2,000: It’s the magic number
Hello and welcome to the August edition of our monthly staff, members and governors’ magazine.

It was a joy and a privilege to be invited to the 2,000th liver transplant celebrations. Everyone who attended was blown away by the inspiring patient stories and the wonderful achievements of this service. Turn to pages 4 and 5 to see some of the fabulous photos from the day.

We’re thrilled that Streams has proved an enormous success for the teams that use this pioneering app every day to provide more timely care to patients. Opposite you can read more about the UCL evaluation, which shows what a difference Streams makes to our work.

Our annual members’ meeting was an opportunity to celebrate your achievements from the past year. We were able to show members some of the trust’s most exciting projects, including how we are redesigning cancer pathways and our ground-breaking HIV research. Turn to page 11 for more details and photos from the evening.

Finally, we’re looking for volunteers to train as mental health first aiders (page 8). This is a hugely important subject so if you think you could help your colleagues in this area please do get involved.

Caroline Clarke
Group chief executive

Key to abbreviations:
Barnet Hospital: BH
Chase Farm Hospital: CFH
Royal Free Hospital: RFH
Royal Free London: RFL
Detection of one of the biggest killers in the NHS has been cut from hours to minutes at the RFH thanks to the introduction of a new mobile app.

That is one of the key findings of an evaluation of Streams – a secure alerting tool which has been developed by technology experts at DeepMind Health in collaboration with clinicians at the RFL to help identify patients at risk of acute kidney injury (AKI). The app will be rolled out to BH in the near future.

According to the evaluation led by UCL, the findings of which were published in Nature Digital Medicine and the Journal of Medical Internet Research, the app improved the quality of care for patients by speeding up detection and preventing missed cases. Thanks to Streams, clinicians were able to respond to urgent AKI cases in 14 minutes or less – a process which, using existing systems, might otherwise have taken many hours.

It also concluded that the app reduced the cost of care to the NHS – from £11,772 to £9,761 for hospital admission for a patient with AKI.

Acute kidney injury – known as a silent killer because it can often be diagnosed late and is often hard to predict – contributes to nearly 20% of all hospital admissions, accounts for 100,000 deaths every year in the UK, and costs the NHS £1.2 billion annually.

Alerted to danger

Mary Emerson, lead nurse specialist for the RFL patient at risk and resuscitation team, said: “The Streams app has made a huge difference to clinicians’ ability to respond rapidly to patients who are developing acute kidney injury. This means we can deliver treatment more quickly, and also identify deteriorating patients much earlier. The mobile technology is easy to use and fits with the way healthcare is delivered today. I’m excited about the possibilities this approach to alerting might have for other conditions and clinical teams.”

Clinicians at the RFL worked closely with experts at DeepMind Health who developed Streams with the aim of improving outcomes for patients by getting the right data to the right clinician at the right time. Like breaking news alerts on a mobile phone, the technology notifies nurses and doctors immediately when test results show a patient is at risk of becoming seriously ill with AKI, and provides information that they need to take action.

Clinicians face real challenges when it comes to detecting conditions like AKI – patients deteriorate rapidly and, without the app, it could be hours before this was picked up due to the limitations of current NHS technology and the reliance on manual observations and intuition. Approximately one in three deaths from AKI may be preventable if clinicians are able to intervene earlier and more effectively.
Day of celebration marking liver transplant milestone

Staff and patients came together during ‘an incredible and emotional’ event to mark the trust’s 2,000th liver transplant.

Staff reflected on the achievements of the liver service and patients shared their personal stories during a day to remember at the Emirates Stadium in north London, home of Arsenal football club.

David Edgell, the 2,000th patient, was there to congratulate the team and he was joined by patients – some who had received their transplants many years ago.

The liver transplant service began at the RFH in 1988 and each year the number of liver transplants has continued to steadily increase, thanks to improvements in the referral process, as well as technology.

Debbie Sanders, RFL’s group chief nurse, said: “It was an incredible day, full of emotion. I met a patient I remembered looking after in intensive care 23 years ago after her transplant.”

Katie Quist, lead liver transplant co-ordinator, said: “The 2,000 organ donors and their families were in our thoughts throughout the day, we know that without their selfless donation none of the transplants would have been possible. It was amazing to see so many of our patients and I was so proud of the full lives they are leading and the incredible achievements they have made post transplant. The recipients and their families make all the hard work so worthwhile and the donors and their families are the true heroes of our service.”

Doug Thorburn, consultant hepatologist and clinical director for liver transplantation, hepatology and hepato-pancreato-biliary medicine and surgery, said: “It was a fantastic event and first and foremost I wanted us to pay tribute to the generosity of organ donors and their families without whom none of this would be possible. It was also wonderful to be able to show our appreciation and gratitude to all the staff across the trust, past and present, who made this achievement possible.”

Since Dave Edgell had the 2,000th transplant back in December 2018 there have been on average almost three liver transplants per week at the RFH.

The event was funded by the liver service’s charity.
Day of celebration marking liver transplant milestone
Celebrating our values during #NHSValuesWeek

The RFL joined NHS Health Education England (HEE) in celebrating NHS Values Week last month and staff across the trust posted messages on social media about the work they were doing.

The week presented the trust with an opportunity to celebrate how we enact our own values, by being positively welcoming, actively respectful, clearly communicating, and visibly reassuring.

Our values

At each of our sites we ensure that we are welcoming, respectful, reassuring and communicative with our patients, their families, visitors and fellow colleagues. Our values were chosen by our patients and staff in 2012 and underpin all we do.

Our behaviour framework, ‘Living our values’, was launched in 2015 and summarises the behaviours that our staff and patients expect to see at the RFL.

Putting your best foot forward

Staff enjoyed an outdoor history lesson as they took a guided lunchtime stroll around Hampstead Heath.

Physiotherapist Jackie Wastell led the two-hour walk and provided some fascinating insights into the history of the heath along the way.

Jackie, who has been running on the heath for many years, said spending even a short amount of time outside had significant health benefits.

“There’s a lot of evidence that just taking half an hour to be among nature and away from your desk is very good for your wellbeing. I always feel better afterwards.”

During the walk staff took in sites such as the famous swimming ponds, Kenwood House and the spot where Harry Hallowes claimed squatter’s rights to the patch of ground where he’d set up camp – later dramatised in the 2017 film Hampstead starring Brendan Gleeson and Diane Keaton.

Indigo Raphael from the trust’s chaplaincy service was one of the walkers.

“It’s a great chance to meet and connect with staff. Walking can be very therapeutic and it’s important to take time out from your regular surroundings to gain a different perspective.”

Jackie also leads a weekly half-hour lunchtime walk around the heath. The group meets every Wednesday, whatever the weather, outside WHSmith on the ground floor of the RFH at 12.30pm. New members are always welcome.
RFL private patients unit: How it benefits the NHS

The private patients units at the RFH and Hadley Wood Hospital are an integral part of the trust, helping to support the RFL, but just how much do you know about their work?

1. Do the consultants in the PPU work for both the trust and the PPU?
   Yes the majority of consultants in the PPU are NHS consultants on RFL contracts with NHS duties and obligations. Many of the consultants in the unit have trained and worked at the RFL throughout their career. There are also a small number of consultants who have now retired from the NHS but continue to work as PPU consultants.

2. Where does the units’ income go?
   The units make a profit every year and all of it is reinvested into the RFL’s NHS services. There are no outside investors or owners so all money generated from the PPU goes back to the RFL. The money is not outsourced to external healthcare providers and does not go to privately-owned healthcare companies. Private medicine conducted at independently-owned private hospitals and clinics supports the profits and facilities of the private hospital provider. Whereas private medicine conducted in an NHS hospital supports the finances and facilities of the NHS.

3. Are PPU staff on the equivalent pay scales as their colleagues in the trust?
   Yes, all staff in the PPU are RFL employees and are paid at the same rate and graded in the same bands as their NHS clinical and non-clinical co-workers.

4. How much money does PPU make?
   Performance fluctuates year on year but the unit has never made a loss and delivered a revenue of £24m in the past financial year. Both sales and profits are expected to grow and the PPU is an important part of the trust’s five year plan to grow and become financially stronger.

5. Are private patients treated at the expense of NHS patients?
   No, private patients are seen and treated in dedicated facilities or NHS facilities paid for by the PPU. The added benefit of private patients is that resources are freed up for NHS patients and income is generated for the NHS.

6. How do private patients pay for their care?
   Patients in the PPU pay for their care through their private medical insurance or pay out of their own pocket. A number of international patients are paid for by their own country’s government.

7. Does PPU fall under the trust’s CQC governance?
   Yes, the PPU is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The units have a strong focus on governance and aligns itself with the policies of the trust.

8. Where is PPU located?
   At the RFH, there are four in-patient wards on the 12th floor, two theatres in the theatre suite, an out-patient clinic in the Lyndhurst Rooms and two private rooms on the children’s ward. The PPU also operates Hadley Wood Hospital in Barnet, which is a stand-alone imaging, out-patients and day surgery hospital.
For staff at the RFL, caring for patients is a given. But it’s just as important to take care of yourself, particularly when it comes to your mental health.

As part of our staff health and wellbeing strategy, we’re looking for staff to become mental health first aiders. Following a two-day training course by an accredited mental health organisation, you’ll support colleagues across the trust as part of a mental health first aiders’ hub. You’ll be confident dealing with mental health needs, from spotting the early signs of a problem to being able to support someone in crisis and direct them to the appropriate professional help.

Carol Menashy (pictured), a staff nurse at CFH, went on the training course a few months ago and says it’s been hugely beneficial.

“It’s wonderful to be able to help your colleagues,” says Carol. “The training gives you the confidence to support people when they need it. You learn how to assess them and where to signpost them for professional help. As mental health first aiders, we’re not professional counsellors, but we’re able to recognise when people are in difficulty and make sure they get the help they need.”

Carol says staff appreciate having someone to talk to. “People feel valued and that the trust is doing something for them,” she says. “Being able to talk to someone about your problems is very therapeutic and can help to put things in perspective. Even a 10 minute chat can make a difference.”

Mental health first aiders can be identified by their badges and staff can approach them if they’re worried about a colleague or to discuss their own mental health.

“We care about our patients and go above and beyond for them, but we often neglect ourselves,” says Carol.

On Thursday 10 October, World Mental Health Day, the mental health first aiders programme will launch across the RFH, BH, CFH and ECC.

If you’d like to become a mental health first aider, talk to your line manager and email rf-tr.hrbpadmin@nhs.net to request an application form and information on training dates.

For more information on what the role involves, email Yemisi Osibote, head of workforce – staff experience, at yemisi.osibote@nhs.net.

“We’re committed to changing attitudes about mental health, reducing stigma and dispelling myths,” says Yemisi. “That way, we can normalise conversations around mental health and support staff.”

Could you become a mental health first aider?

Staff friends and family test: Your views matter

We take part in the quarterly staff friends and family test (FFT) survey, which runs across the NHS.

It asks staff how likely they are to recommend the services they work in to friends and family who need treatment or care and how likely they are to recommend the trust as a place to work.

The staff FFT is designed to complement the annual NHS staff survey and give a more up-to-date and regular picture of staff experience.

The FFT is now open – it takes less than 10 minutes to complete and asks you about various things including health and wellbeing, bullying and harassment and discrimination.

This helps us with our goal of making sure all staff are treated equally and identifies areas where improvements need to be made.

Please take part in the survey so we can get an accurate, real-time picture of your experience of working for us.

Go to Freenet to find out how to take part in the survey.
Joining the RFL family

BH welcomed the new FY1 doctors joining the trust and made sure they were given an orientation tour and got to meet with key staff. Twitter was busy all day with messages of support for our new colleagues joining us right across the RFL. We hope you’ve settled in.

Welcoming our international nurses

A group of qualified overseas nurses from as far afield as India and Australia are some of the latest recruits to be welcomed to the RFL.

The trust employs staff from more than 120 countries around the world, bringing with them a wealth of skills, knowledge and experience.

The latest cohort, also including nurses from the Philippines, Portugal and Lesotho, are excited about the start of their RFL journey.

Dass David, a theatre nurse from southern India, said: “I came here because I love London and it’s a great opportunity to meet colleagues from different countries and backgrounds and to work with patients.”

Jan Jones from Australia is looking forward to working in hepato pancreato biliary (HPB) theatres. “It’s a really interesting role and I like the complexity of it,” she said. “I’m excited to be in London, I love the culture and the history, and I’m looking forward to experiencing four seasons again!”

The group heard from Fritzie Cencil, a clinical practice educator at the RFH who came to London from the Philippines in 2002.

Fritzie said she remembered experiencing a culture shock and homesickness when she first arrived, but since settling in she’s gone from strength to strength. After starting out in a nursing home she moved to the RFH as a band 5 nurse and has worked her way up to her current role.

“All the Royal Free London has given me a platform to showcase my skills and expertise,” said Fritzie. “I’ve had space to grow and fantastic support and opportunities. It’s been great for my career.”

Her advice to those looking to follow in her footsteps? “Be the best version of yourself and always have a goal.”

Our newest nurses were also given a warm welcome to the trust by RFH director of nursing Rebecca Longmate and Julie Hamilton, director of nursing at BH.

Julie, who is originally from Ireland, said: “We’re so excited to have you here. The diversity overseas nurses bring is phenomenal. In 20 years of nursing I’ve worked with staff from all over the world and my nursing role models have come from all cultures and backgrounds.”

Rebecca added: “We value the knowledge and skill you bring to our nursing workforce.”

All smiles from some of our lovely new FY1s on their Hospital Tour!
Staff at CFH marked the opening of the hospital's new road in style with a charity bed push in aid of the Royal Free Charity.

The highly competitive event saw three teams complete a lap of the road outside the main entrance, with a changeover halfway round.

A nail-biting finish saw Lynnvincibles and the Inconsiderate Constructors tie for first place, with Endoscopy Superheroes not far behind.

A huge thank you to everyone who took part and to all those who sponsored the teams and came out to support on the day.

Imaging department redevelopment

The imaging department at the RFH is undergoing a significant redevelopment to replace and upgrade its MRI scanners.

As well as replacing two existing scanners, a new state of the art 3T scanner is being introduced. 3T scanners offer significantly better image quality in certain areas, which can provide more in-depth information and lead to improved outcomes for patients.

Once complete, it will increase the trust’s MRI capacity and deliver high quality diagnostic services using the latest equipment.

To minimise disruption to services while the scanners are being upgraded, a mobile MRI unit will be set up in the south car park from 1 September.

Work is currently underway to prepare for the mobile MRI. From 1 September, some spaces will be closed temporarily while the mobile MRI is in place. This is expected to last until July 2020.

Plans are being put in place to prevent any impact on patient care. Please contact the radiology enquiries desk on rf.radiologyenquiries@nhs.net if you have any queries.
Pioneering research takes centre stage

Some of the trust’s pioneering research projects were discussed during last month’s packed annual member’s meeting.

Professor Alison Rodger, who led a study which showed that anti-HIV drugs could stop the virus being passed, and Professor Anthony Schapira, who carried out world-leading research into Parkinson’s disease, were two of the speakers at the event held in the atrium at the RFH.

RFL group chief executive Caroline Clarke spoke about some highlights from the past year, including the opening of the new CFH, while Professor Derralynn Hughes spoke about how patients are helping to shape newly-redesigned cancer pathways.

Members were also invited to find out more about some of the trust’s leading projects, including the Pears Building, the UCL Institute of Immunity and Transplantation and the new decontamination unit in Enfield at display stands that were put up around the atrium.

And due to the hot weather, the Royal Free Charity supplied all the attendees with ice lollies.
Karen Gordon, head of clinical governance and performance and joint chair of the RFL’s BAME staff network

What’s your role?
I ensure the care we provide to patients is based on best practice evidence and standards which results in the best outcomes for the patients. This is done through implementation of NICE guidelines, participation in national audits and outcome review studies and delivering improvement plans based on the findings. This is happening through our work with teams and also through CPGs. I’m proud that at this trust we put our patients at the heart of everything we do.

Tell us about the Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff network?
This is so important to me. I’m the chair for the RFH site. Our aim is to promote inclusion and work with all staff to see how we can support an agenda of inclusion and diversity. As an organisation we’re doing better than many others and that’s really encouraging. That’s because we have senior staff who ‘get it’, take it seriously and mentor and develop BAME staff and ensure we have diverse panels for recruiting. But I want to see proper representation of BAME staff in senior positions of 8C and above – that’s when I’ll know things have really changed and we’ve broken through the glass ceiling. The only way we’re going to do it is to remove the barriers and become more inclusive. It’s all about getting to know people and realising just how much you have in common rather than focusing on someone’s ethnicity.

What was your first job?
I started work at 18 in a toy factory assembling Matchbox cars. In my next job I was ordering parts for real cars but I knew I wanted to train as a nurse – that was the dream and I did an access to nursing course. I was born on the 12 May which is International Nurses Day so I think it was meant to be.

Tell us a bit about your career?
I started my nursing career at the Royal London Hospital and trained as a neonatal intensive care nurse and worked there for 10 years, where I became a ward sister. I then chose to work in the community and retrained as a health visitor. I next became a nurse manager, leading teams of community nurses in the City and Hackney. I felt I was really making a difference for our patients – people with long-term health conditions, but also for my staff, making sure they reached their full potential. I’ve also lectured at City University.

What would you do if you weren’t doing this job?
My secret dream is to be a ‘Real Housewife of Jamaica’! I can really see myself by the beach or the pool sipping cocktails. I’m just waiting for the call.

What do you want staff to get out of the network?
We want people to get what they need from the network and ensure it is a friendly and welcoming space. It’s great that people turn up to our meetings but we are happy to support everyone. So if someone thinks they could benefit with interview preparation or that mentoring would be beneficial then tell us and we will help you to get the right support. I don’t want anyone to be silent about their hopes and dreams. We also want the network to be fun, with social events that bring people together.