

# PULSE

Find out more about your trust  
members' newsletter

Winter 2011-2012

Issue 21



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# A stroke of genius

The Stroke Unit is striding ahead nationally as the first NHS hospital in the country to be using a pioneering piece of technology to help our stroke patients.

The Bioness NESS Hand Rehabilitation System stimulates movement in partially paralysed limbs.

The device is strapped to a patient's hand and forearm sending electronic signals along the arm to the brain to stimulate nerve and muscle activity.

Sarah Adlington, Physiotherapist, said: "We use our hands a lot and losing movement there is one of the most frustrating things for stroke patients."

The machine, which cost £10,000, was funded by the Royal Berks Charity.

Drew Plumber, Physiotherapy Assistant, helped raise money towards the purchase of the machine by running the Reading Half Marathon in March. He was the fastest member of staff to complete the course with a fantastic time of 1:34:44.



Sarah Adlington helps patient, Steve Low, use the pioneering new kit. (Photo courtesy Reading Post)

# Zipper donate to Cardiology

Trust member and patient Ken Scowen knew just where to find a good cause for a generous gift. He generously nominated the Trust's Cardiology Department as a worthy cause to receive a £2000 donation from the Zipper Bowling Association.

The national club, of which Ken is a member, is made up of people who have had open heart surgery or intrusive cardiac procedures (such as primary angioplasty). They are invited to play by bowling clubs around the country to raise money for cardiac charities and funds.

The association was started in 1996 and currently has 258 members in 35 counties across the country.

Lesley Tyler, Senior Cardiac Support Nurse, gratefully received the cheque on behalf on the department.



Ken Scowden with Lesley Tyler and student cardiac physiologist, Emily Cabrol

Lesley said: "We would very much like to thank Ken and the other members of the Zipper Bowling Association for this

generous donation. The money will go into the Cardiac Fund where it will be used for equipment and training."

# Hundreds attend our Annual Members' Meeting

The big "must" event for everyone's diary proved a big success with our members – over 250 of you came along to our annual meeting at the Madejski Stadium in Reading.

Feedback from members showed that guests found the evening really worthwhile and an excellent opportunity to find out the facts.

Chief Executive Ed Donald presented a review of the year, highlighting some of the many achievements by the Trust and our staff.

And with changes to the NHS very much a hot topic in the news, Chairman Colin Maclean gave members an insight into how the Trust is responding to the challenges which lie ahead – and our determination to provide an even better service to the community.

Mr Maclean explained the Trust wants to use "innovative" ways to find £60m worth of savings by 2015. He said: "There is a lot of change around and we need to develop our strengths and direction. We are looking at taking care out of the hospital so it's more financially viable and bringing it closer to home, reducing time spent in hospital to benefit patients."

Solutions include running more treatments from clinics in West Berkshire Community Hospital, Newbury and Townlands Hospital, Henley, along with our new Royal Berkshire Bracknell Clinic.

This year's keynote presentation was given by Rheumatology consultant Dr Antoni Chan and included an informative film featuring his colleague Dr Jeremy McNally which spotlighted the new treatments offering dramatic improvements for rheumatoid arthritis patients.

Away from the main meeting there was plenty to interest the hundreds of visitors with information displays showing the work of many different departments in the Trust ranging from the new children's A&E to critical care, renal and the opportunities available for people who wish to join our mini army of volunteers.

And there was an added reason for celebration – just days earlier the Trust was awarded the prestigious HSJ Patient Safety Award for an exciting project which has led to big reductions in the numbers of patients developing pneumonia. Our main photo on the front cover shows some of our Governors with the trophy.



**LEFT:**  
Anaesthetics Consultant Dr Ian Rechner showed members a new hi-tech automatic ventilator which is being piloted in the Intensive Care Unit.

**ABOVE:** Ian Thomson from the Royal Berks Charity explains to members how their fundraising can provide important new facilities in the Trust.

**ABOVE:** Outgoing Vice-chair of the Council of Governors, Deborah Sander, presents her report at the meeting

## Trust wins top patient safety award

One of the "stars" of the Annual Members Meeting was a silver trophy – the important HSJ Patient Safety Award which had been presented to the Trust a few days previously.

It was in recognition of an innovative method for preventing pneumonia in patients by ensuring that all patients have their beds tilted by 30 degrees.

In October 2010, the patient safety team implemented the scheme across eight wards to see if it would reduce the number of patients who developed the illness during a hospital stay.

Staff found a reduction of up to 60 per cent in cases of pneumonia in those wards over a six-month period. Raising the patient's head slightly means any fluid in their lungs collects at the bottom.

Renal consultant Dr Emma Vaux, who is leading the project, said: "We're very proud of winning the award and I think it's a reflection of all the hard work that not only the patient safety team have been doing but it's very much a trust-wide project with contribution from everyone.

"We have made a difference to the quality of patient care and unnecessary chest infections, but it has also made a difference that staff across the Trust can see."

# How we performed – through the eyes of one patient

His weekly newspaper column with its highly perceptive and often acid comments, is avidly followed by readers of the *Reading Chronicle*. So when Maurice O'Brien, one of the region's most prominent journalists, was admitted as a patient to the Trust his stay in hospital became the subject of his next article.

And for our staff it provided a totally unbiased account of how one patient felt we had performed.

In this special article for *Pulse*, Maurice recounts his time as a patient and casts his eagle eye over day to day life as he found it.

A FEW weeks ago I came across an internet review on a hotel which happens to be one of my favourite haunts.

Having happily stayed there four years running, there was no mistaking the address and location, in the fishing village of Howth, just north of Dublin. But quite unrecognisable was the description of rude and ignorant staff, dirty rooms, a decrepit interior, cold and greasy breakfasts, and several other equally damning observations which made it more a hatchet job than a review.

Now I'm sure there's some Government website on which you can deliver a verdict on your local hospital and, on the evidence of people who ring newspapers to hurl brickbats and just the occasional bouquet, I'm sure it contains matching feedback.

Suffice to say I wouldn't have returned once, let alone three times, to a hotel answering the



anonymous reviewer's description.

By the same token, most complaints which reach me on The Chronicle news desk are certainly not borne out by the experiences of family and friends with reason to be profoundly grateful to the Royal Berkshire Hospital, whether in Buscot, oncology, the CDU, or elsewhere.

Personally, while I've occasionally poked sarcastic fun in print at the 'chicken run' in West Drive known officially as ENT outpatients, I've never been treated with anything less than 100% care, consideration and, above all, kindness during regular visits for a recurring problem with a perforated eardrum.

However, sarcasm was out, and the jokes all sounded a little feeble, when I arrived there on

August 4 with a persistently croaky throat and armed with a letter explaining the urgent two week wait referral system and containing lines like "being referred does not necessarily mean you have cancer".

Consultant Mr Flannery didn't do jokes, but once he'd located the unexplained lump on my left vocal cord, he was clear, concise and gently matter of fact, and I still felt remarkably at ease when, within minutes, he confirmed a date for surgery exactly a week later.

Pre-op with Karen O'Leary had me almost looking forward to arriving starving on Dorrell ward at 7.30am. And, let me tell you, Dorrell's brilliant; light, airy and modern with single-sex bays (I still have nightmares about intimately sharing the aftermath of a varicose veins op a few years back with an elderly lady who certainly didn't deserve such indignity) and with nurses like Amna to take care of me, it's a five star establishment.

There was another one in the eye for those who say hospitals don't communicate, when surgeon Mr Mansell dropped in for a reassuring chat both before and after, and do forget all the jokes about hospital food because my three-course lunch was fresh, tasty and hit just the right spot.

After 43 years in journalism it goes against the grain to write anything for no reward, but for once I've happily made an exception.

Oh, and by the way, the biopsy came up clear. Now, where's that website address?

## Going home just got a lot easier

A comfortable new discharge lounge is now available for patients leaving the Royal Berkshire Hospital. It offers a calm and relaxed environment for patients who have been discharged from the wards and who are waiting to be collected either by their families or by hospital transport.

It is conveniently situated at the main entrance in Craven Road – providing the easiest possible access. The more mobile patients are within easy reach of the shop and coffee facilities, although hot drinks and light refreshments are

offered within the lounge throughout the day. The new lounge is able to accommodate up to 20 patients at any one time.

As a Trust we are aiming for all patients to be discharged by 10am. If patients are not ready to be discharged by this time for whatever reason (e.g. waiting for transport or their medication to be ready) they can be transferred to the Craven Road Discharge Lounge.

The Lounge is open from 10am to 5pm,

Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays. Patients are referred by negotiation with the wards, and to assist them the discharge team visits the wards in the afternoon each day to discuss planned discharges and reduce the amount of time nurses need to spend handing over patient information in the mornings.

The discharge team works closely with the pharmacy to ensure medications are ready for patients so they get home as quickly as possible.

# Need A&E? It's child's play!

A new child-friendly emergency department has been opened at the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

It offers separate rooms for treatments including a plaster room and suture room and is decorated with brightly coloured murals to make the children feel more comfortable with their treatments – and more at ease during their visit to hospital.

The young patients have their own entrance and waiting room separate from adult patients in treatment and waiting areas.

The League of Friends donated more than £20,000 to help the new department. It funded murals, flooring, ceiling tiles and seating.

Emergency Department consultant, Dr Liza Keating, says it is important that parents know what sorts of minor injuries and illnesses can be dealt with at home or by a GP and which ones need to be treated at the Emergency Department.

As an example Dr Keating says if child falls over and suffers a head injury they only need to be taken to hospital if they have deep cuts, have vomited more than once, show signs of fitting or lose consciousness.



Opening day and a trio of "experts" test out the new user-friendly children's emergency department.



Artists Layla Blacker and Helen Layton with one of the colourful murals they created.

## Major investment in breast cancer screening

Almost £1 million is being invested by the Trust to introduce new breast screening equipment – and to make the service available to even more women.

Routine screening will be extended to enable women to be tested at the age of 47 – three years earlier than previously.

The Trust's board decided to spend £995,000 over seven years to replace three existing static breast screening units and two mobile screening vans with digital equipment.

NHS Berkshire West has agreed to fund the expansion of the service from the existing 50-73 years to 47-73 years as part of a new cancer

reform strategy. The changes will come into operation during the latter part of 2011.

Colin Maclean, Chairman of the Trust, said: "The £1 million of new equipment is allowing more capacity and moving from the old film-based screening to digitised which shows how good this test is in this area."

# Charity's gift to help patients

Patients using the Medical Infusion Unit (IMID) in Sidmouth Ward at the Royal Berkshire Hospital will find their surroundings even more comfortable, thanks to the generosity of a support group.

The local branch of the National Association of Crohn's & Colitis raised £600 for the unit, to fund some "extras" and ensure patients spending time in the unit find it as pleasurable as possible.

Patients have to make regular visits to the unit where they receive their medication – and staff are now asking them what facilities they would like provided. Favoured choice of the patients is a TV to watch during their visits.

*Brian Oatway, local chair of the National Association of Crohns & Colitis, assisted by Daniel Brown and Sonia Thompson, presents the cheque to nursing Gaynor Callum, Chelsea Stannard and Dr Jon Simmonds of the IMID unit.*

*Photo: Reading Post*



# Barbara's bid to boost Buscot unit

Trust supporter Barbara Frost is planning to pop out for a cycle ride to end them all – and raise funds for our Buscot special care unit for babies

61 year old Barbara from Reading plans a 1,400-mile cycling challenge, which she expects to carry out in May.

She hopes her solo ride through Europe will help her raise more than £10,000 to support babies who are born prematurely at Royal Berkshire Hospital.

She is yet to decide the route that she will ride on her month-long journey but she plans on taking a coastal route via Monaco and Cannes.

Mrs Frost will cycle between 50 and 60 miles per day on her specially made bike.

She said: "If you're going to do something like this – because I'm not interested in speed or how fast – it's more a challenge for me but other

people might as well benefit too."

Matron Eleanor West, of Buscot Ward, said: "I think it's fantastic. When people do things voluntarily for the unit we are so appreciative because it helps us buy equipment for the babies.

"Without the fundraising and support from charities we would not be able to function as well as we do – so much of our equipment and extra facilities are funded through generous donations.

"Barbara's commitment and her motivation is amazing really."

Lynn Taylor, manager of Reading and District Hospitals Charity, said: "It's absolutely amazing – unbelievable. I'm sure she'll succeed, she's a very determined lady."

A keen fundraiser, Barbara often supports local charities and last September she cycled the length of the country from Land's End to John O'Groats.



*Matron Eleanor West with Barbara Frost*



*Left: Health Worker of the Year – Consultant urologist and Robbie fundraiser Adam Jones with Chris Tarrant and Steve Belam of The Oracle*



*Right: Child of Courage Matthew Pike with London Irish rugby star Jebb Sinclair and Chris Tarrant.*

*Photos: Reading Post*

## Reading tells our team: 'We're proud of you'

The Trust scored a hat-trick when the community honoured its unsung heroes and heroines.

The Pride of Reading Awards recognise and pay tribute to people who have made a real contribution to the area and each year just a handful of people are honoured.

But when television celebrity Chris Tarrant hosted the glitzy ceremony this year the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust was the name on everyone's lips.

The Trust's team picked up an incredible three awards.

NHS Worker of the Year went to consultant urologist Adam Jones – the judges felt his work in helping promote and fundraise for the Robbie the Robot Appeal has been nothing less than inspirational. Adam has run half marathons and literally climbed mountains to raise funds for our famous robotic surgical facility.



*The winners on stage for the grand finale which featured Sir John Madejski, Chris Tarrant, X-Factor star Danyl Johnson and Elvis impersonator Paul Rouse.*

Nurse consultant Angie Lee won the coveted Make a Difference category for her work in helping save countless lives. Concerned at the terrible injuries suffered by children involved in cycling accidents, Angie launched a campaign to encourage the use of safety helmets. The hugely successful campaign has since spread across the nation and Angie set up the Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust to promote this vital safety message.

And our hat-trick was completed by a 10-



*Nurse consultant Angie Lee MBE and Chris Tarrant*

year-old patient who is very much part of "our team".

Matthew Pike was voted the Child of Courage winner of the year because of the extra visits he has been making to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Matthew volunteered to be part of a special film being made by the Trust. It will be available for other children to view before they are admitted to hospital and tells them everything they need to know – from whether to pack their Teddy Bear to what the food is like.

To make the delivery of *Pulse* and other membership communications more effective and efficient we are aiming to deliver more correspondence via email.

Those of you that selected email as your chosen method of communication when you joined the Trust will now receive an email alert to let you know when you can view the latest issue of *Pulse* online.

If you selected postal delivery, don't worry, you will still receive a hard copy of *Pulse*.

## Pulse goes online

However, we do urge those of you that have internet access to supply us with an email address. You can do this by emailing [Foundation.Trust@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:Foundation.Trust@royalberkshire.nhs.uk) or by writing to the freepost address below.

We are also hoping to update the members section of the Trust's website to make it more interactive and informative. If you have any ideas or suggestions that you think will help to improve this section

of the website please email [Foundation.Trust@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:Foundation.Trust@royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

Full Name:  
DOB:  
Address:  
Contact Tel No:  
Email:

Send to: Freepost Membership Office  
RLRJ-XCXE-XCZH, Foundation Trust  
Membership Office, Royal Berkshire NHS  
Foundation Trust, London Road, Reading  
RG1 5AN

## Diary Dates

### Council of Governors meetings

#### Thursday 26 January 2012

Trust Education Centre,  
Craven Road, Reading,  
6 pm

#### Thursday 29 March 2012

Trust Education Centre,  
Craven Road, Reading,  
6 pm

#### Thursday 31 May 2012

Trust Education Centre,  
Craven Road, Reading,  
6 pm

#### Thursday 26 July 2012

Trust Education Centre,  
Craven Road, Reading,  
6 pm

#### Thursday 27 September 2012

Trust Education Centre,  
Craven Road, Reading,  
6 pm

#### Thursday 29 November 2012

Council of Governors 4pm  
Annual Members' Meeting  
6pm  
(Location to be finalised)

# The Council of Governors

Trust Chairman Colin Maclean OBE

## READING

Mr Dave Dymond \*

Mrs Margie Cutts

Dr Muhammad Abid

Mr David Cooper

Mr Carl Bruce

## WOKINGHAM

Mr John McKenzie

Mrs Vera Doe

Mr Tony Skuse\*

## EAST BERKSHIRE & BORDERS

Mr Jeremy Butler

Mr Ross Carroll

Ms Charlotte Evans\*

## WEST BERKSHIRE & BORDERS

Mr Ian Clay\*

Mr Colin Lee MBE

Mrs Aileen Blackley

## SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE

Mrs Caroline Bowder\*

## STAFF

Mrs Sue Mears\*

Administrative, clerical and

management

**Mr Warren Fisher**

Medical and dental

**Mrs Wendy Holloway**

Allied health professionals and scientific and technical

**Mrs Rebecca Corre\***

Nursing and midwifery

**Vacant**

Healthcare assistant/ancillary

## PARTNER

**Ms Janet Rutherford**

Appointed by NHS Berkshire West

**Professor Dianne Berry**

Appointed by the University of Reading

**Mr Sanusi Koroma**

Appointed by Reading Council for Racial Equality

**Mr John Shaw**

Appointed by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers

**Councillor Bet Tickner**

Appointed by Reading Borough Council

**Councillor Bob Pitts**

Appointed by Wokingham Borough Council

**Councillor Alan Law**

Appointed by West Berkshire Council

**Ms Sally Kemp**

Appointed by NHS South of England

**Mr Josh Harsant**

Youth Observer

\* Governor constituencies which are due for elections in 2012

For further information, please use the following details:

Website: [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

Email: [foundation.trust@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:foundation.trust@royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

Tel: 0118 322 8600

Post: Foundation Trust Membership Office,

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust,

London Road, Reading RG1 5AN