

Countess MATTERS

ISSUE TWO - NOV/DEC 2010

Countess of Chester Hospital **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Your **NEW**
Trust
Newsletter

HSJ
AWARDS **10**
FINALIST

*Trust in
final shortlist
for top
health award*

'Question Time' event a success What is the Staff Partnership Forum?
Stroll with Santa this Christmas Plus much more...

In Brief

Ann Lloyd, who provided an audit for MPT's throughout the North West, has just had this accredited by Donna Hough from the North Western Deanery who is the Dental Workforce Development lead for the DCP's

Andrea Blackwell has been successful in passing the National Clinical Coding Qualification examination, gaining Accredited Clinical Coder status.

Congratulations to everyone who took part in the recent Rounders tournament which raised £100 for the Kisiizi Appeal. The winners were the Physio team who beat Microbiology in the final.

Emma Burton from Cellular Pathology and her partner Steve were victims of an arson attack earlier this year. The couple and their two young sons lost all their possessions and are living in temporary accommodation whilst their home is repaired and refurbished. However, there is now a happy ending to their story as Emma recently took part in the Dee 106.3 wedding contest and won a wedding package at Craxton Wood Hotel and a honeymoon cruise.

Annemarie Facer, Osteoporosis Specialist Nurse, has recently been nominated as the RCN/SOTN BOA Casting Committee Representative. The application of casts and caring for patients in casts requires appropriate standards of education and training for the multi-professional team. The Casting Committee is dedicated to producing guidelines in order to assist practitioners who wish to set local standards in order to monitor their practice, evaluate change and improve practice where necessary. Annemarie is looking forward to working as part of the casting committee to help develop and maintain national standards and competencies.

Trust in final shortlist for top health award...

The Trust has been shortlisted as a finalist for the Health Service Journal's (HSJ) 'Acute Healthcare Organisation of the Year' award and last month a group of judges visited the Trust to review their achievements in practice.

The criteria for potential winners includes; Indicators of high quality patient-centred care, a clear strategy, excellent engagement, good people development, an innovative culture, and evidence of high performance and improvements.

The Countess' entry focused on the various achievements and developments that have taken place during the last two years as part of their transformation programme, which was developed to create more efficient ways of working, through utilising new techniques to reduce waste, and to streamline patient pathways.

During the visit, the judges were shown around the hospital by members of the Trust's Transformation Team (Craig Brothwood, Debbie Brown and Hollie Salisbury). Outpatients Pre-Assessment, the Appointments Hotline, Ward 49 and The Comms Hub were all areas



which featured heavily on the tour to demonstrate the excellent work that has been undertaken and the benefits that have been realised.

Chief Executive, Peter Herring, said to staff: "I just wanted to thank you all very much for the time and enthusiasm you put into presenting our case to the judging panel. The panel were obviously non-committal but they certainly appeared very impressed by our programme of work here. We can be proud of what we have achieved so far."

The winner will be announced on Monday 29th November.



NHS "Question Time" Event a Success

Chief Executive, Peter Herring, and Medical Director, Dr Virginia Clough, recently took part in a "Question Time" Event at the Guildhall, Chester which was hosted by NHS Western Cheshire and Cheshire West and Chester LINK. The event gave local people the chance to put questions about how the NHS White Paper may affect the future of local health and social services to a panel of experts.

BBC Radio Merseyside presenter, Roger Phillips chaired the Panel which in addition to Peter and Virginia comprised two local GPs, the Executive Director of West Cheshire Health Consortium, representatives from Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Cheshire West and Chester Council. All of the panel members had wide-ranging expertise in health and social care.

Over 100 local people attended the event to put their questions to the panel. The audience was also encouraged to respond to the consultation papers accompanying the White Paper "Equity and Excellence, Liberating the NHS" before the deadline of 11th October 2010.

The Question Time session lasted for one and a half hours, after which the audience were invited to talk informally to Roger and the panel, and



to view displays from local third sector and statutory organisations. The event was a big success and another is planned for next year.

International Poster Prize

The 1st International Conference of the International Collaboration of Orthopaedic Nursing took place in Dublin on the 16th & 17th September.

This historic event brought together international leaders in orthopaedic nursing to promote the global application of the highest standards of orthopaedic nursing care and practice by sharing their expertise, best practice interventions, innovations and ideas for advancing nursing care.

Over 100 international abstracts were received by the conference scientific committee for poster presentations which were shortlisted to 42 abstracts from 22 countries. Sandra Flynn, Orthopaedic Nurse Consultant, attended the conference with her poster, 'Patient's perceptions of care and caring in an orthopaedic setting' (designed by Jenni Ross, Medical Photography). Following the judging process Sandra was presented with the best poster award by the scientific committee, with a prize of £150 towards conference and a year's free subscription to the International Journal of Orthopaedic and Trauma Nursing.

What is the Staff Partnership Forum?

History

The Staff Partnership Forum (SPF) was developed as a consequence of the Countess of Chester Hospital successfully becoming a Foundation Trust in April 2004.

Purpose

The SPF is comprised of staff side representatives and Trust management and represents all staff. It meets quarterly (or more frequently if business demands) to discuss a wide range of business related issues i.e. employment policies, terms and conditions of service, but also discusses important strategic issues, related to financial performance, service and capital development. The Trust recognises 15 staff organisations (trade unions and professional bodies), each of which holds one or more seats on the SPF. As part of its commitment to partnership and staff involvement, non-union members also hold seats on the forum.

Membership

Membership of the Staff Partnership Forum is currently as follows:-

British Association of Occupational Therapists	1 seat
Society of Radiographers	1 seat
British Medical Association	1 seat
British Dental Association	1 seat
British Dietetic Association	1 seat
British Orthoptic Society	1 seat
Chartered Society of Physiotherapists	1 seat
Royal College of Midwives	1 seat
Royal College of Nursing	2 seats
Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians	1 seat
UNISON	3 seats
MiP	1 seat
UNITE	2 seats
NON-UNION	2 seats
Non-Executive Director (as Chairman)	1 seat
Divisional Manager	1 seat
Director of HR	1 seat
HR Specialist Services Manager	1 seat
Assistant Director of Finance	1 seat
Deputy Director of Nursing	1 seat
Head of Facilities	1 seat

By mutual agreement between the joint secretaries, the meeting may be attended by full time officers of the recognised staff organisations and others as deemed appropriate to the discussion. Recently accredited representatives of staff organisations are welcome to attend, in the capacity of observer, by prior arrangement.

The agenda for each meeting is usually agreed one week in advance of the meeting, with notes circulated to all members within ten days of the meeting. From April 2007, copies of the 'adopted' notes are e-mailed to every member of staff immediately following the meetings.



Recent Discussions

It has been a turbulent time for the SPF recently, a reflection of the situation the NHS finds itself in. Many policies have been reviewed, often as a result of the review date having expired and/or because of the need to maintain NHSLA compliance. In addition, the SPF has been fully involved in the Transformation Programme and the Cost Reduction Strategy. The Trust faces tough challenges over the coming years and the SPF will need to make tough choices. By working in partnership it is hoped that the choices that are made will minimise the impact of those tough challenges on the working lives of staff and continue to improve the service we offer to our patients.

If you would like to find out more, including how you are represented, please contact Debbie Clev-erly on x4706.

Trust supports One World Week...



The Countess joined many other organisations this year and celebrated One World Week between 18th to 22nd October.

One World Week is an annual opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds to come together to learn about global justice, to spread that learning and to use it to take action for justice locally and globally.

Each year, thousands of people take part in One World Week events across the country with one common purpose: to let others know about some of the global issues that affect us all and to recognise we can all be part of the change.

One World Week supporters believe that when we come together collectively to learn about injustice and inequality, we are prompted to do something about it and great things can happen. And in coming together and understanding each other's perspective, our own lives can be transformed and enriched.

The Countess hosted a number of talks and display stands in the Spiritual Care Centre each day throughout the week around various faiths, cultures and global issues.

Karen Townsend, One World Week organiser, said: "One World Week is a very important celebration of all cultures, faiths and global issues."

In addition, a 'One World Open Mic Night' took place on Tuesday 19th October at Alexanders Jazz Bar in Rufus Court to coincide with both the Trust's Kisiizi Uganda Hospital Project and One World Week.

Karen added: "I would like to thank all of the event organisers for all your hard work and support in delivering what I felt was a successful One World Week here at the Countess."



Countess of Chester Hospital **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Santa Stroll

Sunday 5th December 2010 - 10am

A sponsored 5km walk in aid of Relative Comfort - the Countess of Chester Hospital's new appeal which will provide relatives' accommodation for the Critical Care Unit.

Registration

£10 adults, £5 children (under 10) and includes the following:

- ★ Santa suit for adults or Reindeer antlers for children
- ★ Certificate
- ★ Medal
- ★ Refreshments

Entry forms available from the hospital Fundraising Office on:
Telephone: 01244 366240
or download from the hospital website on: www.coch.nhs.uk/fundraising

Places are limited and on a first come first serve basis

Hospital Chaplain John Kingsley completed the Great Salford Swim on the 26th September and raised £780 for Motor Neurone Disease.

Falls Awareness Week 2010...



The Countess held a Falls Awareness Week earlier this year, for hospital staff and members of the public.

This was organised as part of a national campaign run by Age Concern UK. The week aimed to raise awareness about the risk of falls, both in the hospital environment and the community.

Information sessions throughout the week included:

Daily falls awareness and information stands manned by:

- Margaret O'Neill, Falls Prevention Coordinator
- Helen Thorniley-Jones, PCT Fracture & Falls Prevention Coordinator
- Lorraine Smith & Mike Brown, Chester Care
- Julie Jones, Lead Physiotherapist, PCT
- Annemarie Facer, Orthopaedic Clinic Manager

Physiotherapy Information Display Board

- Information regarding the importance of physical exercise to increase strength and balance and reduce risk of falls.

Canteen Stand

- This focussed on the "DAME" model and displayed all the excellent work that has been achieved throughout the year, which has reduced hospital falls by 40% since December.

Mattress Training Sessions

- Helen Merry, Equipment Library Manager and Jamie Arthur, from Park House Healthcare, provided mattress demonstrations and advice on the correct pressure-relieving mattress to be used in patients who have also been identified as a falls risk.

Virtual Patient Scenario

- A virtual patient scenario was set up in the Education & Training Centre, in order to assist staff in identifying some of the common contributory factors to falls.

- Participants were asked to undertake a quiz, to identify 24 of these factors.

- Rosemary Waring, Cardiac Rehabilitation Physiotherapist, was the winner of the quiz. She received a bottle of Champagne, donated by Sian Williams, Head of Nursing for Urgent Care.

Raising awareness of falls is still a critical issue, since one person dies every 5 hours as a result of a fall in the home. It remains the biggest cause of accidental death for older people.

We must aim to reduce the number of falls in this hospital in 2010 by raising falls awareness, prevention and management.



TINNITUS - you CAN live with it

Tinnitus is commonly described as a ringing in the ears, but it also can sound like roaring, clicking, hissing or buzzing! Over 10% of elderly adults (plus an increasing number of young adults) suffer from this disturbing problem but from first hand experience I know that the trauma can be overcome.. The prospect of facing continuous, or even intermittent, noise in the ears can be daunting and distressing causing depression and fatigue (sometimes through lack of sleep) although Tinnitus is not usually a sign of a serious health problem.

When referred to the Countess of Chester Hospital Audiology Department by your GP you will be assessed through informal interview and the internationally recognised Tinnitus Handicap Inventory, which together evaluates the patient's perceived impact of their tinnitus in different situations. Tinnitus may affect individuals in different ways and therefore each patient is devised a personal therapy plan using the results of their interview and THI. A Consultant ENT specialist will check you for hearing loss for which Tinnitus can be the first sign.

During therapy sessions the clinicians help the patient understand the possible mechanisms of Tinnitus and the current Tinnitus models including the Jastreboff Neurophysiological Model (masking the sound) and the Habituation Model (often called the Psychological model) which teaches relaxation techniques. An example of the latter would be that after a period of living on a busy main road one no longer notices the continuous roar of the traffic and so it is with the noises in your head.

Sound enrichment with what is sometimes called white noise generators plays an important part in many patients ability to manage their Tinnitus symptoms effectively, particularly in the early stages of their diagnosis. The Audiology Department can offer information and advice on a range of products and are able to issue discreet in-the-ear sound generators to patients. These produce a soft and somewhat comforting sound played at a slightly lower level than the sound of the tinnitus itself. This can educate the brain to listen to the soft noise of the generator and to forget the sound of the tinnitus. There are also CDs with natural sounds e.g. sounds of waves lapping on a beach or jungle rain which distract from the hissing and buzzing which take away your concentration.



With increased understanding of their Tinnitus, together with coping strategies such as the use of sound enrichment and relaxation techniques (to be practiced daily) buying a relaxation tape and spending a valuable half an hour aiding your path to recovery can help most patients go on to manage their Tinnitus well. Slow down, breathe deeply, look after your general health - all these will help quieten the noise.

There is a multitude of information available to learn about Tinnitus and how scientists are progressing with new treatments and in the future, a possible cure. In this short article it is impossible to describe all the various causes of and treatments for this noisy problem but the Countess Audiology Department is there to help you and their support is invaluable.

Sue Elphick MBE, Governor.

Efforts to reduce fraud across the NHS

Claire Smallman is the Trust's Local Counter Fraud Specialist with 12 years' experience as a Benefit Fraud Investigator. She subsequently joined the Mersey Internal Audit Agency (MIAA), who carry out internal audit and counter fraud work for the Trust.



On her role, Claire said: "Our priority is to reduce fraudulent practices taking place within the NHS."

Their work focuses on tackling a number of fraudulent issues including the following:

Staff committing fraud

This could include the submission of false claims, for example timesheet and payroll fraud, claims for non-existent (ghost) employees and for IT equipment never purchased. One of the main types of staff fraud is working whilst off sick.

Patient Fraud

This includes wrongful claiming of exemption from fees, alteration of prescriptions and using aliases to obtain controlled drugs. Claiming travel expenses for attending appointments that do not always exist or that they fail to turn up for.

Professionals

Includes alterations to prescriptions, claiming for work not undertaken, creation of ghost patients and fraudulent claims for out-of-hours visits.

Contractors and Suppliers

Includes the submission of bogus invoices and fraudulent claims by appliance contractors.

Claire added: "I would encourage anyone who has a genuine concern to contact me in confidence."

To discuss any queries, please call Claire Smallman on 01244 364479 or the NHS confidential fraud and corruption reporting line on 0800 028 40 60.

HSDU provides external service

HSDU (Hospital Sterilization and Disinfecting Unit) provides a decontamination service of reusable surgical instruments to 14 theatres, 25 outpatient departments and several external PCTs.

We are accredited to ISO 9001-2008 and ISO 13485-2003. This certificate allows us to provide a quality service for external customers as well as our internal customers.

Jane Cooke, HSDU Manager, said: "Being able to provide an external service means we can income generate for the Trust. This year we have purchased essential equipment which was sorely needed including an additional heat sealer and an extension licence for our tracking system amounting to £12,000. In the near future we hope to extend our opening hours, funded by our income generation."

The department's two team leaders recently passed a washer/disinfector test persons course allowing them to undertake the weekly testing in HSDU saving the trust £25,000 per year.

Jane added: "They are also just about to be signed off their AI assessors award allowing them to assess NVQ level 3 in decontamination for the department, a government recognised qualification also funded by the government for Sterile Services staff, we will have six members of staff with this award by Christmas."

NCT Stars Award



Local National Childbirth Trust (NCT) antenatal teachers Lynn Thompson, Di Langhorn, Janet Lacey and Jane Brindley have been recognised nationally by the NCT for their team work skills in providing an excellent antenatal class service which has been commissioned by the Countess.



A high volume of nominations were received from the NCT's 105,000 members across the country. The NCT Stars Award, sponsored by Pampers, recognises the enthusiasm and dedication of those who help the charity in its work to support over one million new parents in the UK every year.

The teachers said: "We are delighted to receive this award. It means a lot to be recognised for the work we've done for expectant parents in the Western Cheshire and Chester area."

Janet Beech, Parent Education Coordinator, added: "This has been a very exciting development for the Countess and we are pleased that they have been recognised for providing excellent antenatal classes to help expectant parents locally to prepare for this life-changing event."

The NCT is the UK's leading parenting charity and has over 50 years experience of supporting families through pregnancy, birth, and early parenthood.

Lottery Winners...

AUGUST 2010

- £150 Shuja Sunny (Dialysis Unit)
- £60 Wendy Funnell (Theatres)
- £20 Alan Edwards (Telecoms)
- £10 Gillian Fitzgerald (Bed Bureau)
- £10 Reverend John Kingsley (Facilities)
- £10 Kirsty Coulston (Finance)
- £10 Adele Ashford (Medical Secretaries)

All future winners will be advertised on the Intranet which can be found on the A-Z (under 'L' for Lottery).

The Countess of Chester Hospital Staff Lottery is a members only scheme and is open to all employees of the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and staff employed on the Countess of Chester Health Park.

SEPTEMBER 2010

- £150 Georgina Agnew (Security)
- £60 Linda Fellowes (Service Development)
- £20 Lesley Freeman (Nurse Management)
- £10 Carol McLoughlin (Plastics)
- £10 Kathy Craven (Telecommunications)
- £10 Catherine Roberts (Medicine)
- £10 Shuja Sunny (Dialysis)

The current prize money totals £270, divided into 7 prizes: £150, £60, £20 and four of £10.

Monies raised by the Lottery benefit the Trust's fundraising activities.

New alcohol service at Chester A&E

Chester Alcohol Service, run by Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP), is now providing an alcohol liaison service within the Accident and Emergency Department.

The service, which is based at Aqua House in Chester, will place two nurses at the hospital to offer interventions to patients presenting with alcohol related symptoms or injuries.

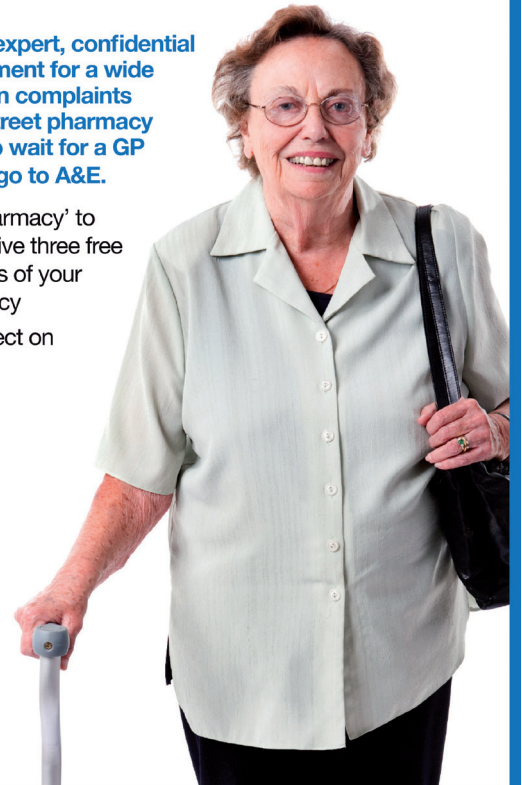
Alcohol Liaison Nurses, Helen Cosnett and Pat Cowan, will be available to see patients at the hospital from Monday to Friday between 9am and 3pm whilst telephone contact will be made with those patients who present outside of these hours and are discharged. The team will be contactable on x6259 and will be given a bleeper.

NHS

Get the right NHS treatment.

Get convenient, expert, confidential advice and treatment for a wide range of common complaints from your high street pharmacy without having to wait for a GP appointment, or go to A&E.

- Simply text 'pharmacy' to 64746 and receive three free texts with details of your nearest pharmacy
- Or call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47



New bereavement service funded by Trees of Light Appeal...

The Countess can now offer extra bereavement support to families after the death of their relative or friend at the hospital regardless of the cause. Through the generous donations made to the Trees of Light Appeal, we have been able to provide some counselling sessions for relatives to access.

Evidence suggests that the majority of people will adapt to their loss slowly over time with the support of family and friends but a few may need extra support. Sometimes this is practical help with sorting out financial issues or the need to talk with someone

who has been in a similar situation. Whilst for others their experience causes a great deal of distress and they may need some extra help to address their difficulties.

All relatives are now provided with information on the bereavement service at the same time as they receive the medical certificate of cause of death from the bereavement officer. The information encourages the person to seek help if they are finding it difficult to manage after bereavement.

The first point of contact is Liz Taylor, Macmillan Support and Information Manager who will talk with the

person about their concerns and find out who might best be able to help them. Some will be signposted onto local services such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, a befriending service or local support groups. For those who feel that counselling may help, contact details will be taken and the counsellor will contact them directly and arrange an appointment to meet. The service is only available by appointment after an initial discussion with Liz.

If you have any questions about the service please contact Liz Taylor on extension 4948.



Reflections on the role of Governor

As Pat Clare starts her third term as a Governor, she felt it time to consider what has happened in that time.

Has the Countess of Chester Hospital improved?

The Countess of Chester Hospital is now a very different organisation – it is more efficient, a safer place for patients, has a larger range of services and a stronger financial base.

How has the Board of Governors made a difference?

The BOG receives information quarterly on the hospitals financial situation, performance against national standards e.g. infection rates as well as participating in the development of future plans. We are encouraged to give our opinion on all these areas as well as ask questions if we have any concerns. These meetings are attended by the Chairman, Chief Executive

and other Directors as well as some Non-Executive Directors (these are the people who are responsible for managing the hospital and are answerable to Monitor –the national regulator.) The Board of Directors want to hear what the Governors think and also gauge the opinions of members.

Nationally, are Foundation Trust hospitals a success?

Nationally, the picture is more complex. I represent the Chester BOG at the national meetings where we hear how other hospitals are managed and how they relate to their Governors. The Chester model is regarded as a good example of both boards working together to improve Foundation Trust hospitals. Our input into the national meetings will hopefully help newer Boards of Governors to develop.

Has the considerable amount of time I have given to being a Governor been worth it?

The amount of time a Governor

spends attending meetings and meeting staff and patients can vary. I choose to make a considerable time commitment to my role. If I felt that time was wasted, I would resign. I want to help the residents of Ellesmere Port and Neston have the range and high standard of hospital services that we need and deserve. Therefore I am pleased to continue, as your elected governor, to work towards that aim. Sue Kettle and Keith Higham also continue to work with me as your Governors.

Pat Clare Elected Governor

Reaching the Young



Firstly a quick introduction, our names are Harriet Walker and Louis Flood and we are both Youth Governors on the Board of Governors at the Countess of Chester Hospital.

We were both delighted to be appointed as Youth Governors for the Countess of Chester Hospital, a demanding role and one which we are sure will reward us with an invaluable insight into the management of all Foundation Trusts. We will be working together to try and boost the Youth Membership and engagement with the Trust. In pursuing this task, we are already starting to implement a forum on the Trust website, aimed at advising students with healthcare aspirations on how to gain experience for their future professions and how to get more involved with their local hospital. We both feel that we would be helpful performing this role, having both experienced a medical admissions cycle.

We have been fortunate enough to profit from vast insightful work experience at the Countess. We both took part in the competitive 3-day course for Prospective Medical Students which improved our awareness of the day to day role of a doctor through observing clinics, undertaking some laboratory work and scrubbing in on surgery, during which Louis barely managed to not succumb to fainting! Furthermore, we relished the opportunity to volunteer on a weekly basis for a couple of hours in Accident and Emergency where we enjoyed helping out the nurses with any necessary tasks, as well as listening to the unique and absorbing stories which many of the patients had to offer.

Alongside our roles within the hospital as Youth Governors we are both currently undertaking our own projects in different areas of the hospital. Louis is currently working towards completing an audit for the Endocrinology department at the trust, which has allowed him to appreciate how clinicians must keep an accurate track record on departmental performance, in view of improving patient care. He is really excited at the prospect of helping to analyse the data involved in the project and hopes to make a real difference in the upcoming year. In contrast, Harriet is about to begin a number of days observing postmortems in the Pathology department, an area of the hospital that not many people are fortunate enough to gain a real understanding of. After the completion of this experience Harriet will use her experience to educate Secondary School students who may be interested in a career in this field.

Harriet Walker & Louis Flood
Youth Governors

Questions for Welsh

Questions were recently raised in the UK Parliament by two Welsh MPs as to whether the Department of Health and the Welsh Assembly Government for Wales had engaged in discussions regarding services to Welsh patients provided by English

contractors. The reason for the question is the UK governments intent to reconfigure the English NHS and give the commissioning role to consortia of GP practices. The answer given was that there had been informal chats. Clearly from our perspective in Wales the sooner official 'non chats' take place the better any likely changes in the provision of services are identified and discussed. Whilst the current arrangements, of payments to the Countess through the tariff system, for services to patients registered in Wales are, in the short term, a viable and progressive solution to this ongoing dilemma of 'how to pay / provide services' a long term sustainable contractual arrangement must be a priority in securing serv-

ices to our community mainly in the north west of the Principality but never forgetting those wider service providers e.g. Liverpool Heart & Chest hospital, Christies Manchester, Clatterbridge Cancer Centre, Gobowen Orthopaedic Hospital etc. I feel sure my colleague Governors in north Wales will keep a close and watching brief on developments.

Barry Harrison Governor
(Flintshire Constituency)



One year on...

I have now completed my first year as a governor and would like to take this opportunity of thanking all the members who put their trust in me.

It has been a very interesting first year with much to learn about the organisation of the hospital and the many facets of its day to day working.

We are given the opportunity to broaden our knowledge by the meetings and seminars we attend. All have been most interesting and enlightening in the work of the hospital and its many specialities.

We are kept up to date with all the pressures, very real, and at our regular meetings we can ask those questions which you would like to ask!!

I have recently been appointed to the 'Appeals Committee' which is held bi-monthly and which I have found to be very rewarding.

Please remember that you have to keep me informed of your questions and feelings, positive or negative so that I, alongside the other governors, can act on your behalf.

Tom Bateman - Governor (Chester and Rural Cheshire)

Constant progress

I have been involved in one way or another with the Countess of Chester Hospital since the mid eighties, when I was employed there, but then moved on to working with the Chester Community Health Council dealing with medical complaints on the consumer side. During that time I began fundraising for the hospital, sitting on the committees of all the major Appeals and, in 1989, set up the Countess of Chester Hospital Car Boot Sale which is still very active and currently has raised almost £900,000 for patient care. So you will see that I have seen the hospital (including being a patient) from all sides and on being elected as a Governor, when the Trust was initiated, I could already understand a great deal of how our hospital works.

Without bias, but also as a lay person, I can truly say, that having watched the hospital double in size since the eighties, the expertise has grown with it. Medicine generally has advanced with tremendous speed and is almost tumbling over itself to keep up with the new procedures and drugs. The Countess, in the top 40 hospitals in this country for the past ten years, is keeping up very well under the guidance of top class Clinicians, a strong Executive who are a dedicated team led by their Chairman, Sir James Sharples, and a particularly vigilant Medical Director who has directed her staff that nothing should go unnoticed. Because of this, rates of such worrying infections as MRSA, C Difficile, and worse, have dropped dramatically mainly due to the tireless work of the whole hospital team.

I know that we are lucky to have such an institution as the Countess of Chester Hospital which cares so strongly for each individual's well-being, on our doorstep. If you are not

a member of the Trust I would certainly recommend that you become one as you too can then keep up with the work that is being done - in your name!

Sue Elphick MBE Governor
(Chester and Rural Cheshire)

Role of the elected Member on the Board

Elected Members of Borough Councils have an increasingly important contribution to make to NHS Boards. Firstly they act as a conduit into their local communities, bringing a flavour of the knowledge, needs and aspirations of those communities to the table. They also bring an insight into the policies and workings of their local authorities which can assist the Board in shaping its own values, policies and strategies. Members can also act as a valuable communication channel into their authorities paving the way for wider collaboration and dialogue - that role can also raise awareness and understanding amongst fellow elected members and senior officers as a contribution to joint working and more formal co-operation.

With the NHS White Paper, the Government wants to see a more prominent role for local authorities in assessing local health needs and in commissioning. This vision sees elected members as having an enhanced role as set out in its "Local Democratic Legitimacy in Health" paper, both as members of formal boards and as advocates for their communities, bringing a perspective of place and neighbourhoods to commissioning plans and strategies. Local authorities are uniquely placed to promote the integration of local services across NHS, social care and public health boundaries and local councillors are instrumental in this process.

Alan McKie Cllr

Board of Governors Election Results

The Trust recently gave notice that it was holding elections to the Board of Governors. Below are the results of the election along with the names of nominated governors from our two partnership organisations.

Public: Chester and Rural Cheshire

The following candidates were elected unopposed:

Marilyn Elizabeth King (New)
Richard William Taylor
(re-elected)

Public: Ellesmere Port & Neston

The following candidate was elected unopposed:

Pat Clare (Re-elected)

Public: Flintshire

The following candidate was elected unopposed:

Gordon Donaldson (Re-elected)

Youth Governors:

Louis Flood
Anya Bos

Staff Governors:

Doctors – Dr Richard Nelson
Allied Health Professionals/
Technical/Scientific – Roger
Howells
All other staff groups – Hayley
Parry

Partnership Organisations:

Professor Mike Thomas –
University of Chester
Ms Fran Parry – Flintshire
Community Health Council



Countess MATTERS

EDITORIAL TEAM

Tell us what you think!...

Jo Richardson: Corporate Design & Medical Illustration
Manager – Design and Layout, ext 5431

Andrew Duggan: Marketing and Communications Officer –
Editor, ext 6381

Sue Elphick MBE: Governors' Editor.

Deadline for next issue: Monday 3rd January 2011