

# Foundation feedback

Governors' Roadshow



Stop smoking in pregnancy

Cestrian Ward

Welcome  
from the Editor &  
the Editorial Team



To members of the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, we are pleased with our 11<sup>th</sup> issue of Foundation Feedback in which we continue to cover all aspects of the way your hospital functions and the dedicated emphasis on patient care.

This time we are concentrating on the Women and Children's Unit including Paediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology together with our usual news items and Governor activities.

We always request comments from our members, complimentary or otherwise, and questions will be answered. As with the old cliché it is "Tell us if we are doing it wrong, tell other people if we are doing it right"!

Sue Elphick MBE  
Editor and Elected Governor  
Countess of Chester NHS  
Foundation Trust

## Joining the Tweeters

The Countess of Chester Hospital has launched its very own Twitter account.

By joining the likes of 10 Downing Street, Stephen Fry and Jonathan Ross, the Trust plans to use the micro blogging site as an additional means for providing information about the Trust's latest developments.

Director of Marketing & Communications, Stephen Winterson, said:

*"This is another example of how we as a Trust are embracing the latest methods of communicating with people."*

We've already had great success with our Facebook group, which just needs a few more members to reach the 500 mark, our video clips are available on YouTube and our own Trust website has a number of interactive features such as electronic newsletters and the Chief Executive's Blog, which all help to attract approximately 20,000 visitors per month to the site."

The Countess already has over 20 followers on the micro-blogging website, with the Health Service

Journal and NHS Direct among the list. The Trust is hoping to use the website as an additional tool for keeping people updated on important issues.

Stephen added "Twitter is a great way of keeping updated with the Trust's developments in an easily digestible way, which is particularly useful for people who are constantly on the go and just want a snapshot of information."

But we are not just using the site as a stand alone tool, we are also including links to our own website within our updates, which should result in extra traffic and additional time spent viewing more in depth information."

If you are registered with Twitter you can follow the Countess at:

[www.twitter.com/TheCountessNHS](http://www.twitter.com/TheCountessNHS)

The Countess of Chester Hospital recently won the 'Best Use of New Media' category at the NHS Communicate08 Awards, for a project entitled 'How to reach a youthful audience'. The award focused on the Trust's effective use of tools such as Facebook and YouTube as well as the development of interactive features on their own website.



Marketing and Communications, Medical Photography and Illustration and Web Development teams

# Stop smoking in pregnancy

Lynne Evans is a registered midwife with a BSc (hons) in Public Health from Liverpool John Moores University. She is part of the Western Cheshire Stop Smoking Service and is employed as a Specialist Stop Smoking Midwife.

It is well known that smoking in pregnancy can affect the unborn baby. The Stop Smoking Service can offer free friendly advice and support in a variety of settings to anyone wanting to try to go smokefree.

Lynne is developing a new policy regarding the routine carbon monoxide testing for all pregnant women who are booked to deliver their baby at the Countess and this is currently out for consultation. It is anticipated that this policy will be ratified and implemented in September.

*All women will be offered a carbon monoxide breath test and this will be conducted unless they choose to opt out.*

There is no pressure but all pregnant smokers will be given equal access to information.

Lynne offers home visits and also has two clinics – one in Blacon Children's Centre and one in Stanlaw Abbey Children's Centre. She sees clients weekly for the first four weeks of their programme and then once a fortnight usually up to twelve weeks.

She also offers postnatal visits to clients wanting to stay smokefree after delivery and offers the service to partners and family members of pregnant clients providing they are receiving support. Clients are able to text or phone Lynne at any time during their programme for extra support.

All midwives are being given mandatory smoking-in-pregnancy training and in theory Lynne says that by December all midwives will have received their training. This training will be ongoing.

Lynne produces bi-annual Smoking in Pregnancy reports that are available on request, which among other statistics provides information on how many clients have come into the service and how many have quit smoking.

*Sue Elphick*



## Dates for your Diary

Please check the local press and the website for further details nearer the time. We'd love to see you at one of these meetings.

As a Foundation Trust the Governors and hospital are keen to keep in touch with the local community and would welcome your views and any suggestions you may have.

Please address these to the Foundation Trust Secretary and post to:

**The Foundation Trust Secretary**  
Countess of Chester Hospital  
NHS Foundation Trust  
Liverpool Road  
Chester  
CH2 1UL

## Future meetings:

**Board of Directors' Meeting**  
Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009  
at 2.00pm (held in public)

**Board of Governors' Meeting**  
Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at  
5.00pm

**Annual Members' Meeting**  
Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2009  
at 5.00pm for 6.00pm

**Board of Directors' Meeting**  
Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009  
at 2.00pm

**Board of Governors' Meeting**  
Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009  
at 5.00pm

# Ladies only...

Debbie Fell, Staff Nurse for 10 years in the Women and Children's Division describes life on Ward 34, Priory Ward, to Sue Elphick and Jackie Hughes.

This ward is purely for women nursing mainly gynaecological conditions such as cancers, mastectomies, bleeding in pregnancy and terminations. Terminations may be medical by the administration of tablets or surgical taking place in the Jubilee Day Surgery Unit. Due to bed pressures other patients may be admitted to the ward – anything from orthopaedics to maxillo facial – but always females.

*Days on the ward are action packed from staff handover at 7.30am to 8.00pm when the night staff take over again.*

The 28 bedded ward is divided into three under the care of specific nurses on duty. At this time Healthcare Assistants serve breakfast, change beds and help patients to wash. Each nurse sees her ladies and takes blood pressures, examines wounds, changes medication if necessary, removes drains and catheters, monitors fluid output and input and more. The tasks also include counselling particularly for mothers who have lost their babies which Debbie admits to finding difficult and she often worries about her patients whilst she is off duty.

Apart from the previous tasks there are theatre lists to prepare and discharge plans to set up including contacting the multi-disciplinary team of Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists and Dieticians. In

a very full and busy day sometimes staff have to quickly identify who is to be discharged and go home with the appropriate medication.

Staff have a ten minute break in the morning and afternoon and sometimes in the early evening with 30 minutes for lunch. Visiting times are two separate hours in the afternoon where staff need to deal with relatives' queries.

All staff are now required to rotate onto night duty which is considered less hectic but physically demanding. There is obviously good team work and dedication throughout the staff on Ward 34.



Patient on Priory Ward with Staff Nurse Lisa Doleman

# Top marks for patient environment

The Countess of Chester Hospital has received top marks for their patient environment during an annual assessment.

The annual Patient Environment Action Team (PEAT) Assessments 2009 took place in February and it was officially confirmed last month that the Countess received a score of 'excellent' across all three areas that were assessed. The three areas covered the patient environment, privacy and dignity, and catering services.

*Patient Environment Action Teams were established in 2000 to assess NHS hospitals.*

Under the programme, every hospital in England with more than ten beds is assessed annually and given a rating of excellent, good, acceptable, poor or unacceptable.

The teams of assessors inspect standards across a range of patient services including food,

cleanliness, infection control, and patient environment (bathroom areas, décor, lighting, floors and patient access) to give the hospital an overall rating.

This is the first time that the Countess has been awarded excellent in all three categories and is particularly significant due to the fact that the multidisciplinary team which conducted the assessment included patient representatives.

Deputy Head of Facilities, Steve Turner, said: "It's always good for our staff's hard work to be rewarded and appreciated through assessments of this nature and it also emphasises the high quality of service that the Trust offers to patients. Issues relating to privacy, food and the



In-patient with Staff Nurse



Steve Turner, Deputy Head of Facilities

general hospital environment are particularly important for determining a patient's perception of a hospital, so we are very happy to have achieved the highest score possible on this occasion."

The Countess was the only hospital trust in the Cheshire area to achieve 'excellent' in all three categories.

## Care and support in bereavement

A Memorial Garden was opened in July 2000 after being approached by a parent who had lost a baby through miscarriage and had nowhere to go to remember that baby.

With help from the Chester Childbirth Appeal and Miscarriage Support Group money was raised to open the Garden in Blacon Cemetery. For a small price parents can

have their baby's name added to one of the headstones placed in the garden. They get a lot of comfort from having somewhere to go to remember.

The Miscarriage Support Group meets the first Tuesday of each month at the Caldley Valley Centre in Chester at 7.30 pm for anyone who has lost a baby. For any information about having your baby's name inscribed or about the support group, please call Karen Dalton (organiser of the Baby Garden and Support

Group) on 01829 70083 or email at [kdalton61@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:kdalton61@tiscali.co.uk).

As well as this support there are services held twice a year in the hospital chapel and once a year a candlelit service is held at Chester Cathedral.

In the hospital chapel there is an open book in memory of all the babies that have been lost and a fresh page is turned every day.

# Infertility

## Management Programme

The Fertility and Assisted Conception Unit have established an Infertility Management Programme that outlines a series of investigations which aim to reveal the likely causes of a couples fertility problems and identify the most appropriate treatment options within the course of one full menstrual cycle.

Couples referred to the Countess and its Infertility Management Programme will be seen in the specialist fertility clinic within a very short time frame.

At this appointment a full history and examination will be undertaken including vaginal swabs and an ultrasound scan to assess the uterus and ovaries. Male partner investigations including specialist semen analysis will also be arranged. Further detailed investigations such as testing the function of the fallopian tubes will be planned during this appointment.

Carrying out the appropriate investigations at the right time will allow both our specialists and our patients to arrive at a complete understanding of the cause of

any problem before initiating the most appropriate treatment. The purpose of this systematic approach is to reduce unnecessary delays and reduce stress and uncertainty, which will hopefully result in a successful pregnancy.

The Countess of Chester Hospital's brand new £600,000 Fertility Unit is an extremely modern facility equipped with the latest technology to help clinicians provide the best treatment. The unit boasts a dramatic design interior with a striking colour scheme, which makes it feel very different to a traditional hospital setting and helps patients to feel more at ease during their investigations and treatment.

*In 2008 the Trust was awarded the ISO9001 Quality Management System Certification by the British Standard Institution, for the provision of fertility services.*

This is the first and only clinical service to be awarded with this certification. During the HFEA inspection in the same year the Trust was also

awarded a 5 year license to continue with Assisted Conception Services.

The Countess of Chester Hospital provides a full range of fertility investigations and treatments and is licensed by the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority (HFEA). It was one of the first units to ensure that all its investigations and treatments were 100% compliant with the guidelines issued by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE).

At the Countess we offer a full range of treatment that is funded by the NHS, and recent efforts by the fertility team along with local Primary Care Trusts mean that waiting lists for treatment have and are continuing to reduce dramatically.

For couples who need treatment but fail to meet the criteria for NHS funding, or for couples who wish to proceed to treatment more rapidly, the Countess also offers self funded treatment for infertility.

*Mr Nabil Haddad,  
FRCOG Consultant Gynaecologist  
and Head of Unit*



# A happy ward clerk

I spoke to Tracy Eccleston, Ward Clerk on the Cestrian Ward, about how a demanding job can be enjoyed.

Tracy has worked at the hospital for nine years and loves her job. It is mostly a very happy ward, with the excited anticipation of expectant mothers and the joy of the new ones. A wall covered in thank-you cards bears testament to the good care and satisfaction of the patients and photos of a myriad number of babies is a delight to see. However occasionally sadness can appear in the middle of all this when a baby who is poorly in the Special Care baby Unit passes away. Then the mother will be moved to the bereavement suite whilst her baby lies in the Snowdrop room. No mother has to suffer being in a bed next to a mother glowing with the delight of new motherhood of which she has been deprived.

*Tracy's six hour working day begins at 9.00am by checking the bed state including changes from the previous day and available bed space.*

Tracy then checks that all mothers and babies are in corresponding beds and cots and ensures that each patient is colour coded to the Consultant who is caring for them. A large white board has to be updated. If a baby has to be seen by a Paediatrician Tracy has to liaise with the Paediatric Clerk for appointments and ensure that the baby's notes accompany them to see the Paediatrician. There are not many breaks in the day and only 20 minutes for lunch but Tracy is content with this as she is so busy. Her enthusiasm for her work is shown by the fact she completed an NVQ

Customer Care in 2008 and won the Student of the Year Award.

In between answering continuous phone calls and taking and passing on messages Tracy ensures that the computer is updated with the names of babies by going round the mothers and asking them if they have named their baby. She explained that it can cause problems if the baby remains unnamed when discharged as baby's case notes are then not easily identifiable. At weekends the housekeeper on duty takes over Tracy's role.

The Cestrian Ward was previously two wards with two ward clerks. It is now a 32 bedded ward and Tracy sits opposite the main security door so she is able to monitor who can enter. Staff have their own key cards.

Manager Gill Aylward says that Tracy is a friendly face at the front desk who greets mothers, their babies and visitors and ensures that



strict visiting times are adhered to.

Only children of the patient are allowed onto the ward and Tracy has to politely say to visitors that they are not allowed to bring in any other children. Dads are allowed onto the ward between 11.00am and 8.00pm.

Job satisfaction is very important in our lives and Tracy Eccleston has certainly proved hers.

*Sue Elphick*

# Governors' Roadshows

Governors continue to recruit new members to the Trust and also engage with members of the Trust and members of the public.

Governors are able to do this by holding roadshows throughout the areas which the Countess of Chester Hospital serves. As feedback is so important the Governors meet with the Board of Directors to provide views of what people expect from their local hospital. Photographs show Governors meeting members of the public at the recent Countess of Chester Hospital Car Boot Sale early on a Sunday morning and at the local market in Neston on a Friday morning.



Neston local market - Governor Eleanor Hornsby recruits members



Neston local Market - Governor Elizabeth Bott with member



The Countess of Chester Hospital car boot sale - Governors meet members of the public

# Chesterfest

Chesterfest is an annual event organised by Chester Church Congregations and the Light Project.

Twenty three local churches are involved and during one week in July deliver several CAKE projects (Community Acts and Kindness Experience). These projects are many and varied ranging from children's holiday clubs; involvement with local residential homes; a local performing arts school; gardening and tidying up community areas. This year there were a total of seventeen such projects.

Queen Street Christian Centre in Chester provided twenty seven volunteers, who worked on the 'patient gardens' at the Countess of Chester Hospital. They were able to treat the furniture and woodwork in the Garden of Life, the Sensory Garden and the Royal Infirmary Garden.

The hospital catering staff provided a buffet which was much appreciated by the volunteers. At lunch-time Sir James Sharples, Chairman of the Trust, and George Potter, a Governor of the Trust were able to explain a little about the hospital and thank all those involved.

*Michael Hemmerdinger  
Deputy Chairman  
of Governors*



Governors recruiting members



Neston local market – Governors left to right – Richard Taylor, Eleanor Hornsby, Pat Clare, Elizabeth Bott and Chairman Sir James Sharples



Governor Eleanor Hornsby discusses membership



Sensory Garden



The group of volunteers



Painting in the Sensory Garden



CAKE project volunteers and Chairman Sir James Sharples

# Messages from your Elected Governors



**From: Gordon Donaldson,  
Elected Governor  
- Flintshire**

At last, Westminster and Cardiff Bay have agreed to revise their protocol on cross-border funding. For the years 2009-10 and 2010-11, Westminster will make £12 million a year available to the Assembly to ensure that Local Health Boards pay English hospitals on the same tariff (known as Payment by Results) as for English patients. This will mean over £3 million a year extra to the Countess. This also confirms that we have subsidised the Welsh Health Service by over £10 million in the last five years, and that will never be paid.

The Protocol will be renewed in 2011 "in line with the three-year planning cycle" and I hope that means an end to the annual payments wrangle between the Local Health Board and our Trust.

The protocol reiterates that "English" patients have GPs with English addresses and "Welsh" patients have GPs with Welsh addresses.

Surprisingly, there are 19,000 English residents registered with Welsh GPs and 14,000 Welsh residents registered with English GPs.

The protocol reiterates that English and Welsh patients in Welsh hospitals and Welsh patients in English hospitals must have Welsh waiting times and only English patients in English hospitals have the better English waiting times.

The result is that the Countess will continue to have to comply with two sets of target waiting times and that some Welsh patients may feel discriminated against.

I spoke on this subject at the Board of Governors on 21<sup>st</sup> April. The position is that there is never discrimination in quality of treatment, nor for emergency,

urgent and cancer patients. Some departments operate a twin-track policy with Welsh patients typically waiting a month longer for operation or first appointment. Altogether, 80% of Welsh patients (2007-08 data) are actually treated within English waiting times and the other 20% within the longer Welsh times, so that number is very small, about 4% of Countess patients.

I urged reduction of this twin-track policy, and had a good hearing, but the Welsh Government has not put in extra resources to reduce Welsh waiting lists as much as what was spent in England – Flintshire Governors are constantly reminded that Wales gave a greater priority to free prescriptions to the 20% who used to pay, not to mention free car parking. So the Countess is left with the obligation to operate to the standards set by our two governments.

The extra income is great news for all patients, from both sides of the border, and is timely help for our ambitious development plans.

## Now you can contact your Elected Governors by email, letter or fax:

### Email:

#### Public Governors

##### Chester & Rural Cheshire

stanley.skyrme@coch.nhs.uk  
helen.clifton@coch.nhs.uk  
sue.elphick@coch.nhs.uk  
elizabeth.bott@coch.nhs.uk  
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##### Ellesmere Port & Neston

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##### Flintshire

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eleanor.hornsby@coch.nhs.uk  
liz.kevan@coch.nhs.uk

### Out of Area

eric.huntington@coch.nhs.uk

### Voluntary

michael.hemmerdinger@coch.nhs.uk

### Youth

kate.bernie@coch.nhs.uk  
grace.langan@coch.nhs.uk

### Staff Governors Nurse/Midwives

lyne.podmore@coch.nhs.uk

### Doctors

ian.harvey@coch.nhs.uk

### All other Staff Groups

millie.bradshaw@coch.nhs.uk

### Allied Health Professionals/ Technical/Scientific

heather.shilliday@coch.nhs.uk

### Letter:

Please address your letter to:-

Stephen Cross  
The Foundation Trust Secretary  
Countess of Chester Hospital  
NHS Foundation Trust  
Liverpool Road  
Chester  
CH2 1UL

### Fax:

Please address your fax to:

Stephen Cross  
The Foundation Trust Secretary  
Fax: 01244 365292



**From: Helen Clifton, Elected Governor  
– Chester & Rural Cheshire**

This issue is focussed on the Women and Children's Division of the hospital and somewhat appropriately my first grand-daughter was born there on June 16<sup>th</sup> this year. So I asked my son and daughter-in-law about their experiences of the care and the department.

Mum had had an uneventful pregnancy and went into labour spontaneously when her waters broke. Both she and Dad were very complimentary about the attention they received when she was in labour, and appreciated the attention of the midwife. They especially liked the fact that only one professional was with them, so that their privacy and dignity were maintained throughout. Only when the baby was actually being born were they joined by another midwife.

Mum stayed in hospital for one night, and spoke very highly of a member of staff who calmly supported and encouraged her whilst she was breast feeding and also suggested that Dad go to get something to eat – he's not good company when he's hungry!

We were all particularly pleased to observe that visiting and security restrictions were maintained so that more than two visitors were turned away.

Infection and security are even more important issues when two lives are being cared for.

These are some of the experiences of one little family. The governors like to hear both good and not so good views from the members and the public so that we can help to improve and maintain the service, so let us know yours!



**From: Eleanor Hornsby, Elected Governor  
– Flintshire**

Although I represent Flintshire as a Governor, I am sure many of you from other areas will recognise me as the person who introduced you to membership of the Countess of Chester Hospital Foundation Trust. I can be found most Thursday mornings in the main corridor of the hospital, inviting people to become members and make their voices heard in the shaping and future development of the hospital.

As you can see, public membership of the Trust is of great importance to me. I am a retired nurse and I care very much about the future of the NHS and the Countess of Chester Hospital in particular. The Countess is OUR hospital and through membership we can ensure that we communicate our needs and expectations of the services it provides.

The Countess, as a Foundation Trust, must have public accountability and achieves this through communication with its membership by a quarterly newsletter, Annual Plan and Report, Board of Directors and Governors' meetings, roadshows in various venues, open days in the hospital for the public to go "behind the scenes", discussion groups and by requesting public opinion. There is also a very informative web site. ([www.coch.nhs.uk](http://www.coch.nhs.uk))

I am very proud to be associated with the Countess of Chester Hospital and the team who provide our care. As members, let us continue to support it by showing our appreciation for all the staff who work there. Make your voice heard.



**From: Pat Clare, Elected Governor - Ellesmere Port and Neston**

Over the past few months, your Governors have been getting out into the community to meet members of the public in order to hear their views about the hospital and to encourage more people to become members. The last roadshow was held at the Neston

Friday Market so I was on home territory. Both the Chairman and Trust Secretary joined several other Governors in meeting the shoppers to tell them about the range and quality of services available at the Countess of Chester Hospital.

I continue to attend the fortnightly Strategy meetings as well as the quarterly Board of Governors' meetings. This means that I can contribute to the ongoing discussions about the present and future services at the hospital. I am made aware of any problems and have the opportunity to meet both clinical and managerial members of staff in order to gain a full and accurate picture of the hospital and the service it provides.

I represent the Board of Governors at the National Association of Governors and this gives me the opportunity to meet fellow governors from around the country and to share ideas and good practice. I feel privileged to represent our governors and feel proud of our local hospital.

# Paediatric Outpatients

We met Irene Ratchford, Manager of Paediatric Outpatients in the new department which was opened in June this year.

It's a very smart clinic with a comfortable waiting area and plenty of space for children to play. Irene is keenly awaiting the art work to brighten up the walls.

There are six consulting rooms, two changing and feeding rooms for parents to use and the staff appreciate the fact that they are now situated in the main Women and Children's building and therefore more a part of the hospital – previously the department was in a separate building away from the children's wards.

*A busy clinic was just about to start - 44 children were expected at this session.*

Irene has a small staff of two registered children's nurses and two healthcare assistants, with reception staff. Clinics are held every day, both morning and afternoon.

Doctors from both the Countess and Alder Hey hospitals see patients aged from birth to 18 years of age for every type of illness and problem.

*The nurses themselves also hold clinics to help children with bed-wetting and occasionally visit children in their own homes or at school.*

There are also various support services available within the clinic (dietician and physiotherapist, for example) and clinics are held at other venues such as Ellesmere Port Hospital and GP health centres.

Irene is clearly devoted to children, she has worked for Chester's hospitals for 37 years and is deservedly proud of her achievements.

*Pat Clare*



Paediatric Outpatients waiting area



Millie, the first out-patient in the newly refurbished clinic