

News round up

Hello and welcome to our news round up - a briefing designed to keep local residents, patients and our health and social care partners up-to-date with the latest news from our hospitals.

A welcome from Chief Executive Daniel Elkeles



I would like to begin this edition of the news round up by wishing all of our readers a very happy and healthy 2017.

We've had an incredibly busy start to the year, as over the past six weeks we have provided care for an unprecedented number of acutely unwell patients and have seen a very high number of people in our A&E departments.

But as you would expect, we have robust plans in place to deal with the added pressures of winter, including additional consultants at work (including at weekends) to provide senior medical reviews for our patients. We also benefit from the exemplary support of our incredible staff, as well as our health and social care partners in the community.

While there is no denying that this has been (and continues to be) a very challenging time for us, thanks to the efforts of teams and individuals across our hospitals we have managed the situation well. The can-do attitude of the whole team and our absolute commitment to putting the patient first has helped us to continue to provide the best possible care to the people who need us. I am pleased to say that figures from November (the latest data available) shows that our A&Es are amongst the strongest performing units in the country.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay a very public thanks to our staff, volunteers and wider health network.

I hope you enjoy the rest of this newsletter, and if you do have any comments or questions for us (suggestions are welcome!), then please email communications@esth.nhs.uk.

Reflecting on our success in 2016

Before we get too far into the challenges and opportunities of 2017, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the successes of 2016. Last year was another incredibly busy year for Epsom and St Helier hospitals, with our early figures showing that we provided care to people on 904,193 occasions in just 12 months.

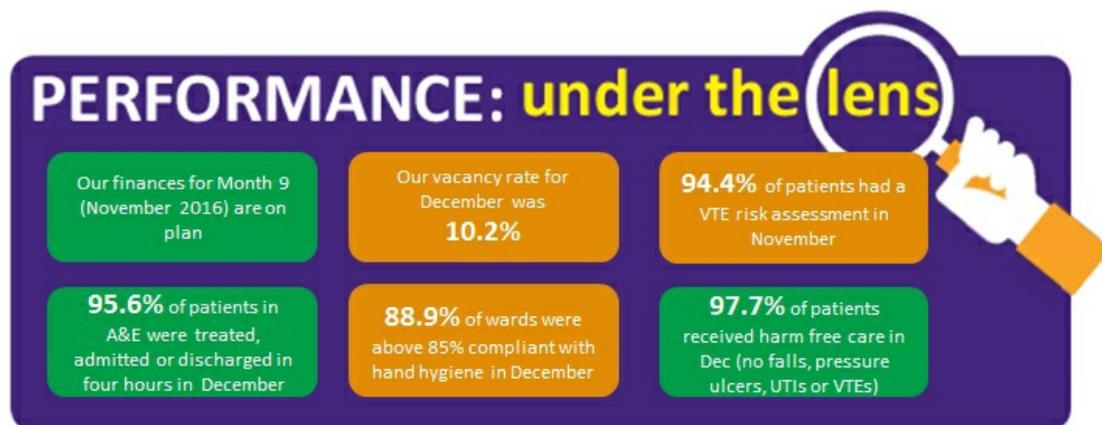
This total of outpatients, inpatients and A&E attendances means that 2,477 patients and mothers-to-be came through the hospital doors every single day. Our A&E departments have seen 153,328 people during the year, which is more than 6,000 additional people than the previous year. And on top of that, we've also seen a significant increase in the number of elective operations we've performed. In 2015, we saw 52,144 elective admissions and this year that figure was 53,663 - that's an increase of almost 3%.

We did all of that while still managing to drive down the amount we spend on agency staff by an impressive 30%. In 2015, we spent £18.4million on agency staff and our early forecasts show that we have spent £12.8million this year. That is still a huge amount of money, but it is a saving of £5.6million, and is the lowest for any of the multi-site district general hospitals in London.

Our organisation, powered by our 4,900 staff working as one team, has achieved a huge amount in 2016.

A spotlight on our performance

Every month, we put our performance as an organisation 'under the lens'. We take a closer look at our achievements and challenges against a number of key standards and share that information with all staff. Our latest performance data is below:



Showcasing success for the Liberal Democrats

Leading politicians from the Liberal Democrats were left "immensely impressed" after a planned visit to the A&E Department at St Helier Hospital recently.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrats Tim Farron, MP Norman Lamb, and local MP Tom Brake visited the hospital's bustling A&E to find out more about the department's strong performance and the plans in place to deal with the busy winter period.

During November alone we saw 12,711 patients in our A&E departments, and cared for, discharged or admitted 95.6% of those within four hours (which made us the sixth best performing trust in the country and top in London).

We were absolutely delighted to welcome Tim, Tom and Norman to our hospital, and would like to thank them for taking time out of their busy schedules to come and find out more about the work that we do.



Once the guests had been shown around A&E, they came for a further briefing where they met:

- Dr Simon Winn, our lead clinician of acute medicine, who spoke about our Acute Medical Units
- Debbie Frodsham, Director of Emergency Care, who told them about the work we're doing to improve patient flow through our hospitals
- Debi Miller, Lead Nurse, who spoke about our 'step closer to home ward' for patients who are medically stable and almost ready to return home.

You can read the full story on the news pages of our [website](#).

Melody maker Ed Sheeran makes Melody's day



Another special guest to our hospitals at the end of last year was world famous singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran, who came to pay a visit to one of his biggest fans - nine year old Melody Driscoll, who is a regular patient in the hospital's dedicated children's ward, Casey.

Melody, who lives with Rett's Syndrome (a rare condition that affects brain development and causes physical and mental disability), has a number of complex medical needs and is often an inpatient at the hospital. During long stays in hospital and the pain caused by her condition, there's always one thing certain to brighten Melody's mood: Ed Sheeran.

Her parents launched a campaign to meet Ed, who was happy to oblige. He even signed Melody's pink guitar before playing two of his hits, 'Thinking Out Loud' and 'Photograph', and posing for pics with other young patients.

Dr Ruth Charlton, Consultant Paediatrician and Joint Medical Director, said: "We are so touched that Ed would take the time out of his busy schedule to visit Melody and the other young patients on the ward. Melody was mesmerised by Ed, and it was a truly wonderful to see how happy he made her.

"We would like to thank Ed for coming - this was a very special day for our staff, our patients and of course, Melody."

Specialist eye team recognised for wonderful care

A multidisciplinary team of specialists from the eye units at Epsom and St Helier hospitals has been recognised with a national award for delivering "inspiring and remarkable care" to patients with glaucoma related eye conditions.



The consultant-led team were named as winners in the Best Ophthalmology Team category at the Bayer Ophthalmology Honours awards in recognition of their entry 'Making a Difference for Glaucoma Patients: A 'Can Do' Approach', which set out the work done to improve the experience of patients.

The awards were presented at a ceremony hosted by Paralympian and former world record holder in the 800m sprinting event Danny Crates at the Royal College of Surgeons in London.

Anne Linnell, the Consultant Ophthalmologist, explained what has been achieved at the trust in just two years. She said: "We are absolutely delighted to win this award: it shows the fantastic team spirit and 'can do' attitude we have here at Epsom and St Helier.

"In 2014 we identified changes that we needed to make to ensure the best possible care is given to our patients. This meant ensuring that they were seen as quickly as possible by the correct consultant; ensuring all decisions were taken by a team of clinicians; to improve the glaucoma service; and reduce cancellations of appointments. The aim of our entry was to offer patients an even more positive experience, and the results we achieved within one year were remarkable.

"To be recognised by other people is gratifying, because I'll be honest, it has not always been easy and it didn't happen overnight given the training and development of the non-medical staff. The glaucoma consultants are now seeing those that need to be seen - the high-risk patients, because our multi-disciplinary team approach frees up our critical time."

The judging criteria for the award included: improvements in patient care; improvements in patients' experiences and quality of life; improved outcomes and service delivery; service redesign, efficiency and savings to the NHS; clear purpose; supportive policies and evidence of good communication.

Celebrating the lives of our youngest patients with World Prematurity Day

Grateful parents, fundraising volunteers and Epsom and St Helier staff took the time to celebrate the lives of premature babies recently, as they marked World Prematurity Day.

The group gathered in the Neonatal Unit at St Helier Hospital, which provides intensive and specialised care to babies who are born from as early as 26 weeks, to mark the event and to celebrate a whopping year of fundraising. Together, grateful families, staff from the Neonatal Department and the St Helier League of Friends have raised £25,000 in the last year alone.

The money raised has enabled equipment such as a cerebral function monitor, vapotherm unit (which supports the baby's breathing), a mobile patient monitoring system, two baby weigh scales and two phototherapy units and much more to be bought for the unit, which cares for around 350 sick babies each year.



Andrew Reece said he, his wife Sneshka and "perfect" one-year-old Siena would have been "lost" without the care they had received. The family raised a total of £3,300.

Andrew said: "World Prematurity Day is vital in raising awareness of ill babies. Siena was supposed to be born on January 20 2016, but was born on the November 11 2015. Having a premature baby is really scary, and at the time we had only had one National Childbirth Trust class - but the care we received was amazing. The staff just scooped us up and really looked after us. We would have been lost without them.

"We were really happy with the care we received. The nurses on duty always remembered what had happened with our baby previously, despite the fact they have a number of other ill children to look after. It was also the little things like offering to make my wife a cup of tea. I mean where would we have been without the NHS?"

Epsom and St Helier surgeon travels over 7,000 miles to aid the people of Malawi

One of our kind-hearted surgeons has travelled over 7,000 miles to Malawi to operate, teach and to "give back" to the people.



Paul Thomas, a general and vascular surgeon who specialises in hernia work across the trust, visits the country twice a year during his annual leave. Through his charity AMECA Trust, he has helped raise £400,000 to build a new primary care clinic in Chilaweni that will provide treatment to 22,000 people.

Paul spoke of his compassion for the country, but revealed his patients are dying from preventable diseases. He

said: "I think my visits are about giving something back to the citizens of Malawi. They are a very nice and warm people; they always greet me and ask how I am doing. But it is a very under-resourced country.

"I go twice a year because there are only around 11 surgeons in the country for a population of 16 million. To put that into perspective, it would be like me being the only surgeon for Southern England. The total budget for the entire population is about half of

the money our trust receives each year.

"I teach basic trauma skills, surgery and procedures, but often when patients come to us with advanced diseases; it is too late for a surgical intervention or any kind of intervention. The people in Malawi are dying from preventable diseases."

To find out more about the AMECA Trust, visit <http://ameca.org.uk/>.

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