.

"I always knew I wanted to be a Nurse, and when my nan had to have major operations, I knew I wanted to specialise in stoma care.

"This is my passion and I'm living it. I want to provide the care that was given to my nan by the team at RWT."

Louise Nickell, Group Director of Education and Training, presented Amy with the award.

She said: "Amy has had an inspiring journey. Having started her working life outside of the NHS, Amy quickly developed an innovative role in the Colorectal department as the first Apprentice in that team.

"After developing teaching aids to train staff, Amy teaches stoma care to new staff, Nurses, and Doctors, which recognises her skills, knowledge, and experience. Patients love her."

Amy's family, including her son, Luke Sharkey, 16, and her 90-year-old-nan, watched her being honoured.

Luke said: "Myself and my siblings are extremely proud of our mum. We have seen the hard work and determination she has put into the role – even at home.



Amy all smiles with son Luke

"This has inspired me in my own development in my decision to join the British Army. She has helped me throughout my journey."

Amy's colleague, Louise Ryder, Clinical Nurse Specialist, nominated her for the award.

Louise added: "Amy is an excellent teacher, advocate, and role model for the department and all our patients sing her praises, as do we.

"She has also put herself forward to present at the West Midlands Stoma Nurse Conference to encourage and inform others."

"I always knew I wanted to be a Nurse, and when my nan had to have major operations, I knew I wanted to specialise in stoma care."

Farewell David

Four-page special on our retiring Group Chief Executive



Man of the people...Prof. Loughton (centre) with Cannock Chase Hospital staff after achieving Getting It Right First Time status

He's achieved so much, but as he prepares to retire, Professor David Loughton CBE says he owes it all to the people he has worked with.

Prof. Loughton leaves at the end of April 2024 after nearly 20 years as Chief Executive of RWT – the last two and a half years as Group Chief Executive also leading Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust – and 40 years in the NHS.

“Without doubt, my biggest achievement has been building successful Executive teams, because that enables you to deliver everything,” said Prof. Loughton, 70.

“A lot of my directors have been with me for years – we know each other and we’re a brilliant team.

“I’ll be sad to leave quite a number of the people I work with because they’re friends more than colleagues, and some will remain lifelong friends.

“You can only do things if you’ve got time. But if you keep turning over your Executive Team, you get nothing done.”

At Wolverhampton, Prof. Loughton’s main initial task was turning around the finances.

“When I came to Wolverhampton, it was in real financial trouble – in £37m deficit,” he said.

“And we were the third worst in the country for infection prevention.

“Within 18 months, we were among the best in the country, with the longest period of time between MRSA major incidents.

“That was also the turning point in terms of staffing. I realised in 2005 we couldn’t control the infection prevention standards of agency staff, so we stopped using agency Nurses.

“That was probably one of the best and biggest things I’ve done at Wolverhampton.”

Astute recruitment is key, says Prof. Loughton.

“We have people who want to come to work here, and we want people to recommend it as a place to be treated,” he added.

“The theory is simple: Happy medical students want to come back as Doctors in training, and happy Doctors in training want to come back here as Consultants.

“To this day, I’m on 90 per cent of interview panels here for Consultants.



“I spend lots of time talking to people prior to interviews trying to attract them because some are here for 20 years.

“I look for good people. I probably spend a third of my time looking for good people – Consultants and Nursing staff.”

Allowing his Executive Team to manage operations gives him time to focus on his long-term vision of making RWT one of the most innovative Trusts in the country.

Among the many major projects he has led has been Cannock Chase Hospital becoming one of the first hospitals in England to achieve Getting It Right First Time status (pictured) in March 2023.

This enabled the site to become an accredited surgical hub for elective surgery.

“Service development is the second most important strand of everything I do,” added Prof. Loughton.

“I try to avoid working on anything that affects the organisation for the next six months.

“I’m always looking further ahead – I leave the Chief Operating Officers and Directors of Nursing to look after the operational side of things and keep checking in with them to see if everything is OK.”

So does he have any regrets? “Sometimes the amount of time things have taken,” he added.

“My big regret here is not delivering a new women’s and children’s hospital after trying several times.

“But I don’t really have regrets or disappointments – you just have to keep going until you deliver.”

For someone so aware of the importance of recruiting the right people, it’s little surprise that Prof. Loughton is keen for

his legacy to be about staff.

“I’m so proud Walsall and Wolverhampton have got one of the lowest levels of vacancies in the NHS,” he said.

“Since I’ve been at Walsall we’ve recruited 400 more Nurses, we’re full in terms of Midwives at both Trusts at a time when 70 per cent of Maternity Units in the country have unsafe staffing levels.

“I’m also particularly proud of the quality of the clinical staff, both Medics and Nurses recruited.

“In the last 12 years, Wolverhampton has gone from a mortality index of 120 to 90.

“It means fewer people are dying than you would reasonably expect, which is down to the quality of care.

“At Walsall, because of the quality of permanent Nursing staff, the incidences of patient harm have plummeted and the early indications are that patient mortality is coming down.

“These are probably my two biggest achievements.”

But as he reflects on almost five and a half decades in the workplace, Prof. Loughton is in no doubt it is the right time to go.

“I’m 70, I’ve done 35 years (as a Chief Executive) and it’s time for me to spend time doing something else,” he insisted. “My mind thinks I’m 25 but my body knows I’m not! I’m going to live on my boat, which is moored in the Cotswolds. I enjoy walking, so I’ll get a lot more time to spend outdoors.

“I’m retiring at exactly the right time because the summer’s coming and I’ll enjoy living on the boat.”

David's two decades at RWT

In David's 20 years at RWT and more recently also Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, he has overseen a huge number of changes and milestones. Here are just a few of his greatest hits:



The £57 million Heart and Lung Centre which opened at New Cross in 2004 was the UK's first purpose-built specialist heart centre. It's gone from strength to strength, and now has the highest activity out of the four Midlands centres and lowest mortality rate nationwide.



In 2011, we became the first NHS Trust in the Midlands to deliver robotic surgery, with a prostate removal for early prostate cancer in a man from Halesowen, referred from Dudley. We have since gone on to perform between 2,000 and 3,000 cases in Urology alone and now have two robots operating in many specialties. Our experts have worked with our robots to build a surgical repertoire ranging from life-saving cancer surgery to life-changing joint replacement.



In 2014, RWT became the first NHS Trust in the country to introduce Teletracking – a world leading patient and staff badge tracking system that has since been imitated many times over.



Vertical integration has been a huge success – starting with three GP practices in 2016 and growing to now include nine practices which work closely with acute colleagues to streamline and better personalise patient care.



In April 2014, the Trust started hosting the NIHR Clinical Research Network West Midlands, cementing our place at the forefront of academic and operational health research.



In 2018, Black Country Pathology Services was launched, joining together Pathology services for all four local NHS trusts, co-locating in a state-of-the-art £16 million centre on the New Cross site the following year.



Trust teams pulled together like never before when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Every single colleague made a vital contribution, but headline innovations included the opening of a new 56-bedded ward to support infection prevention and control, and a manufacturing hub in the library at New Cross, where redeployed staff made 5,000 visors a day.



In October 2014, Cannock Chase Hospital transferred to RWT following the dissolution of Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust. The Hospital is now an important part of the RWT family and plays a key role in the provision of elective care.



In April 2021, the Trust began its important strategic collaboration with Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, which continues to grow and develop. In 2022 both Trusts launched a joint strategy with the four Cs – Care, Colleagues, Collaboration, Communities – at its heart.



In 2015, a new £38 million Urgent and Emergency Care Centre opened at New Cross Hospital.



In September 2021, the Trust announced plans for a 40-acre solar farm at New Cross, in partnership with Vital Energi, which is due to officially open soon.



The Trust continues to embrace new and innovative ways of working, with digital technology at the forefront. Next up is the delivery of our new £10 million electronic patient records system, in partnership with System C.



Professor David Loughton CBE with Tom Mortimer, Project Support Officer



Amanda Campbell-Jackson receiving her award from Professor David Loughton CBE



Ruth Stokes (right) being presented with her award from Professor David Loughton CBE (left) and runner-up Joshua Terry

Staff celebrated at first digital awards

Digital innovation and ground-breaking technology were celebrated at a digital awards ceremony – the first of its kind in Walsall and Wolverhampton.

Hosted by the Digital Innovation Unit, which works across RWT and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, the event brought together colleagues interested in a digital innovation project, providing an opportunity to network and showcase their work.

Professor David Loughton CBE, Group Chief Executive of both Trusts, welcomed healthcare professionals across hospital, community, and Primary Care settings to the conference suite at GTG in Wolverhampton.

He said: "People, data and technology are crucial to the ongoing evolution of the NHS, and by working together we can innovate to deliver exceptional patient care now, and for the future."

Alvina Nisbett, Group Director of Digital Innovation, added: "This event was about raising awareness of good digital governance and clinical safety, plus a

chance to hear from experts on the importance of digital innovation linked to healthcare."

Speakers touched on a range of topics and included Jayne Lawrence, Head of Information at RWT, talking about the benefits of good data storage.

Janet Mortimore, Head of Information at Walsall Healthcare, detailed the statistics and reports available via Walsall's 'InfoHub', which is considered to be the "jewel in the crown."

The Trusts were privileged to welcome special guests Dr Umang Patel, Chief Clinical Information Officer for Microsoft, and Professor Sultan Mahmud, Director of Healthcare at BT and former Director of Strategy at RWT.

Dr Patel said: "The world has changed, and I think we can get on the front foot to transform healthcare delivery."

Professor Mahmud talked about artificial intelligence platforms, data architecture, cloud connectivity, and a digital future that is "within grasp".

Staff were invited to create posters

which were displayed in the main concourse – all showcasing their efforts to improve processes and patient outcomes.

The event concluded with an award ceremony, where the following RWT staff were recognised:

- Baljit Juss, Digital Implementation Manager, Reducing Digital Inequalities and Improving Digital Access Award
- Ruth Stokes, Senior Sister for Nursing Quality, Innovative Use of Data and Analytics to Improve Patient Outcomes Award
- Tom Mortimer, Project Support Officer, Improving out of Hospital Care Through Digital Award
- Andrea Campbell-Jackson, Service Support Manager – Virtual Ward and Hospital at Home, Empowering Patients or Staff through Digital Award
- Dr Sandeep Hothi, Consultant Cardiologist, Digital Clinical Pathway Transformation Award

Sharon is honoured with regional award

A "fantastic" senior healthcare leader has been honoured with a regional award after transforming Radiology at New Cross Hospital.

Sharon Dhadda, Radiology Workforce Lead at RWT, won the Black Country Allied Health Professional (AHP) Workforce Transformation Award.

Her award category acknowledges individual AHPs, AHP support workers or teams demonstrating transformation through innovation in AHP workforce.

Sharon heads up staffing for Radiology, which includes Diagnostic Radiography, one of 11 specialties AHPs are employed in at RWT.

The eight Black Country AHP Awards covers 2,200 registered AHPs across six NHS Trusts – RWT, Walsall Healthcare, Sandwell and West Birmingham, The Dudley Group, Dudley Integrated Health and Care Trust and Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Extended to local authority and private/voluntary sector, there are approximately 4,592 registered AHPs and 545 AHP support workers from Primary and Secondary Care in the area.

Each Trust selected its own winner who was put forward for the Black Country awards, so Sharon saw off competition from five other organisations.

Sharon has revamped Radiology by increasing staff numbers to previously difficult-to-fill roles and introducing an apprenticeship scheme so the Trust can produce its own staff.

"It's been a wonderful experience and mainly because I have the backing and support of a fantastic team," said Sharon.

"I'm proud to contribute to making the patient journey better by recruiting, retaining and developing our staff, and to be recognised for this is a lovely bonus."

She was presented with her award by Sir David Nicholson KCB, CBE, Group Chair of RWT and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust at the ceremony held at West Bromwich Albion FC.

Sharon added: "I moved into this role two years ago and didn't expect to be able to make so many significant changes in such a short space of time.

"We've had many firsts – our first Diagnostic Radiographer apprenticeship programme, our first experience of recruiting colleagues from an international profile in large numbers, and the introduction of a focused Clinical Education Team.

"It's been a wonderful experience so far, and mainly because I have the backing and support of a fantastic team of managers and colleagues.



Sharon Dhadda pictured with her regional award

"Our story revolves around providing the best quality of care for our patients who are at the heart of everything that we do.

"I'm proud to contribute to making that patient journey better by recruiting, retaining and developing our staff.

"Helping people is at the core of my values and beliefs, and to be recognised for this work with an award is a lovely bonus."

Stuart Simper, Head of Operational Radiology, nominated Sharon.

He said: "We were a struggling department understaffed in almost every area. But after Sharon became Workforce Lead, the number of staff recruited is now over 100.

"Sharon has implemented a full training team to assist junior staff to fully develop. We're now getting applications from all over the UK.

"Her appointment made this department a sought-after place to work and her input is invaluable. She's a fantastic member of staff."



Our Exceeding Expectation award is a monthly recognition given to a colleague who has gone the extra mile for either a patient or a colleague. RWT is always proud of its colleagues for bringing the Trust's values to life and going the extra mile for colleagues and patients. They make us proud of our RWT family.

Read below to find out about the most recent winners.

January

Tim Jones, Associate Practitioner in Cardiac Investigations, impressed our judges the most in January – after hitting the big screen!

Working in the Electrocardiogram (ECG) department at RWT, Tim always strives to deliver safe, high-quality care to our patients.

Education has been at the centre of his work, with a recent example being a YouTube video he developed.

Aimed at supporting other healthcare professionals, it provides expert knowledge surrounding cardiac investigations.

The clip has since been viewed worldwide by 710,000 people.

He also provides regular support to medical students, helping them to conduct ECGs.

Always going the extra mile, he is an example of someone who brings RWT's values to life every day. Well done Tim!



Tim Jones flanked by Professor David Loughton CBE and colleague Emma Painter

February

A huge well done to Emily Cooper, Early Pregnancy Bereavement Nurse, for winning February's award.

Emily was nominated by mum-to-be Izabela Szlapa, who returned to New Cross Hospital to show her appreciation to Emily.

Izabela describes Emily as her "beacon of hope" for supporting her and her husband David through the tragedy of baby loss last year.



Emily Cooper receiving her award from Professor David Loughton CBE

The couple are still being supported by Emily.

Emily was also joined by Professor David Loughton CBE, Group Chief Executive, who surprised her with the well-deserved award.

March

Congratulations to Jason Vistenia, Senior Clinical Nurse Specialist, for catching the judge's eye in March.

Jason's journey in the Dermatology Team at Cannock Chase Hospital began with a clear vision to elevate the standard of care for patients with complex dermatological conditions.

Not only has he succeeded with his mission, but he has also reduced waiting times, improved access to care and achieved patient satisfaction.

Providing education and training are his main priorities, recognising the importance of empowering colleagues with the knowledge and skills to deliver high-quality care.

This has improved staff competency and confidence and also fostered a culture of learning and development.

Under Jason's leadership and proactive approach, the service has flourished into a model of excellence.



Jason Vistenia with Louise Coope, Clinical Nurse Specialist

Do you know a member of staff or a team who bring RWT values to life?

Maybe they go the extra mile for their patients or colleagues? Do they exceed expectations daily?

If so, please nominate the member of staff or a team for the award.

Please go to <https://www.royalwolverhampton.nhs.uk/about-us/awards/exceeding-expectation-award/>

The winners will be announced on the Trust's social media and in the next edition of Trust Talk.

Facebook – The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

Instagram – rwt_nhs

Twitter – @RWT_NHS

Tik Tok – RWTNHS



Master's first for trailblazing Toyin

A senior healthcare leader and mentor is celebrating after becoming Wolverhampton's first international Nurse to pass a Master's degree through its development programme.

Toyin Olu-Adeniran, who teaches Nurses for RWT and is based at New Cross Hospital, has gained an MSc in Professional Practice in Healthcare (Teaching and Learning).

The 35-year-old, a Practice Education Facilitator (PEF) (Post-Registration), completed her Master's at the University of Wolverhampton last October after starting it in 2020.

"I'm excited and proud as it's been my dream to attain my Master's," said Toyin, who had a post-graduate diploma in education when she arrived in the UK from Nigeria in 2019.

"It's not been easy with challenges balancing work and family, so I'm pleased to have completed it."

Toyin is grateful to the RWT's award-winning Clinical Fellowship programme which supports Nurses to study for both BSc and MSc degrees combined with their jobs.

"I'm very thankful to the Clinical Fellowship for giving me the opportunity to study, and for the team's investment in me, so I want to give something back to Nurses and students I teach now," she added.

As part of her PEF role which she has been in since August, Toyin also supports students at RWT.

Running different development programmes to support and educate Nurses, she also hosts induction programmes for Nurses and Healthcare Assistants.

The fourth of six siblings, Toyin has come a long way since arriving in the UK in March 2019.

She started her British career at a nursing home in Basingstoke, Hampshire, passing her OSCE (clinical exams to work in the UK) there, before a friend recommended Wolverhampton to her, and she was appointed as a Staff Nurse at RWT.

After nine months in Basingstoke, she decided to make the UK – or more accurately Ettingshall – her home, with her husband of eight years, Oluyemi, a product owner for Jaguar Land Rover in Gaydon.

Starting as a Staff Nurse on Ward C25 (Renal) at New Cross, Toyin had a taste of her future with a six-month secondment in Nurse Education before becoming a Clinical PEF in Surgical Division across various surgical wards.

"I came to the UK because I wanted to experience a different culture and different ways of practising nursing," said Toyin.



Toyin Olu-Adeniran, teaches Nurses at RWT

"The first change I noticed was it was a lot colder, and people were asking me why I was walking around in my big coat in March! But it's been lovely – I've learned a lot, made lots of friends and been made very welcome.

"Achieving my Master's and doing my job is rewarding for me because people see me as a mentor, and I enjoy seeing people developing their careers.

"To anyone I'd say the opportunities are there and the Trust is very supportive."

"I'm excited and proud as it's been my dream to attain my Master's"

Determined Nurse achieves dream job



Delighted Marilyn Holdaway, who has landed her dream job

A determined healthcare worker has achieved her dream of qualifying as a Nurse and hopes her story will inspire other volunteers to apply for a job in the NHS.

Marilyn Holdaway came to the UK from Spain in 2000, having originally come from Cuba.

She said: "In Cuba I was an English teacher, but I knew my passion and desire in life was to become a Nurse.

"It was my dream, but I had no idea how to get into the NHS. I spoke to my friend who said the best thing to do was to apply to be a volunteer."

After applying and successfully passing the application process, Marilyn started as a volunteer in 2015 on Ward A8 at New Cross Hospital.

She said: "I had a very good experience on this ward and I loved working there.

"I mainly made teas and coffees but wanted to do more. The Volunteer Services Team rang the ward for me to request this and they gave me training to feed patients and I picked up some other tasks.

"Everyone on the ward encouraged me to progress. And then a job opportunity came up there as a Healthcare Assistant (HCA).

"I applied but I was so nervous. I nearly dropped out – thinking it was too challenging for me, my spoken English wasn't strong, and I had never been for an interview in the Trust."

With support and guidance from Eleanor Morris, Deputy Head of Patient Experience, Marilyn felt more prepared for the interview.

Marilyn added: "Eleanor was so helpful – she went through some example interview questions with me, and we practised over and over.

"She said 'Do your best, be yourself, and have confidence to know you can do it'.

"Those words will stick in my head forever. I will never forget her kindness and support. I was so happy to get the HCA job.

"I applied for a Nursing qualification in 2018 and was successful with my course application.

"I became a Registered Nurse in July 2023 and now work as a Nurse in Stroke Services. I have achieved my dream and never looked back since."

Now Marilyn wants to inspire others to get into the NHS.

To find out more about becoming a volunteer, contact 01902 307999 ext 88763 or email rwh-tr.volunteering@nhs.net

Top Consultant to lead new research network

A Consultant Gastroenterologist at RWT has been appointed as Director of a new research network in the region.

Professor Matthew Brookes said he was "honoured and immensely privileged" to be given the opportunity to lead the new West Midlands Regional Research Delivery Network when it launches in October 2024.

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Research Delivery Network (RDN) will comprise 12 new Regional Research Delivery Networks (RRDNs), hosted by NHS organisations covering all English regions.

RWT will be the RRDN host for the West Midlands.

The RRDN started on 1 April 2024, with service delivery due to begin on 1 October 2024.

This follows the end of the contract for the NIHR's current regional delivery arm, the Clinical Research Network (CRN) West Midlands, on 30 September 2024.

Prof. Brookes, who started his role in April 2024, said: "This is an incredible opportunity to extend research delivery in primary, community and social care settings.

"It will make it easier for the West Midlands population to access cutting-

edge treatments and innovative technologies and models of care, through research.

"Our aims and ambitions as the NIHR RDN will build on the invaluable work of the CRN over the last 10 years.

"It is a tribute to the many dedicated Network staff that we are now in a position to move forward with our plans to boost support for delivery of the vital research that meets the health and care needs of the population."

Dr Brian McKaig, Chief Medical Officer at RWT, said: "The West Midlands Regional Research Delivery Network presents a fantastic opportunity to improve and enhance the effective delivery of relevant, inclusive and collaborative research in all health and care settings across the region.

"We are delighted Professor Brookes is going to be at the vanguard of these new arrangements for supporting the successful delivery of the highest quality research.

"He will play a key role in the joint national leadership function, which will balance regional context, expertise and leadership with national co-ordination and strategy."

The new NIHR RDN will support the country's world-class research system to deliver high-quality studies that



Professor Matthew Brookes has a new role

enable the best care for patients and the public.

It will work across the health and care system – and with staff in all settings – to support the effective and efficient initiation and delivery of research.

This will benefit people receiving care now and in the future. It will support the NHS and care services and generate benefits for the economy in the UK.

Sapphire success as West Park Neuro Rehab Unit awarded highest level of accreditation

A unit which cares for people with acute neurological conditions has been recognised for its exemplary patient care by being awarded the highest level of clinical accreditation at RWT.

Sarah Cleaver, Senior Sister on the Neuro Rehabilitation Unit at West Park Hospital, and her team were presented with a Sapphire Award by

Debra Hickman, RWT Chief Nursing Officer.

The unit was the first one at RWT to receive the accreditation.

To receive the accreditation, each area must pass an audit which looks at 15 identified areas such as medicine management, communication, safeguarding, and feedback.

Sarah said: "I am so proud of the team. They have done an excellent job to achieve this. It just shows what we already know – it is a great place to work and be cared for."

The report details patients reported feeling "safe and well cared for." It also said how it was clear staff worked well together.

Staff were described as 'incredibly welcoming, friendly, and chatty' and always going above and beyond for their patients.

Debra said: "Well done to all the team for their hard work and commitment to provide exceptional patient care."



From left, standing: Jo Sanhi, Ellie Power, Gayathri Ruwanpura, Lal Aros-Atolagbe, Katrina Creedon, Clare Tank, Babette Bekoka, Nicola Morris and Emma Stewart. From left, seated: Sarah Cleaver being presented the Sapphire Clinical Award by Debra Hickman, Chief Nursing Officer

Yes, Minister



Downing Street date for Consultant Nurse Phil



Phil Tittensor, Consultant Nurse for the Epilepsies at RWT, ringing the bell as he prepares to enter 10 Downing Street

A leading epilepsy Nurse was invited to Downing Street to showcase a new national partnership.

Phil Tittensor, Consultant Nurse for the Epilepsies at RWT, represented Nursing as part of the UK Epilepsy Priority Setting Partnership (PSP).

He is one of the most active Epilepsy Research Nurses in the UK and is Chair of the Epilepsy Nurses Association (ESNA).

Phil attended a buffet and drinks reception at Number 10 with George Freeman, the recent Minister of State in the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology. Julia Cumberlege, The Baroness Cumberlege CBE DL, a member of the House of Lords, was also key to the event and gave a short talk.

She wrote The Baroness Cumberlege Report which first recommended Community Nurses prescribe from a restricted list of drugs and applications.

The PSP is a once-in-a-generation national consensus which collated and ranked the research priorities of the UK's epilepsy community – epilepsy patients, their families, friends and carers, those bereaved by epilepsy, clinicians and health and social care professionals.

Funded and led by the Epilepsy Research Institute, the PSP sets the research landscape for the condition over the next 10 years in the UK and will have global influence.

The ESNA has affiliation with the Institute, as well as a long-standing association with its predecessor, Epilepsy Research UK.

The information gathered helped identify and prioritise areas of healthcare that can be improved by research, to result in higher quality studies and increased investment in research into epilepsy.

"I was proud and delighted to attend," said Phil, who is based at Cannock Chase Hospital (CCH).

"The scope of the UK Epilepsy PSP was to look at causes, including prevention and co-morbidities, diagnosis – with access to health services – and treatment, to include anti-epileptic drugs, surgery, side effects, co-morbidities (including those as a consequence of treatment), and epilepsy that does not respond to treatment.

"It also included clinical management of epilepsy, including risk of epilepsy-related deaths (including Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy – SUDEP), service access, neuro development, co-morbidities, social and psychological factors, and emerging areas such as epilepsy in older people."

The role of new technologies – specifically artificial intelligence and machine learning – is also a top 10 priority, and is Phil's specific research interest. He leads several trials that are either planned or underway.

"The dissemination of research breakthroughs to influence epilepsy care, practice and policy, including medical education and pathways to improved care, was also part of the scope," added Phil. "This work underpinned setting up the Institute."

Pioneering training programme receives national recognition

An innovative training course for aspiring healthcare leaders in Wolverhampton has been received a prestigious award at the Houses of Parliament.

The Future Medical Leaders Programme, run by RWT, won the Good Practice in Training Category at the Healthcare Honours Awards.

Dr Harjinder Kainth, Consultant in Acute Internal Medicine and General Internal Medicine, and Laura Willis, Acting Group Head of Corporate Learning Services, attended the awards ceremony which was held at Westminster.

Laura said: "We were truly shocked. We know we have a fantastic programme,

but the competition was high.

"We heard from other inspirational NHS colleagues in the room and there was some truly amazing work that is taking place.

"When we heard the news we had won we were over the moon that our programme was recognised and awarded first place.

"It's a fantastic recognition of the passion and commitment the team has for designing and delivering excellence in colleague development.

"Going forward the plan is to continue developing and delivering excellence in our Leadership Development programme for all colleagues at RWT."



Dr Harjinder Kainth, Consultant in Acute Internal Medicine and General Internal Medicine, and Laura Willis, Acting Group Head of Corporate Learning Services with their award

High praise from government minister

Staff who provide a one-stop shop in Wolverhampton that offers support and guidance to families have been praised for their "dedication" by a government minister.

David Johnston, Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing, and members of the Children's Social Care National Implementation Board visited Graiseley Family Hub in the city.

Graiseley Family Hub was opened earlier this year to give guidance and advice to support families through pregnancy and beyond, including infant feeding, mental health and wellbeing, health visiting support and parenting classes.

It provides a wide range of other services, including stay and play sessions and birth registrations.

It also brings together services that can make a huge difference to people who need extra support, such as advice on benefits and welfare rights, getting into work, relationship building and stopping smoking.

Mr Johnston said: "It was a pleasure to be in Wolverhampton meeting the Graiseley Family Hub team which is doing excellent work supporting local families with services ranging

from infant feeding to help with housing and employment. Their dedication to supporting local people shone through."



Charlotte Leo (left), Community Midwifery Matron, and Marion Astbury meeting David Johnston, Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing at Graiseley Family Hub

Clergy calling prompts Nurse's career juggle

A Nurse is combining caring for patients with nurturing the body and soul after joining the clergy.

Reverend Phil Douglas, 60, a Staff Nurse, works three days a week at Wolverhampton Eye Infirmary and performs his parish duties on Wednesdays and Sundays.

Phil, who lives in Wednesfield, is now serving his curacy at the Church of the Epiphany in Oxley for the next five years.

He sees similarities between both careers. "Both involve caring as well as serving others," said Phil, who is based at New Cross Hospital.

"In a way I'm following tradition, as the first Nurses were monks who saw it as their religious duty to care for the sick.

"I can do the deacon role at work as you don't need a clerical collar.

"Then there are things such as praying for colleagues who may have a time of need."

Phil started attending a Methodist church in 1986 where he was christened. But he says God "called" him to the Church of England.

Initially his training was academic, studying for a Graduate Certificate in Theology, Ministry and Mission, at The Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education in Birmingham.

Following completion of this he was ordained at Lichfield Cathedral.



Phil in his day job as a Staff Nurse

"Over two years I studied the bible, doctrine, spirituality and worship and gained practical experience in leading worship and preaching. Juggling study with work was tough," said Phil.

"The training is also about formation – you're 'reformed' by God into the person he's called you to be. It's a lifelong process."



Phil Douglas, Staff Nurse as his parishioners see him in church

Now he is studying to be a curate – a priest in a parish but not in charge of it. Phil describes this as like an "apprenticeship" after becoming a deacon, the first stage of his ordained role.

"I assist leading worship, preach and administer holy communion," he added.

Phil now intends to become a priest, for which he will be ordained in June.

That will sit alongside his deacon role, enabling him to celebrate holy communion.

One of his more demanding tasks is preparing sermons.

"It can take lots of time," he said. "There are set Bible readings for each service. Often, I let an idea from a reading 'buzz' for a few days. I've used everyday things like the vending machine at work and my cats!"

Abigail Francis, Senior Sister, Ophthalmology Outpatients Department, said: We're extremely proud of Phil and his achievements."

Phil trained at New Cross and the former Royal Hospital before working in Theatres at the latter for 10 years.

After graduating in Nursing in Oxford, he returned to RWT, and bar a short stint in prison nursing and addiction services, has been with RWT ever since, at Cannock Eye Centre before almost four years at the Eye Infirmary.

A coffee and catch up...

with Emily Jarvis, Senior Sister in Adult Community

From volunteer to leading a team of 40 in just 10 years – Emily Jarvis is a shining example of what can be achieved if you put your mind to it.

She fell in love with caring for patients so much as a volunteer at Russells Hall Hospital that she decided to go into healthcare.

Then at 17 she secured a position as a Healthcare Assistant on the Cardiology Day Unit (now B15 Catheter Suite) at New Cross Hospital.

Showing a clear passion to climb the ladder, Emily was seconded to complete her Nursing degree by RWT.

After graduating, she joined a fast-paced surgical environment at New Cross, as a Staff Nurse on Ward A12.

But after losing her nan Eileen Jarvis on the same unit and with memories still raw, she found it too much to continue working there and decided on a change, to community.

Emily and her team provide care to patients in their own home, easing pressure on hospital services and freeing up beds for those in need.

Digital champions

"The Virtual Ward was set up and it was merging with the Hospital at Home service and I was encouraged to go for the Junior Sister post, which I got," said Emily.

"From there, the opportunity came up to go for the Senior Sister's role and I got that."

Leading by example, in the last few months the 26-year-old from Coseley won a national award for recruiting digital champions to empower staff to use easy-to-use remote monitoring apps more effectively. This featured in the previous edition of Trust Talk.

So after achieving so much so soon, where does the drive come from?

"My family has always been hardworking, to work for what you get, and I was brought up to be the same," she said.

"I also wanted to do well for my grandparents who are no longer with us, so I think it comes from that too."

Emily is keen for her service to continue growing.



Award-winning Emily Jarvis is climbing the ladder quickly

"I love being a part of an ever-growing developing service, developing new pathways and building my knowledge," she added.

"My biggest challenge is promoting the service to other organisations and trying to capture the right people at the right time.

"However, on the flip side, we are also working with acute hospital referrals and have increased this over the last six months."

Emily is flourishing in her leadership role and supports her colleagues to empower themselves.

"I'm always a listening ear to my colleagues," she added.

"I support my staff members' personal development and provide an environment that improves staff retention."

If you know someone who has an interesting job in the Trust and think they would like to share what they do then please email rwh-tr.CommunicationsDept@nhs.net

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