

# STAFF News 'n' Views

## Have your jab



# Team MWL



## Have your say

# Hello from Ann

Dear all

Welcome to our Autumn issue of News 'n' Views.

It's hard to believe we're already so far through the year. Of course, in the NHS our thoughts naturally turn to the approaching winter period and concerns about increased pressure and seasonal illnesses.

As you would expect everyone is really busy with planning for the winter and this will continue over the coming weeks.

I've said it many times before, but one of the best ways we can help manage the impact of increased winter pressures is by staff receiving the flu and Covid jabs. Vaccinations not only prevent us from getting seriously ill, but they reduce the chance of us spreading infection to our most vulnerable patients, our families and our colleagues. For these reasons, it is vitally important that we all play our part and get protected as soon as possible.

It is also the time of year that we focus on the national NHS staff survey, something I am really passionate about. Your feedback in the past has made a huge difference and helped us to make some great changes that have improved our services and facilities for patients and staff across our sites, and I really want that to continue this year. The survey is open until the 24th of November so please make sure you have your say.

You can read about our annual vaccination campaigns and our staff survey campaign in this issue, along with news on our long-awaited estates developments and our drive to create our new MWL values through our Big Conversation workshops which are open to everyone.

There's lots to catch-up on and get involved in, so I hope you enjoy reading the latest edition of News 'n' Views and I'll see you very soon.

Thank you.

Ann

Ann Marr OBE  
Chief Executive



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# Trust volunteer named as youth ambassador!

**It takes a very special type of person to give up their free time to help others, so when Whiston Hospital volunteer, Tate Traynor, was approached by local charity Career Connect to be a youth ambassador, we knew they were definitely on the right tracks!**

Tate first joined Team MWL earlier this year and has had a truly positive impact on our patients. He has firmly established his role, supporting as a 'patient buddy' and assisting ward staff by running essential errands.

Tate says: 'I've a number of duties on the ward; talking to the patients and keeping them company, assisting them at mealtimes, and I can also take them outside for some fresh air. The thing I like most about working here is meeting new people from all different backgrounds – on the first day I joined I met a man who was a pilot in World War 2!'

Volunteers like Tate enrich the experience of our patients in a variety of ways, and for a lot of our volunteers, it's also a way of developing useful transferrable skills that they can take into the workforce.

'I've gained so many skills from volunteering, interacting with patients has increased my confidence massively. It'll be really helpful when I'm looking for a job.'

Now, as an ambassador, Tate has taken part in filming with Career Connect, talking about his experiences to encourage others to consider the benefits of volunteering.

'I'd really encourage other young people to consider volunteering. It's an amazing thing to do, you meet all kinds of different people, from different walks of life – you never know who you might meet from one day to the next.'

In the future Tate would love to continue working in healthcare. He said:

'I would like to use the skills that I've gained to become a paramedic or a Royal Marine medic in the future!'

Congratulations Tate, everyone at Team MWL is very proud of you!



## Hospital gardeners honoured at annual awards

What's better than giving flowers to say thank you? Giving those that make our hospital grounds bloom year after year the special recognition they deserve!

After over 30 years of loyal service, it was time for a very special thank you to our green-fingered heroes, David J Platt Landscapes, for the incredible care they take in making the grounds of Whiston and St Helens hospitals look so spectacular. Chief Executive, Ann Marr OBE, honoured the team at this year's STHK Staff Awards, for the truly positive impact they have on both patients and staff experience. When you are greeted with beautiful gardens, colourful flower arrangements, and often a quirky fun-themed display (like the miniature cricket pitch complete with miniature ornamental cricketers at St Helens Hospital!) it can make a real difference to those who pass through our doors.

Ann said: ***"When receiving treatment or visiting a loved one, a trip to hospital can be daunting. Year-on-year, David's teams provide the most beautiful surroundings for our patients and staff that raise a smile on even the darkest of days, which is so important"***.



Founder David Platt and his fantastic team excel in their thoughtful and imaginative displays and are passionate about making the grounds the best they can be. David said: "The hospitals are special places for us, and we love it when we get nice comments about how the grounds look. It's not just a job for us".

And it's not just the team at Whiston and St Helens that have been honoured. The wonderful gardening team at Southport and Ormskirk were named Volunteers of the Year at last year's Time to Shine Awards, to show our gratitude for all their fantastic hard work, in making our grounds look so spectacular! It goes to show, that all of our gardeners really are the best of the bunch!



# Weathering the Winter together

Winter is understandably the most challenging time of year for the NHS, with respiratory viruses (RSVs) circulating, severe weather conditions causing more trips and bumps, and of course it's 'party season' which often means a few more attendances to A&E!

As we face the first winter as Team MWL, we're working together right across the organisation to make sure we're prepared for the cold months ahead.

Check out how you can play your part in making sure we're ready to 'Weather the Winter' this year.

We'll be sharing lots of information and tips to keep you well this winter, which you can find on our dedicated website: [www.mwllwinter.co.uk](http://www.mwllwinter.co.uk)

## Take some time to look after yourself

Winter can take its toll on your wellbeing. When you're busy looking after everyone else it's easy to forget about yourself - this is where our Health and Wellbeing Team are on hand to help. With a wealth of activity running throughout the season, we've got sessions to support your mental wellbeing, the latest financial advice and much more. **Check out our winter website for more information, and please do make the most of the support we have on offer.**



## Jab well done!

Working in the health service means we're more exposed to respiratory viruses which puts us at increased risk of becoming poorly and spreading infections. One of the ways you can protect yourself, loved ones and our patients is by getting your Winter jabs!

**This year, we're offering both Flu and Covid-19 vaccinations together or separately. Find out when the team are in your area on our website.**



## Flu fiction

**Fiction:** The vaccine gives you flu

**Fact:** The vaccine contains an inactivated virus which cannot give you flu

**Fiction:** You don't need the jab every year

**Fact:** Viruses that cause flu mutate, so you need the jab that matches the new virus each year

## Covid Queries

**Query:** Covid vaccines reduce the effectiveness of the immune system

**Fact:** Covid vaccines increase the effectiveness of our immune system by prompting it to respond when exposed to the virus

**Query:** Covid vaccines were made in a rush so are not safe

**Fact:** All vaccines go through similar rigorous authorisation and appropriate clinical trials processes before being made available to the public

## We're all ears when it comes to ideas...



With more patients needing us during Winter, Chief Operating Officer, Lesley Neary, has worked directly with frontline colleagues across all areas of our hospitals to find out what you think are our biggest challenges with patient flow, and how we can tackle them.

Lesley held a number of ideas sessions across the Trust to hear your thoughts, and those who attended were really positive about finding solutions and working together to make a real difference, not only to our patients and hospital flow, but to staff too.



Our operational and service improvement teams are now working hard to put some of your suggestions into practice. If you have any further ideas you think could help us to alleviate some of the pressures we face this winter, get in contact by email: [communications@sthk.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@sthk.nhs.uk) and we will pass them on.

## Recognise a Winter Champion NOW!

With all the hard work that takes place during the winter months it's really important that we take the time to thank our colleagues and recognise their amazing efforts.



With that in mind, we're on the lookout for MWL Winter Champions; teams or individuals who have made a huge difference at this time of year.

So, whether your colleague has gone above and beyond for patients, launched a fantastic team wellbeing initiative, helped the Trust to overcome a challenge or simply gone out of their way to help you through a difficult day – nominate them now by heading over to our winter website and we'll make sure they receive a huge and heart-warming thank you.

## We're talking to everyone!

We're already communicating with our patients, the public and our system partners in readiness for Winter; we'll be sending messages to schools to share with parents with top tips on how to access care if their little ones are unwell, we're sharing service messages with our local GPs and ambulance service about accessing the right care for their patients, and we'll also be sharing messages with the wider public about knowing the right service for their needs, because we all know the importance of keeping A&E free for those who need it most.



# WINTER

# @MWL



# Delivering and teaching 5 star patient care!



Here at Team MWL, we're not just delivering 5 star patient care, we're sharing our knowledge so patients across the country and beyond can receive top class care.

Last month, the Trust received two very important visits that saw the Urology and the Spinal Care teams share their expertise and talents, and show just why our services are leading the way in education...

## Urology education gains national praise

Back in 2019, clinicians from St Helens and Whiston hospitals joined forces with Edge Hill University to transform learning for urology staff working in the NHS.



Consultant Urological Surgeon & Divisional Medical Director John McCabe, alongside Eleri Phillips, Urology Education Programme Lead; and the Urology Team, set about developing a formally recognised education programme for nurses, physician associates and allied health professionals in the wider urology community, creating the Post Graduate Certificate in Urology Practice & MSc Urology.

Offering NHS staff the chance to gain accreditation, a total of 99 students from as far as Guernsey have enrolled on the successful programme so far and we've just welcomed another 32 students! The team has also introduced two clinical modules to teach Flexible Cystoscopy and how to perform a Local Anaesthetic Transperineal Prostate Biopsy (LATP).

The education programmes have been such a success that NHSE Senior Programme Manager, Chris Ashdown, visited Whiston Hospital in September and asked if the team could increase the number of events they run throughout the year. With a national push to detect prostate cancer earlier, it is hoped that by training even more staff in the procedure it can improve outcomes for patients.

Consultant Urological Surgeon & Divisional Medical Director John McCabe said, ***"We are delighted to be able to share our knowledge with NHS staff far and wide. Working with Edge Hill has meant that we can raise the profile of our specialty, but more importantly – we can help patients who are affected with urology conditions by providing a high level of standardised care throughout the wider organisation."***

## Sharing best practice from Southport to Singapore!

A team of spinal injury specialists from Singapore have spent three weeks with staff at the North West Spinal Injuries Unit at Southport Hospital recently.

The educational visit was arranged by Mr Bakul Soni, Clinical Director and Consultant, after linking in with a former colleague in Singapore, to offer a team of health workers the chance to develop their skills in advanced techniques, particularly in the ventilation of patients with spinal injuries.

Valerie Ng, a Consultant in Rehabilitation, Medicine and Ventilation Care from Tan Tock Seng Hospital, said: ***"The visit has been fantastic, and we cannot thank the staff at Southport enough for the help and support they have given us. We have learned a lot looking at the similarities and differences between the care provided here and in Singapore and hopefully we have been able to share our experiences together to help everyone."***



# Diary of an FY1



**This August, almost 100 FY1 Doctors and Clinical Fellows joined Team MWL – which is the biggest intake we’ve ever had! So how are they getting on? We caught up with Dr Ashwin Manivannan to find out...**

Ashwin always had a passion for helping people and medicine, so decided to study it at university. Six years in and he is now caring for and treating patients as a qualified doctor...

## **How did you feel before your first day?**

“It was a really exciting day, but I was very nervous - you’re given a huge responsibility when you start to treat patients, so you want to make sure you do your absolute best.”

## **And what was your first day like?**

“It was definitely what I expected, completely new - new surroundings, getting used to how the wards do things and then interacting with my patients, but everyone was so supportive and helpful, it really made things easy for me.”

## **How are you finding things two months in?**

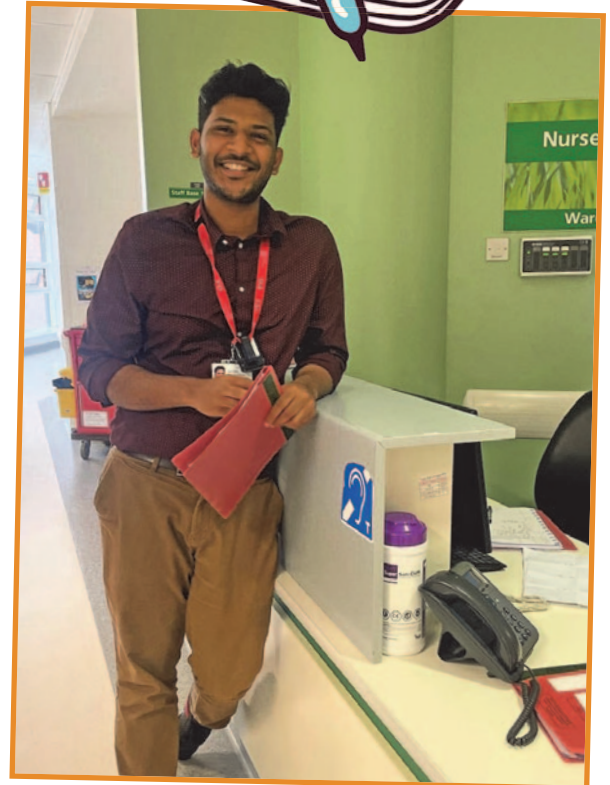
“It has been a really steep learning curve, learning how to prioritise my time – what can wait and what needs to be done straight away, and ensuring I deliver five star patient care to my patients. I’m certainly feeling so much more settled now that I am further into my placement. The whole team around me is incredible, the culture here allows you to learn without judgement and is very open. Everyone is on hand to help – I’m very much enjoying it!”

## **What has been the highlight of your placement so far?**

“Definitely helping patients! We deal with people with complex medical needs so the investigative work that I do to find the right diagnosis and treatment, then to see how that treatment can help my patient is incredible. Watching your patient’s condition improve and seeing them have a better quality of life, knowing that your decision has influenced that is so rewarding!”

## **Finally, what are your plans for the future?**

“I’ve got a keen interest in cardiology and at the moment I feel like I would like to specialise in this area, but for me right now – I am just enjoying making the most of my learning and can’t wait to further improve my knowledge and skills.”



**Every August, Trusts across the country recruit a new cohort of Junior Doctors who embark on a two-year placement, rotating through six different specialties to determine which career path they want to take.**

Medical Director, Dr Peter Williams said: “I’m really looking forward to working with our new Junior Doctors over the next two years. I remember when I first started out as an FY1 (although we were called House Officers then!) and I felt the exact same as Ashwin; very excited, but also really nervous. We’ve got a great team of doctors and nurses who will help our new colleagues find their feet, so I would encourage everyone to make the most of the support available.”

# Have your say... we won't brush it off.



## Your views are vital to help us make MWL one of the best places to work in the NHS!

That's why the annual NHS Staff Survey is a great way for you to share your thoughts on all different aspects of working at the Trust, and each year that feedback is used to make further improvements right across our services.

## How to take part...

You'll receive either a digital link sent directly to the email account you have registered on ESR, or those staff without an email account will receive a paper copy to their department or home address.

You've got until the 24th November to complete your survey, but don't delay, have your say today!

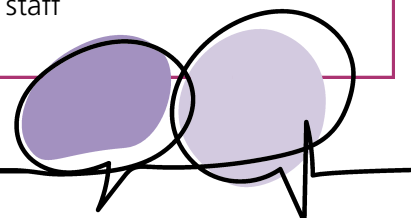


Ann Marr OBE, Chief Executive said: "Over the years, the Staff Survey has helped us to make many changes within our organisation, including improvements to our buildings and environment, enhanced training offers, expanded health and wellbeing offers, and so much more.

Our staff are at the heart of our organisation and your opinions are not only valued, but they're needed – so please fill in the survey."

## How your feedback has made a difference...

You said	We did
<b>'I'd like to explore an apprenticeship but I'm not sure what's available'</b>	We've been working hard to build the range of apprenticeships available across MWL. Now over 300 staff are currently taking part in an apprenticeship, with an additional 80 in the application stage.
<b>'I think it should be more straightforward to apply for flexible working'</b>	Staff can now apply for flexible working through ESR. If you wish to apply for flexible working, then you should talk directly to your line manager who will be able to explain the Trust's Flexible Working Policy further.
<b>'I want to build on my skills so that I can advance in the organisation'</b>	In the last year over 70 members of staff completed Leadership programmes at MWL. We're also offering apprenticeships from level 2 (GCSE equivalent) to level 7 (masters degree) so there really is something for everyone.
<b>'We need enhanced security in some work areas, to maintain confidentiality and keep staff safe'</b>	At Southport and Ormskirk sites we are adding an extra 250 CCTV cameras, and new swipe access control. At St Helens and Knowsley sites we're providing bodycams to staff in hotspot areas and working closer with Merseyside Police.
<b>'It's difficult to complete mandatory training sometimes because there aren't enough computers'</b>	We've installed additional computers in the libraries across our sites so that there are more quiet spaces for staff to focus on your learning.





# We're getting bigger, and even better!

As one of the largest Trusts in the region, our services now cover a population of over 600,000 people. So, to keep up with this demand, we're always changing and adapting! Check out the latest developments to our hospitals below:



## Theatres at Whiston Hospital get bigger

Colleagues based at Whiston Hospital may have seen signs and scaffolding around the site, as work is already underway to expand our current operating facilities.

Floor four will be home to two additional theatre suites that will be kitted out with all the latest high-tech equipment, allowing us to treat even more patients, and perform more complex procedures too.

## Southport Hospital theatres improvement

Theatres at Southport Hospital have a new addition as a specially dedicated area has been created to allow for the preparation of patients waiting to go to theatre.

Previously, patients would wait on the ward and only once they reached theatre or the anaesthetic room, would the team be able to complete their important pre-operative checks. This would take up valuable time and increase the turnaround time between patients. Now, with the addition of the new pre-operative area, staff can complete these vital checks much sooner and patients can be transferred straight into surgery making their journey more seamless. Feedback from both patients and staff has been incredibly positive.





Throughout October, we'll be raising awareness about our freedom to speak up process and who you can speak to. Head over to our staff intranet pages to find out more.

At MWL, we encourage colleagues to raise any concerns which may be affecting them at work. We understand that when we raise issues, we can learn from them, which is a massive part of our culture here.

## Meet our Freedom to Speak Up Guardians



**Ann Marr OBE**  
Chief Executive



**Richard Fraser**  
Chairman



**Dr Peter Williams**  
Medical Director

## Site Specific Freedom to Speak Up Guardians

**Staff in St Helens and Knowsley**

Rajesh Karimbath  
Assistant Director of Patient Safety

**Staff in Southport and Ormskirk**

Christine Griffith-Evans  
Freedom to Speak Up Guardian (FTSU)

# If you haven't already, join the big conversation!

**We're asking colleagues from across MWL to get involved in helping us to create our new organisational values!**

Play your part in setting the tone of our organisation; what we want to be known for, how we want our patients to feel when they use our services, and what we want our colleagues who work here to say about us.

By coming along to our interactive session and sharing your thoughts, you're helping to shape MWL's history. Visit the staff intranet to book your place!



## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Did you know that we have six staff networks that colleagues can join here at MWL? It's important to us that all our staff feel welcome, included, and have the same opportunities.

Open to all staff here are some of the networks available:

- Building a Multicultural Environment
- Building Abilities (Disability and Wellbeing)
- Carers Network
- PROUD @ MWL (LGBT+)
- The Armed Forces Network
- Menopause Network

If you would like to join, visit the staff intranet for more details.



## Join the staff FB group!

Since the launch of our Team MWL private Facebook Group, over 1,200 staff from across the organisation have joined, making it even easier to stay in touch with each other and keep up to date with the latest goings on around the Trust.

**Don't miss out, join today!**

All the help you need to join is on the staff intranet, but really, it's as simple as logging into your Facebook account; searching 'Team MWL', requesting to join and answering a few questions about where you work, and... you're in!

**What to expect...**

Once you're a member, you'll be able to share your own positive stories, inspirational ideas, and celebrate personal and team achievements with your colleagues.

The group is an ideal way to get to know some of your teammates and say hello! It's a safe space for everyone.

**Visit the staff intranet to find out more and check our staff Facebook group FAQs.**



# Because You're Amazing



***We regularly receive feedback about how fantastic the care is at our Trust. Here are just some of the messages from the last few months.***

## **Cancer Services, St Helens Hospital**

'I just wanted to say a big thank you to everybody for all the professional expert treatment I have been afforded so far. What you have done no doubt saved and prolonged my life. Your dedication and support for your patients is exemplary and can only in my opinion be commended. A very big thank you from me'.

## **Maternity Unit, Whiston Hospital**

'I attended Maternity Triage after experiencing a bleed related to my low placenta and was subsequently admitted for a short stay to Ward 2E for monitoring. All the staff I had contact with were efficient, caring, informative and very helpful and reassuring. I felt very well cared for and informed of what was happening at each and every stage of my admission. Very thankful for all the staff, they do an amazing job, and I couldn't have asked for better care'.

## **Emergency Department, Southport Hospital**

'I recently visited your ED and would like to say thanks to all the amazing staff you have working there. The staff were amazing, caring and listened to concerns and were reassuring and confident in everything they did. I can honestly say that from reception to discharge everyone was so kind, professional, and caring. When I say they're a true asset to your Trust and to healthcare as a whole, I mean it'.

## **Community Nursing Service, St Helens**

'To all of the community nurses, you are little gems, and I don't know what we would do without you coming at night. You're all angels'.

## **Children's Outpatients, Ormskirk Hospital**

'I would like to say a huge thank you to the staff on the children's outpatients ward at Ormskirk Hospital for their outstanding care during my daughter's short day case. We attended the ward and from the start we were well informed by the staff and met the anaesthetist and dentist who was completing the operation. All staff involved were caring, thoughtful, helpful and above all made sure my daughter felt safe in a situation that was scary, having a General Anaesthetic and teeth removed'.

## **Ward 14, Southport Hospital**

'On a weekend stay I had an accident which resulted in me breaking my collarbone and having surgery and an overnight stay on Ward 14 in Southport Hospital. Every single individual in the Orthopaedic Team were amazing, not just their expertise, but their bedside manner and positive interaction with me and other patients was second to none. I have nothing, but praise for Mr Hakim and his team. I watched them on the ward round and they were truly working as a team, good chat and complimentary about other members of their team. Another shining star was a young man working for the Catering Team who showed genuine care and compassion for patients. He always had a smile on his face and lifted the whole atmosphere on the ward when he came in'.

## **Emergency Department, Whiston Hospital**

'I just wanted to thank all of the staff who looked after me last night. I was really ill in A&E requiring steroids and a nebuliser. It was very clear just how busy A&E was last night and it was a long wait, but staff were kind and efficient - very clearly doing their absolute best. They didn't let busyness get in the way of great patient care. Thank you'.

## **Feature your story!**

We're always open to ideas, and we love hearing your thoughts! News and Views is our Team MWL staff magazine, if you have a story to share, or ideas on what you'd like to see in future editions, contact: [communications@sthk.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@sthk.nhs.uk)

