

# yourhospitals

News and information from Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Spring 2009 Issue 2

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# Welcome to the future of intensive care

**W**arrington Hospital's new £6.25 million intensive care unit has opened to its first patients. The state of the art unit has 16 critical care beds and increases the hospital's capacity for caring for critically ill patients from across the Warrington and Halton areas.

The new intensive care unit has all of the latest equipment to provide the very best in monitoring and support for patients and has also been designed to help prevent the risk of infection as well. It is a major and long-awaited development for Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust as intensive care beds have previously been split across three areas of the hospital in converted accommodation. The trust had been unable to further expand the old facilities to meet the growing need for this kind of specialist care.

The new unit brings the facilities together in one purpose built area and has initially increased the hospital's critical care beds from 14 to 16 - with room to expand to over 20 beds over the coming years. The light and airy new unit also houses a new family and waiting room, counseling rooms and staff areas and has the latest critical care equipment and central monitoring built in.

The unit is also specifically designed and equipped to help protect seriously ill patients from healthcare associated infections which they can be more vulnerable to. It has two isolation cubicles with a special negative/positive air pressure system that prevents germs from getting in or out.

All of the monitoring equipment and medical gases in the unit are also suspended from ceiling mounted 'pendants' above the beds which makes it much easier to clean the unit as the floor area is uncluttered.

Because staff are working together in one place on the new unit the beds can be used more flexibly between the two types of intensive care - high dependency care and critical care. The plan is to have eight beds of each type in the new unit, but this can be changed depending on patient need at any given time.

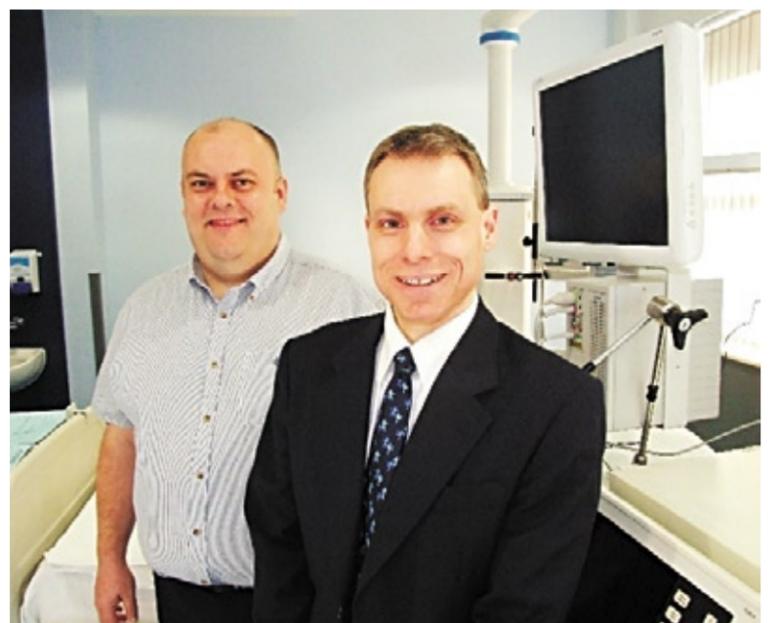
"Over the last four to five years, our intensive care survival rates are consistently better than most other hospitals in the UK," said Dr **Andy Higgs**, consultant anaesthetist at the hospitals, "However, we have had to transfer many patients to other units in the region and further afield, because our old unit was too small to cope with the demand. The new unit provides a state-of-the-art facility for patients, their relatives and our staff along with the expansion in bed numbers that means many more people who fall critically ill will receive these high standards of care that they need closer to home."

**Ellis Clarke**, matron for critical care, added, "We are thrilled with the new unit. It's a major development for the hospital and our patients that we've waited a long time for. The unit is based on the very best practice currently available and complements the skills of our teams of doctors, nurses, therapists and other professionals. We have got the best equipment and infection control measures built in and the room to expand that means it is a unit for the future, not just for now."

Work started on the new unit in March 2008. It is located in the Burtonwood Wing of the hospital and the area that it occupies has been completely redesigned and rebuilt as part of the project. The main contractors on the project have been Norwest Holst who have worked with the trust's estates team to deliver the new facility on time and under budget.

## Intensive care unit - did you know?

High dependency care is needed when patients have, or are at risk of, developing acute failure of one vital organ such as heart, liver or kidney. **Intensive care** is needed when a patient has acute breathing failure, or failure of two or more vital organs. These conditions commonly follow major accidents or trauma, complex major surgery or the most serious life-threatening infections and diseases of any kind.



Matron Ellis Clarke and Dr Andy Higgs in the new unit

## Editor's welcome

Welcome to the second edition of the Your Hospitals newsletter from Warrington and Halton Hospitals.

This newsletter is sent quarterly to the 6,500 people who have joined the hospitals' free public membership scheme which you will have either joined on-line, by filling in a form or by meeting one of our membership recruiters at a visit to the hospitals last year.

Overall things may have seemed quiet on the membership front since you joined us but an awful lot has happened behind the scenes. Our first governor elections took place in September, followed by the news that our application to become an NHS Foundation Trust was successful on December 1st. Since then the Governors' Council made up of the people you elected to be governors has begun to meet. I think it is fair to say that we have a group of very passionate and very challenging governors who will bring a great deal of expertise to the hospitals.

In this issue of *Your Hospitals* we have tried to give you an update on some of the news and developments from across the two hospitals so you know more about the services we provide and how the trust is performing.

Over the coming weeks we will be working with the governors to put them in touch with you as well as providing other ways to get you more involved in your hospitals.

Thanks for your support – please feel free to email me with any ideas for features and information you would like to see from the hospitals and we'll try and include them in future issues.

If you have access to the internet keep checking [www.warringtonandhaltonhospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.warringtonandhaltonhospitals.nhs.uk) for news and updates from across the hospitals.

**Chris Horner**  
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If you have picked up a copy of *Your Hospitals* and aren't a member, you can join for free online at [www.warringtonandhaltonhospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.warringtonandhaltonhospitals.nhs.uk) or call us on 01925 662296 for a membership form.



Preparing chemotherapy drugs in the new CANtreat unit



*The new unit is fantastic!*

# Chemo unit boost to local cancer patients

**P**eople with cancer in Warrington and Halton have received a major boost with the opening of the new CANtreat chemotherapy centre at Halton General Hospital. Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust provides the service in partnership with Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology NHS Foundation Trust. The unit was part funded through CANtreat – a cancer charity that specialises in funding improved environments for chemotherapy patients in the North West region.

Cancer rates in Halton are significantly higher when compared to the average national rate so local services are key. If you're a male from Halton you have 17% higher chance of dying from cancer when compared to England as a whole. If you are female from Halton there is a 31% higher chance.

Around 20 to 30 patients a day with a range of solid tumour cancers such as lung, colorectal, breast and upper gastro intestinal cancers can now receive treatment at the hospital.

The unit has been designed to provide a bright and comfortable environment for providing the treatment and means that more Halton patients don't have to travel over to Clatterbridge on the Wirral for their treatment. It will also mean that clinics in temporary accommodation at Warrington Hospital can be moved to the new purpose designed unit at Halton.

The CANtreat unit is run by a mix of nurses and consultants from

Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology. The drugs are prepared in advance at Clatterbridge and brought over to Halton for each clinic. The unit has a large open area with reclining seats for providing the treatment as well as a comfortable waiting area, nurses' station, clinic room, drug preparation area and even a relative's room.

It has expanded greatly on the number of patients who can be seen at the hospital. It is linked to the Delamere Cancer Centre on the site. The hospital has exciting plans to turn the old smaller chemotherapy room in the Delamere into a complementary therapies suite that will be open five days a week and will allow patients to receive a range of treatments to support their care.

"The new unit is fantastic," explains **Karen Mason**, cancer lead manager for Warrington and Halton Hospitals, "Patients can come in, see the doctor, have their bloods taken and then receive their treatment in comfort. It's purpose built for their needs, it's comfortable and it is close to where they live which means that we can make what can be a very difficult course of treatment much easier for people. It greatly expands the cancer service we can offer local patients from Runcorn, Widnes and the surrounding areas."

**Kim Barrow**, chemotherapy clinical services manager at Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology, said, "This is such an exciting opportunity to work in partnership with our colleagues to ensure that patients are treated locally to where they live whilst ensuring they receive their treatments from chemotherapy experts."

Over £100,000 for the £200,000 plus project to redesign the area and bring it into use was raised by local fundraising led by CANtreat. However, the fundraising hasn't stopped and the charity wants local people to keep on giving to help further improvements at the unit.

"We're very proud to have played a major part in the funding of this improved service which has been much appreciated by the patients and nurses using the new facility," said **Chris Eyres** from CANtreat, "Our aim is to improve the environment in which patients receive their chemotherapy to give them a positive attitude in fighting the disease. The unit ticks most of the boxes in this regard and we are delighted with the outcome. Raising £100,000 for the project has been a great achievement, thanks to all

concerned, and we hope to provide funds to improve the CANtreat Chemotherapy Unit still further when funds come in."

**Donations can be made on line at [www.justgiving.com/cantreat](http://www.justgiving.com/cantreat) or by cheque to CANtreat Ltd, PO Box 805, Warrington WA1 1ZS.**

### Did you know?

There are many types of chemotherapy treatments using different drugs that are specially prepared for each patient. Some patients need a simple injection of a drug that can take a few minutes to complete but many chemotherapy treatments require infusions through a drip that can take several hours.



Most patients take a seat whilst their treatment is given

# New CT scanner speeds up appointment times

Patients at Halton General Hospital are benefitting from a new £400,000 CT (computerised tomography) scanner.

**A** CT (computerised tomography) scanner is a special kind of X-ray machine. Instead of sending out a single X-ray through your body as with ordinary X-rays, several beams are sent simultaneously in a narrow beam.

The X-rays from the beams are detected after they have passed through the body and their strength is measured. Beams that have passed through less dense tissue such as the lungs will be stronger, whereas beams that have passed through denser tissue such as bone will be weaker. A computer can use this information to work out the relative density of the tissues examined, displaying them as a two-dimensional picture shown on a monitor.

The previous scanner at the hospital was a 16 slice scanner – meaning that in one turn of the x-ray tube 16 images were taken. The new scanner is a Philips 64 slice scanner which means it takes 64 images and can therefore scan four times quicker and provide more detailed images.

The scanner at Halton can be used to diagnose a wide variety of medical uses. The scanner is used for both Halton and Warrington patients for diagnosis of a variety of medical conditions and complements the CT scanner at Warrington Hospital.

Images can also be sent directly to clinicians across the trust for viewing on screen for a fast diagnosis.

“The scanner is extremely versatile,” explains **Stuart Clark**, superintendent radiographer at the hospital, “With one patient we can be viewing the tiny structures of the inner ear and then the next patient we are able to do a whole body scan. It is also four times quicker at scanning and means that we can scan an extra 20 plus patients each and every week compared to the old scanner.”

The new scanner is located in the radiology department at Halton General. It would normally cost around £400,000 but the hospital has been able to purchase it for £275,000 thanks to having had a Philips scanner previously.

#### Did you know?

During a CT scan the patient lies on a bed, with the body part under examination placed in the round tunnel or opening of the scanner. The bed then moves slowly backwards and forwards to allow the scanner to take pictures of the body, although it does not touch the patient. The length of the test depends on the number of pictures and the different angles taken.



Stuart Clarke, superintendent radiographer at the hospital, with the new CT scanner.

## Can you help new mums with breastfeeding support?

Hospital looking for ‘breastfeeding peers’ to help encourage, train and share their experiences with new mums on the wards

Local mums who have breast-fed are being asked to share their knowledge and experience to help new mothers at Warrington Hospital as part of an innovative volunteer project.

Volunteers are being sought who can give up some of their time to come and work with the midwifery team on the wards in the Croft Wing at the hospital and help share their valuable experience and practical first-hand advice with new mums from across Warrington, Halton and the surrounding areas.

Breastmilk gives babies all the nutrients they need for the first six months of life and evidence shows that it can help protect them from infection and diseases including ear and gastro infections, diabetes, eczema, asthma and even obesity problems. It also reduces mothers’ chances of getting certain diseases later in life.

Over 3,000 babies a year are born at Warrington Hospital and take up rates for breastfeeding have improved by 5% in less than a year from 56% to 61% of new babies. However, the new approach is aiming to boost rates further and complements new training that has been put in place for midwives.

“There’s a lot of evidence to show that new mums appreciate the experience and guidance from other ordinary women who have been through the same experiences as them and can help guide them through initiating breastfeeding in a practical way,” said Ann Marie Hatton, lead breastfeeding midwife at Warrington Hospital, “This is a hospital based project that means we can support mums with this peer-group advice in the early stages after birth which is the most important time. Breastfeeding is the best start for babies and the health benefits are clear but some mums take to breastfeeding straight away whilst for others it can be difficult and they need some extra support, guidance and the chance to chat and learn. We hope that this project will help us to do this and give the right kind of support that every mum needs.”

Previous training is not necessary if you are interested in volunteering as the hospital’s breastfeeding team will be providing basic training. All interested women will need to have a CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) check carried out in order to work within the ward areas at the hospital. The hospital will cover travel costs for any volunteers.

The hospital is looking to recruit a range of people from different parts of the community who can give up any amount of their time.

“Even if it is just an hour or so every other week, it will help us to provide support to new mums that could be invaluable,” explained Ann Marie, “If it helps another mum give their baby the best start in life then it’s well worth it.”

If you’re interested in volunteering then please contact Ann Marie directly by email at [ann.hatton@whh.nhs.uk](mailto:ann.hatton@whh.nhs.uk) or by calling 07798 823850 during working hours on Monday – Thursday.

## Hospital team asks patients to return loaned nebulisers

Staff at the hospitals are asking local people to help them out by returning any unused nebulisers that have been loaned to patients back to the hospital.

A nebuliser is a machine that turns a liquid medication into a fine mist that is inhaled through a mask or mouthpiece. The hospital’s Rapid Response Respiratory Team need to recover any nebulisers that are no longer being used by patients in the community to help treat a surge in new patients.

The kit is typically loaned to patients who need high doses of medicines direct to the lungs or those that cannot manage traditional inhalers. Nebulisers are used to help in a wide range of chest and respiratory diseases including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, bronchiectasis and some chronic asthma. They can also play a role in treatment of lung cancers.

Rates of respiratory disease in the local area are much higher than the national average in England.

A key part of the role of the Rapid Response Respiratory Team at the hospital is to provide equipment in patient’s homes that can help prevent a respiratory condition worsening and them then needing a hospital admission.

Because of an increase in referrals to the service recently, the demand for nebulisers has also

soared. The hospital typically gives out around 200 nebulisers each year and there are around 450 of the machines currently out in the local community – many of which are no longer required as patients have recovered or no longer need the equipment. The Nebulisers typically cost around £80-£100 each.

Sarah Furlong, respiratory nurse specialist at the hospital, said, “Part of our role is to avoid patients having to come in to the hospital or to be able to safely discharge them from hospital if they can handle their own condition. A key part of that is providing equipment that patients can use at home. However this is becoming more difficult as we are constantly running out of the nebuliser machines.

“We wish to appeal to anyone who may still have a nebuliser, no matter how dusty, which they no longer use and can return to us so we can refurbish them and reissue them.”

People with nebulisers that are no longer in use can drop them off at the Rapid Response Respiratory Team offices in Block 4 at Halton Hospital which are located by the Post Graduate Centre at the rear of the hospital site. They can also be dropped off at Warrington Hospital at the main information desk.

# We've achieved Foundation status

**North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust's bid to become an NHS Foundation Trust was successful and from December 1st 2008 the trust became the new Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.**

**T**he Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts – Monitor – authorised the hospitals' application following a thorough assessment of all areas including finance, service development, safety, governance and risk over the last few months. The hospitals were able to demonstrate that they are performing well, have met the criteria for becoming an NHS Foundation Trust and have robust and sustainable plans for future development. It is the result of a major turnaround for the trust which only two years ago was in financial deficit. Since then the trust has paid off its historic debts, improved its national rating for quality of services and made major reductions in both waiting times and hospital infection numbers which are both now amongst the lowest in the North West region.

As an NHS Foundation Trust Warrington and Halton hospitals are now more accountable to local people rather than central Government. They have a clear commitment to engage with patients, stakeholders and the local community to ensure their views can be heard when developing services. They also have more financial responsibility and control, along with greater freedom to develop their services to local priorities which hospital bosses feel will bring benefits to local people.

Patients, carers and local residents have the opportunity to get involved in their hospitals by becoming members of the Foundation Trust and over 6,700 members of the public have already joined the organisation. The members have elected a Governors' Council made up of local people and staff along with representatives from partner organisations. They will now play an important role in making key decisions affecting the trust and membership is open to anyone over the age of 12 who lives in the areas the hospital serves.

"I am absolutely delighted that we have achieved NHS Foundation Trust status," said Allan Massey, chairman of the trust, "I hope all our staff are incredibly proud. This is a great step forward for the hospitals, and will give us greater flexibility to respond to the needs of our patients, staff and local communities to deliver services that best

meet their needs. "Our hospitals have improved beyond all recognition over the last two years and this approval to move to Foundation Trust status recognises this and gives us the platform to further improve the quality of our services."

**Catherine Beardshaw**, chief executive of the trust, said; "This is fantastic news for the hospitals and good news for local people and our staff. We are now Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and this is a very big vote of confidence from the Government and the Independent Regulator in the progress we have made, our future plans and the care we provide.

"It's a badge that shows we have met the standards that have allowed us to earn greater independence. We will be able to develop new services and make changes faster than we have before and look at the benefits we can bring to the local community as a major employer in the towns we serve. We want people to be proud of their hospitals and our new name reflects our commitment to the two hospital sites we have, working together to provide the services that local people need."

### Did you know?

As part of the move the trust has changed its name from North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust to Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The new name was chosen to better represent the area the two hospitals work across and make it clear where our trust is located.

Under NHS guidelines names of organisations should be clear and descriptive with a reference to the locations of the services they provide. By using both hospital names the trust wants to be clear about the hospitals their services are provided from and that they work together as one trust.

**Catherine Beardshaw** explained, "We asked the public during the consultation on our application for their views on this and the majority supported a change of name – as long as it didn't cost too much to implement. We'll make sure that it is done in a sensible and cost effective way. Only some key signs and things like the name on our website have changed straight away – other items will be replaced as and when they need replacing."

# Meet your hospital

**W**e announced the results of the elections for the first ever elected public and staff hospital governors for Warrington and Halton General hospitals back in late September.

16 public governors were elected from across Warrington, Halton and the surrounding areas following nominations and a ballot amongst the 6,700 people like you who joined the hospitals as a member.

Five staff governors have also been elected by the hospital staff. The public and staff governors have formed a new Governors' Council for the hospitals along with representatives of key partner organisations - nine partner governors. The Governors' Council will ensure that decisions around the hospitals are made in the

interest of the local community.

Being a hospital governor is a voluntary role and governors are not paid for their time although travel expenses are covered.

Each public governor represents an area of either Warrington or the surrounding areas and was nominated from, and elected by, the people who live in that area who have become members of the hospitals. Governors will serve a term of office of either two or three years - so that the entire council does not change at once. Individual terms decided upon by the results and majorities in their elections.

The hospital is now working with the governors on ways to improve membership involved in their services.

## Your Public Governors

### Halton area governors

**Daresbury, Windmill Hill, Norton North, Castlefields – David Warrener**

'Awaiting profile'

*Term of office – until December 2011*

**Beechwood, Mersey, Heath, Grange – Doreen Shotton**

Doreen Shotton is widowed with four married children and twelve grandchildren. Until December 2007 she was a Non Executive Director of North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust, chairing the Human Resources and Charitable Funds Committees. Her career includes Lecturing in Mathematics to Engineers, Health Service Management and Lay Inspector of Schools. She has worked voluntarily as a Magistrate, Director/Trustee of four national charities and Chairman of YMCA National Housing Association. Currently, she is a Director Trustee of Age Concern Mid Mersey, Chairman of Halton's Dignity Champions Network and Lay Researcher for Health in Halton Oral History Project with Liverpool University.

*Term of office – until December 2010*

**Norton South, Halton Brook, Halton Lea – Bob Bryant**

Bob Bryant is a newly elected Governor in Halton and is proud to serve the local community. Bob is the founder and Chair of The Let's Go Stroke Club, which is one of the largest stroke clubs in the country. He is also a School Governor and an Elected Member of Halton Borough Council. Until recently Bob was the Chair of the Patient & Public Involvement in Halton. Bob is married and lives in Runcorn.

*Term of office – until December 2011*

**Appleton, Farnworth, Hough Green, Halton View, Birchfield – VACANT**

A by election will take place in this constituency.

*Term of office – until December 2010*

**Broadheath, Ditton, Hale, Kingsway, Riverside – George Skarratts**

George Skarratts was born in Liverpool in 1938 and served time as a ship's electrician. At 18 he joined the regular army and on return worked for General motors and took various technical qualifications including a B-tech in industrial electronics, City and Guilds certificate in computers and computing including business applications and a Diploma in industrial management. George joined GEC in 1983 as electronics service engineer, rising to the position of national Commercial Manager until retiring in 2000. George is married with two adult children and one grandson and his hobbies include golf and swimming as well as fundraising for various charities.

*Term of office – until December 2010*

### Warrington area governors

**Lymm, Grappenhall and Thelwall – Peter Cotton**

Peter Cotton, 62, was elected as a Governor in September 2008. He retired from the role of Project Director for Leyland Trucks in 2002 after 35 years in Industry. He was responsible for managing their Business Strategy and Product Plans, and for Project Management of Collaborative and New Product introductions. He has a BSc Engineering from Imperial College London, and significant hands on experience of the preparation of financial, legal, and communication documents for Company Board Meetings. Since retiring he has become a Magistrate and a trained Advisor for Citizens Advice. He is married with 3 sons, one who will graduate as a Doctor in 2009.

*Term of office – until December 2011*

**Appleton, Stockton Heath, Hatton, Stretton and Walton – David Knowles**

David Knowles is a practicing Optometrist currently working as a locum throughout the area.

He has previously owned and managed several successful businesses in optics and a hotel. He is married with four children and one grandson.

*Term of office – until December 2010*

**Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft, Poulton North – Taha Tayih Al-Naimi**

Taha Tayih Al-Naimi is a retired professor and graduate of Imperial College and has lived in Warrington for over five years. He headed two universities with four medical colleges and the Baghdad Central Teaching Hospital under his jurisdiction. For three years he led a steering committee of all ten Iraqi medical colleges. His years on the board of the International Association of Universities and his subsequent position as Secretary general of the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils gave him an insight into worldwide problems and aspirations.

*Term of office – until December 2010*

**Penketh and Cuedley, Great Sankey North, Great Sankey South – Lydia Carson**

Lydia Carson is married with two children. She has worked for the local authority, the NHS and the private sector in her career. She now works part time in a local school and is a carer for two family members.

*Term of office – until December 2011*

**Latchford and Poulton South**

Pamela Hees is a retired government posts with the Post Office and finished her career for Warrington. She enjoys meeting with their quality and will support the interests of both patients and staff. Pamela is a dancer in a local dancing and

*Term of office – until December 2010*

**Bewsey and Howley – Jean Ann Poole**

Jean Ann Poole is a retired nurse, then a manager in family practice. A magistrate always had a keen interest in the community and also includes a keen interest in the U3A. A widow with four children and

*Term of office – until December 2010*

**Poplars and Rebecca Kell**

Rebecca Kell is a retired volunteer over the last 10 years. She is an elderly with disabilities. She regularly uses a wheelchair given an unbroken with a long-term will support a hospital governor. She has been the vice chair of the

*Term of office – until December 2010*

**Birchwood and David King**

David King is a retired engineering lived with his wife for 40 years and retired from Birchwood. He is a volunteer in nursing in Warrington. He has been a Warrington governor for 10 years. One of his aims is to raise as a

# al governors

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In the meantime you can pass a message on to any of your governors by emailing [foundation@whh.nhs.uk](mailto:foundation@whh.nhs.uk) or by calling the Foundation Trust office on 01925 664222.

## Membership office set to open

A new development in the Warrington Hospital entrance area is a new Foundation Trust Membership Office that will be the first point of call for any membership enquiries and also a place that patients can go for information, advice and other hospital information. We will be running surveys and advertising future events through the office as well.

The office is set to open in April and is located in the main foyer as you enter the hospital through the main entrance (just past the newsagents and cafeteria). Drop in and say hello if you are passing.

## rnors

### East, Latchford West, South – Pamela Heesom

Heesom has worked for both central and local government including the Admiralty, Risley Prison, the environment and health. She has a career as an information officer on Borough Council. Pamela is working with the public and dealing with questions and feels that these skills help her in representing the interests of patients and the hospitals as a governor. She has fostered two sons and also has an adult literacy. She enjoys sequence walking.

*Term of office – until December 2011*

### and Whitecross, Fairfield and Jean Ann Pownall

Pownall was born and educated in Warrington and trained as a nurse at Warrington General Hospital, obtaining her registered nurse qualification in 1954. She has worked in the community as a district nurse, as a health visitor with involvement in family planning and health education for 15 years. Jean has an interest in local issues which led her to be a Resident's Association, Older People's Group, bowling and now for 13 years, Jean has three children and six grandchildren.

*Term of office – until December 2011*

### and Hulme, Orford – Kelly

Kelly has completed over 500 hours of voluntary service in the local community over the last two years and has gained knowledge of people from young to old with a wide-ranging needs and varying backgrounds. Rebecca has diabetes (type 1) and uses the trust's services which has helped her understanding of the needs of patients with long term chronic illness which she feels she can help with. Her aim of improving services as a governor. Rebecca has helped set up a company for women who have experienced domestic violence.

*Term of office – until December 2011*

### and, Rixton and Woolston –

g is retired Managing Director of an insurance sales company. Aged 71, he has lived in his family in Warrington for over 40 years in the Locking Stumps area of Warrington for over 18 years. Before and after David worked as an unpaid volunteer for numerous charitable organisations and has campaigned for health improvements in Warrington. He has also worked as a Warrington Magistrate for a number of years. One of David's main concerns he wants to see a governor is for the elderly and

disadvantaged who may need support to get the medical care and the treatment they need and are entitled to.

*Term of office – until December 2010*

### Burtonwood and Winwick, Whittle House, Westbrook – Chris Kenyon

Chris Kenyon has lived in Westbrook with his wife Brenda for over twenty years. After making many visits to Warrington Hospital with Brenda's chronically ill Mother, the experience has given him an insight into the working of the Hospital and a desire to become involved in its governance. Chris retired in 2006 after spending most of my working life in management in a very labour intensive retail service industry, being responsible for customer satisfaction and profitability.

*Term of office – until December 2011*

## Out of area governors

### North Mersey – Marjorie Conroy

Marjorie Conroy has been retired (twice!) but is now employed part time as Town Centre Chaplain for Mission in the Economy. Her career has been enjoyable and varied starting out as a computer clerk but also working as a sales manager, psychiatric nurse, office worker, analytic clerk and then managing her own business for 15 years. She spent three years as President of the local chamber of trade and served in a voluntary role on the management board of victim support and social services in the St Helen's area. Marjorie is married to Bill and is mother of four grown up children and grandmother to seven grandchildren.

*Term of office – until December 2010*

### South Mersey – Janet Walker

Janet Walker joined the WRAF straight from school and trained as an aircraft mechanic. She then worked for Vickers Armstrong Aircraft and later Peto Scott television manufacturers. She later worked as research lab assistant working on photo-sensitive materials and with her husband ran a family manufacturing and distribution business in Hi-Fi industry. Janet is lifetime member of the Guide Association and is a Guide and Ranger Guide Leader, a fulfilling range of other key duties for the Guide Association locally and regionally. Janet has brought up three children and is member of Chester Cathedral Council.

*Term of office – until December 2010*

## Houghton Hall opens for step down care

The trust has opened its new step-down and step-up care facility at Houghton Hall in Warrington. It provides first class patient care in the community for patients who require further therapy, rehabilitation and support following a hospital stay in a move away from traditional ways of working.

Houghton Hall is a former nursing home on Greenwood Crescent, Orford that the trust has converted to create a high quality setting for this new style of care. It is managed by the hospital which has recruited a team of dedicated nursing and support staff who are based at Houghton Hall. It is run in partnership with the Community Services Unit of NHS Warrington and Warrington Borough Council social services department to ensure that patients get all the services they require to enable them to return to the community following illness or surgery.

It provides 39 beds in total for Warrington patients. 35 of the beds are for step down care for patients who have completed their acute care at Warrington Hospital but who require high quality therapy and rehabilitation before going back home or to community care. Four beds will be used for step up care – providing a facility for local GPs to send patients from the community who need some support to help manage their condition and prevent them from needing a longer acute hospital stays.

The layout of the facility provides single rooms for all patients. The unit has dedicated staffing from a team of a unit manager, two sisters, 17 staff nurses, 19 unqualified nursing staff and full housekeeping, catering and domestic support. There is input from consultant physician Dr Barton's team from the hospital and it also has full therapy and social care support.

Step down care is becoming a new focus for the NHS with an acceptance that many patients benefit from better integrated care in the community to receive the support they need to make the final recovery before going back home or to their place of residence. As well as being the right place for patients to complete their recovery, it also allows the hospitals to free up hospital beds for emergency and surgical care.

Now that the new facility is open, Houghton Hall will be for Warrington residents and the Halton step down wards for Halton patients so that patients are closer to home and their families.

"This development is really going to benefit local patients," said **Simon Wright**, director of operations at Warrington and Halton Hospitals, "By taking patients out of the hospital and into a bespoke facility like Houghton Hall we can prepare them for their return home in an environment that is right for them and the care they need."

"This new facility is the result of close partnership working to ensure that our patients get all the coordinated care they need from the hospitals and community services," added **Louise Meikle**, matron for step down care who is based at Houghton Hall, "We have recruited a dedicated team of staff and it's a real benefit to the portfolio of services we provide across Warrington."

**Houghton Hall is located at Greenwood Crescent, Orford, Warrington WA2 0EA.**



Houghton Hall provides single rooms for residents whilst they complete their rehabilitation.

## Making parking easier at Warrington Hospital

Warrington Hospital has issued guidance on patient parking following the opening of 220 extra spaces on the site in the last few months.

The hospitals invested £1.4 million in the scheme to improve access for patients and visitors. A new deck of parking at the rear of the site has provided an extra 137 spaces and a further 72 spaces have recently been provided as a result of the trust leasing off site parking for staff at the Basford's site on Guardian Street next to the hospital.

These new areas are primarily being used for staff car parking, allowing the hospital to move staff from the main public car parks. This has released the extra car parking spaces for patients and visitors closer to the main hospital buildings.

The main public car parks are in the following locations:

- The Main car park (on the left by the Lovely Lane front entrance) – best for access to the main wards, departments and outpatients appointments
- Outside the ophthalmology centre (in the centre of the site, at the end of Kendrick Wing) – best for ophthalmology appointments and appointments at the MRI centre and Daresbury Centre
- Outside the Croft Wing (ground floor underneath the new deck of parking at the rear of the site) – best for maternity and women's services and the Burtonwood Wing.

The hospitals are working to ensure staff use the new facilities and do not park in the public pay and display areas now that the new capacity is in place. This is beginning to take greater effect now.

Spaces for disabled car users are still located at all the main entrances and further plans are to increase these, as well as adding some short stay, drop-off spaces and a taxi rank.

"Overall the new spaces have made a big difference and congestion on the site has eased," said **Mike Atkinson**, head of patient services at the hospitals, "Our aim is to make it easier for patients and visitors to park close to the main buildings whilst still ensuring that our staff have the spaces they need."

"Because the new decks can only be accessed by steps we've moved our staff parking there and freed up the main car parks for more visitor and patient spaces. It's taken some time for the new arrangements to bed in and we'll keep working to ensure staff don't park in public spaces but overall the parking problems we've had over the years are easing."

Regular visitors to the hospitals are also being reminded that there is a range of car parking concessions available. Details can be found on [www.warringtonandhaltonhospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.warringtonandhaltonhospitals.nhs.uk) on the 'parking at the hospitals' pages or from the Cash Office at Warrington Hospital and the General Office at Halton Hospital.

## Minor Injuries Unit at Halton General Hospital

A regular guide to using some of the services across Warrington and Halton Hospitals.

The Minor Injuries Unit at Halton General is open from 9am to 10pm every day of the week and provides treatment for less serious injuries, such as sprains, fractures, cuts and grazes to the residents of Halton.

Halton General Hospital has never had its own full Accident and Emergency (A&E) department and many local people go to A&E at Warrington Hospital with minor injuries, when they could be treated much more quickly at Halton's Minor Injuries Unit.

In A&E departments staff must give priority to serious and life-threatening conditions, so if you go there with a minor injury, you may have to wait a long time to be seen (although Warrington Hospital does have a minor injuries area as well).

If you live in the Halton area and your injury is not too serious, it is usually better for you to go to the Minor Injuries Unit at Halton General. You do not need an appointment to visit the unit. However, the unit is for injuries and is not an alternative to going to your GP for a minor illness.

The unit is run by a team of highly qualified nurse practitioners who have experience and expertise in treating minor injuries. The team is supported by senior medical staff from A&E at Warrington.

### What conditions can be treated at the unit?

The Minor Injuries Unit can treat a wide variety of problems including:

- cuts and grazes
- sprains and strains
- broken bones (fractures)
- bites and stings
- infected wounds
- minor head injuries
- eye problems, such as minor eye infections, scratches or something that is stuck in your eye.

### Nurse prescribing services

Some of the nurse practitioners are nurse prescribers which enables them to see and treat patients who present with some minor illness. This can include simple urinary tract infections in women, skin infections, ear and throat infections and emergency contraception.

### Services for children

Children under the age of three can be treated at the Halton Minor Injuries Unit – although the problem should be minor and any child with serious injury or illness should be taken to Warrington Hospital A&E.

### What conditions cannot be treated at the unit?

Conditions that Minor Injury Units cannot treat include:

- chest pain
- respiratory problems
- abdominal pain

- gynaecological problems
- pregnancy problems
- drug overdose
- alcohol related problems
- mental health problems
- health conditions that would normally be treated by your GP or hospital.

### Where is the unit located?

The Minor Injuries Unit is located at Entrance 2 of Halton General Hospital. This is at the rear of the hospital site near the main car park areas.

■ **By car** - If coming via Hospital Way by car, turn right as you reach the Brooker Centre before the main entrance. Follow this road and you will see Entrance 2 to the left and the unit entrance and reception is just through the doors.

■ **By bus** - If arriving by bus at the main entrance, keep walking through the main hospital corridor and then take the stairs or lift down to Entrance 2.

The unit is open from 9am to 10 pm every day of the week. Outside of these hours you should use the A&E department at Warrington Hospital for urgent care needs that cannot wait until the unit is open.

### What to expect - patient advice and information

#### What happens when I get to the unit?

On arrival at the unit you will be seen by a trained nurse and your condition will be assessed as to whether your condition can be seen in the unit. If the condition cannot or does not need to be seen in Minor Injuries you will be redirected safely to the appropriate health care provider such as a dentist, your GP or A&E.

#### How long will I have to wait?

Like major A&E departments, the Minor Injuries Unit has a four hour target meaning that the longest you should have to wait for your treatment to be complete after arrival is four hours in total. Most patients are seen much quicker than in A&E due to the nature of injuries. However, on very busy days you may have to wait up to four hours.

#### What else can I expect?

Depending on the nature of the injury you will usually be treated by the team in a private cubicle. You may need to have an x-ray in the hospital's x-ray department as well. You will be taken upstairs for this and then come back down to have your results assessed by the team.

There is a separate children's area in the unit for caring for infants with an injury.

#### Contacting the department

The department cannot offer advice over the phone and if you require advice from a trained nurse by phone you should call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47.

## Behind the scenes at the labs

Over 100 Foundation Trust members got a rare chance to see behind the scenes at Warrington Hospital when the pathology laboratory threw open its doors to the public in November.

As part of National Pathology Week 2008 the hospital gave people a chance to learn more about the work that goes on in the laboratories. The labs at the hospital provide a range of vital services. They carry out around 1500 blood tests each and every day from patients in the hospital and people who have a blood test at their local GP – processing them and providing results within hours and diagnosing a range of conditions.

Visitors got to see all the techni-



cal equipment used to produce results for diagnosing and treating disease both in the laboratory and on the wards. They also saw the blood bank where all the blood needed for the hospital is stored. The Microbiology Department and infection control team demonstrated how they identify bacteria including infection causing bugs. "We hope that this was a fascinating chance for people to see behind the scenes," said Alison Davies, consultant pathologist at the Hospitals, "Almost everyone who comes into hospital or needs a diagnosis when they go to their GP will need a test of some kind. This was a chance to see the work that goes on to turn that test into a diagnosis and how we do that."

## Avoid spreading the 'winter' bug

Summer may be around the corner but we're asking visitors to the hospitals to consider whether they are well enough to visit sick patients in a bid to reduce the risk of the spread of common bugs including Norovirus.

Each year up to one million people across the country are affected by Norovirus (sometimes called "winter vomiting virus"). It is the most common cause of infectious gastroenteritis in England and Wales and can affect people of any age. It is very contagious as it is spread from person-to-person and through food and water. It can spread quickly in a hospital environment if brought in by unsuspecting visitors.

Many hospitals and GP practices around the country have reported a major rise over the last few months. This winter, Warrington and Halton Hospitals saw a number of cases which led to them restricting visiting to some wards at times in November and December. They are asking visitors to be vigilant if they have not been well and have relatives in hospital as the virus remains in the community.

**Staff are asking visitors to the hospital to follow three simple steps in a bid to reduce the risk of spreading the bug among patients:**

1. Do not visit hospital if you

**feel unwell.** If you, your family or close work colleagues have experienced vomiting and diarrhoea in the last 72 hours please contact the ward for advice before visiting. If you have an outpatient appointment but are unwell, ring and tell us and we can rearrange it for you.

2. **Always wash your hands** with soap & hot water and/or use hygiene hand rub when entering and leaving the ward.

3. **Do not sit on the patient's bed.** If you intend to visit your friend or relative please do not sit on their bed or the patient's chair. Visitors' chairs are provided – please ask the nurse if you need more.

"In Winter, stomach bugs like Norovirus are very difficult to control because they spread so quickly and easily from person to person and are very common out in the community," said Kath Holbourn, Director of Nursing and Governance at the hospitals, "Staff have been asked to be extra vigilant and ensure they properly wash their hands between patients and we are now asking visitors to help us too by

following these simple steps.

"What we would like people to think about is whether they or anyone close to them such as family, friends or colleagues has had diarrhoea, vomiting or fever within the last 72 hours. If this is the case then they should avoid visiting the hospital and use alternative methods of contact to speak to the patient such as the hospital's bedside telephone system. If they really feel they can't postpone their visit they should contact the ward for advice prior to coming to the hospital."

### Did you know?

Whilst Norovirus is an unpleasant experience, the infection tends to only last between 12 and 60 hours and most healthy people will just need to drink plenty of fluids and rest up. However, the illness can have a worse effect on patients in hospital by making them weak and dehydrated and interfering with the effectiveness of the medicines they are taking.

# Reducing Salt can have real health benefits



In each issue of Your Hospitals the dietitian team here at the hospitals aim to give you some advice on a key topic and for this quarter we thought it would be interesting to look at salt and the effect it can have on our bodies...and break a few myths about salt at the same time.

## Salt?

The north-west has strong links with the salt trade as salt has been produced in Cheshire for over 2000 years. The ending 'wich' on a Cheshire place name means that it was once a salt town. Cheshire is the only place in Britain where salt is still produced on a large scale and it is one of the most common minerals on earth. We cannot survive without salt as many chemical reactions in our bodies need sodium, one of the two elements that make up salt (the other is chloride.)

Although salt is essential to the healthy functioning of our bodies, too much salt can put our health at risk. It is a recognised fact that most people in the UK eat too much salt.

## Associated health risks

Eating too much salt can raise your blood pressure which can in turn can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke. It is therefore important for you and your family to eat only the recommended amount of salt necessary to maintain a healthy body.

## How much should I eat?

The recommended daily maximum for adults is 6grams/day (about one teaspoonful). You may think that by not putting salt on your food you are reducing the risk of taking in too much. However, most of our intake is hidden salt in processed foods like ready meals, baked beans and sauces. It is even in sweet foods such as biscuits and cakes. In fact 75% of the salt we eat comes from processed foods. The average daily intake in the UK is over 9 gram/day... a huge 50% more than it should be.

## Read the label

So how do we know how much salt we consume? Well a good start is to read the information labelling on food, where salt is listed as salt or sodium (1g of sodium = 2.5g of salt).

### A little or a lot per 100g?

| A LOT          | A LITTLE       |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1.25g of salt  | 0.25g of salt  |
| 0.5g of sodium | 0.1g of sodium |

Look at some labels in your food cupboards, you may well be surprised.

## Foods high in salt

To help control salt intake the following foods, which are particularly high in salt, should be eaten in moderation. These include:

- Bacon
- Tinned & packet soups
- Cheese
- Crisps & salted nuts
- Sausages
- Smoked fish
- Ham
- Pickles
- Ready meals
- Pizza

- Bottled sauces
- Soy sauce
- Vegetables canned in salt
- Stock cubes
- Yeast extracts

It is also worth noting that sea salt and rock salt have the same effect on the body as table salt. Although low sodium salts are available they don't help you to change your eating habits.

## How to reduce salt intake

- Try gradually reducing salt in cooking - your taste buds will adjust! Also avoid adding salt at the table. Taste first; often we add out of habit.
- Watch out for high salt snack foods, such as crisps and nuts, and processed foods, such as ready meals and takeaways.
- Check labels. Choose those with a lower salt content and buy tinned vegetables without added salt, even better buy fresh.
- Be more aware and control how much salt is in your meals by making more meals from scratch using fresh ingredients.

## Cooking Tips

Use these tips to add flavour to your meals in other ways.

Add fresh herbs to pasta, vegetables and meat.

Add lemon juice to fish

Marinate meat and fish to give more flavour.

Pepper can be used liberally

Use garlic, chillies and ginger in stir fries

Use your vegetable water (salt free!) for gravies, soups, stews and sauces

Wine can be added to casseroles and stews

## A simple low salt Tomato Sauce for Pasta

### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 large onion finely chopped
- 1-2 cloves garlic finely chopped
- Pinch of dried herbs e.g. basil or oregano
- Teaspoon of tomato puree (check label for no added salt versions)
- 1x 225g/8oz tin chopped tomatoes

### Method:

1. Fry the onion and garlic in the oil until softened.
2. Add a pinch of dried herbs of your choice e.g. basil or oregano.
3. Add a teaspoon of tomato puree and stir.
4. Pour in tin chopped tomatoes, stir, and leave to simmer for at least 10 minutes.
5. Season with black pepper.



## Remember...

Cutting down on salt is only part of healthy eating. Eating a diet that is high in fruit and vegetables, high in fibre, low in fat (especially saturated fat) and low in salt can help to reduce blood pressure, risk of heart disease, risk of stroke and even the risk of some types of cancer.



## Good progress in fight against infection

### Numbers of cases of the infection Clostridium Difficile have fallen dramatically at the hospitals.

The latest national figures published by the Health Protection Agency showed a 35 percent drop in cases of C-diff across the hospitals. There were 42 cases in July to September 2008 compared to 65 cases in the previous three months (April to June 2008).

Overall numbers of the infection are now down to a third of that at the same time the previous year.

C-Diff is a bacterium that is present naturally in the gut of around 3 percent of adults and 66 percent of children and it does not cause any problems in healthy people. However, some antibiotics that are used to treat other health conditions can interfere with the balance of 'good' bacteria in the gut. When this happens, C-Diff bacteria can multiply and cause symptoms such as diarrhoea and fever.

As C-Diff infections are commonly caused by antibiotics, most cases usually happen in a healthcare environment such as a hospital or care home. Most people with an infection make a full recovery. However, in rare cases the infection can be fatal.

The hospitals have been working hard on reducing the risk of C-Diff infection for patients and have seen a trend of lower infection numbers over the last six months.

**Kath Holbourn**, Director of Nursing and Governance at the hospitals, said:

"These figures show a dramatic decrease in the numbers of C-Diff infections we have seen over the last few months. Our programme of work around reducing infections is paying dividends.

"It's the result of hard work by our staff and new initiatives to improve the care for patients at risk of infection – such as those who have been on long courses of antibiotics. Our specialist ward for infection control at Warrington Hospital has helped prevent the risk of infection spreading and leading to better outcomes for patients who develop infection. We're also working closely with GPs in the community to reduce the unnecessary use of antibiotics in high risk patients. There's still work to be done but these drops in numbers show that we're providing better, safer care for our patients."

# Contacting your hospitals – cut out and keep guide

**Main trust switchboard –  
01925 635911**

**In an emergency**

**Warrington Hospital Accident and Emergency**  
– 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Halton General Hospital Minor Injuries Unit** –  
9am to 10 pm, 7 days a week.

**NHS Direct** - For health advice and information  
24 hours a day you can call the national NHS  
Direct service on **0845 4647** or view their web-  
site at [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

**Writing to us or calling us**

The main addresses and telephone numbers for  
the hospitals are:

**Warrington Hospital**

Lovely Lane, Warrington WA5 1QG  
Tel - 01925 635911

**Halton General Hospital**

Hospital Way, Runcorn WA7 2DA  
Tel - 01928 714567  
(outside office hours you can contact Halton  
Hospital via the main Warrington number  
01925 635911)

**Houghton Hall (step down unit)**

Greenwood Crescent, Orford,  
Warrington WA2 0EA  
Tel - 01925 858970

**Contacting us by email**

[nchweb@whh.nhs.uk](mailto:nchweb@whh.nhs.uk) is our email address for  
general enquiries. We will aim to respond within  
72 hours or forward your query to the relevant  
department who may contact you directly. Please  
note however that we cannot cancel or amend  
appointments, or provide advice on medical mat-  
ters, via email and that you will need to call the  
relevant department on your appointment letter  
to do this.

Please note that our hospital email addresses  
have now changed to a standard  
**firstname.lastname@whh.nhs.uk**

**Other useful numbers**

Foundation Trust membership office - If you are  
a member of the Foundation Trust at Warrington  
and Halton Hospitals and have any questions  
around your membership, events or want to  
contact your governors you can contact us by  
email at [foundation@whh.nhs.uk](mailto:foundation@whh.nhs.uk) or can call  
**01925 664222**.



Visit [www.warringtonandhaltonhospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.warringtonandhaltonhospitals.nhs.uk)  
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or visit our website: [www.yourownspace.org.uk](http://www.yourownspace.org.uk)  
or e-mail: [salesteam@muir.org.uk](mailto:salesteam@muir.org.uk)

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