

# Free press



## Footballers deliver festive treat to patients



Follow our Twitter account @RoyalFreeNHS to see what our patients and staff are saying about us



# Hello and welcome

to the December edition of our monthly staff, members and governors' magazine.

This is my first Christmas as chief executive and I'd like to say a huge thank you for all you have done this year to deliver exceptional patient care.

I receive so much wonderful feedback about the difference you make to patients' lives and that makes me hugely proud to work at the RFL.

There have been many things to celebrate this year – CFH has enjoyed a successful first year and was awarded HIMSS level 6, which means it is one of the most digitally advanced hospitals in the country.

We also celebrated our 2,000th liver transplant with a spectacular party at which we heard so many moving patient stories. We've enjoyed great success in developing our clinical practice groups across the trust, including making huge improvements to the way we care for children with asthma.

And there is much to look forward to in 2020 – the fabulous new Pears Building will open at the RFH, allowing the expansion of the Institute of Immunity and Transplantation and we'll be going live with the Streams app at BH, which will help some of our most vulnerable patients.

I'd like to say a special thank you to those staff working over the festive period, you are all stars.

Wishing every one of you a merry Christmas and a happy new year – see you all in 2020!



**Caroline Clarke**  
Group chief executive

- positively welcoming
- actively respectful
- clearly communicating
- visibly reassuring

Key to abbreviations:  
Barnet Hospital: BH  
Chase Farm Hospital: CFH  
Royal Free Hospital: RFH  
Royal Free London: RFL

**Royal Free London** @RoyalFreeNHS

Gold stars all round for the Royal Free Hospital Children's School who have received a faultless inspection from Ofsted – taking them from a 'good' to an 'outstanding' rating.

#schoolrules #joyintheclassroom

Find out more here: [bit.ly/2qZ9Rxs](http://bit.ly/2qZ9Rxs)

**Royal Free London** @RoyalFreeNHS

Our multi-agency discharge event (MADE) has begun at Barnet Hospital. A warm welcome to all our partners coming to the hospital today to help with patient flow including our social services teams from Herts, Barnet and Enfield. #flow #MADinBarnet

**Caroline Clarke** @RFLChiefExec

#HIVTestWeek Thanks to the efforts of our wonderful ICDC team we are reaching more staff and patients. Give HIV the finger! @RoyalFreeNHS

**Deborah Sanders RN** @DeborahBalkin

What a lovely tree on Juniper ward, really love that all the staff have their own angel decoration on it @RoyalFreeNHS

**Royal Free London** @RoyalFreeNHS

Massive congratulations to all the winners of the Cordwainers prizes presented by Colonel Nigel Easton and @derekfeeleyIHI. Well deserved and very impressive. Here are potentially the radical healthcare redesigners of tomorrow.

**Royal Free London** @RoyalFreeNHS

Breda Athan, infection specialist & peer vaccinator feels strongly that healthcare workers should get the flu jab every year. "It's important for everyone working in a hospital to protect themselves from flu but also prevent the spread to our vulnerable patients." #RFLflufighters

**Royal Free London** @RoyalFreeNHS

Missed our annual Marsden lecture last night and want to find out more about the talk, 'Is it time for radical redesign?', given by healthcare expert @derekfeeleyIHI? Spoiler alert. It is! [ow.ly/yif950xi7JQ](http://ow.ly/yif950xi7JQ)

**Royal Free Tissue Viability** @RoyalFreeTVI

Great teaching session in 8 west ward @RoyalFreeNHS site from our wonderful Tissue Viability Team. #pressureheroes

# Patients delighted by surprise visit from Spurs

Children at BH were given a festive surprise - and received some early Christmas presents - when members of the Tottenham Hotspur women's team paid a visit to Galaxy Ward.

Midfielders Megan Wynne and Rachel Furness and defenders Hannah Godfrey and Siri Worm delivered gifts, including Lego, Toy Story favourites Buzz Lightyear and Woody, and cuddly toys to eager fans.

Patient Alina Asjad happened to be celebrating her 17th birthday when the footballers dropped by.

Alina said: "Hopefully I'll be leaving hospital soon but this visit has definitely made my birthday. I was finding opening my gift a bit difficult but Megan gave me a helping hand."

Spurs fan Ricky Jones, father of patient Alfie, said he was delighted to meet the players. He added: "I'm the happy one here because I love Tottenham. But my ex-wife and my son are actually Arsenal supporters! I'm super happy to see the players and it's a nice thing that they are doing."

Huge Spurs fans Sarah and Alex Lavender are the parents of twins Marley and Jesse, who were born last month and are now being cared for on Starlight neonatal ward.

Alex said: "We've been here over five weeks now and it's so wonderful to see new faces and get visitors - we value it so much. We are now on the home stretch and hope to be back at home a week from now. We've got so much Spurs stuff already as we are genuinely very big fans but we didn't have the Spurs soft toys they gave us so that's wonderful."

Alex also praised the staff on the ward and said: "We'd just like to say the staff here are incredible."

Hannah Godfrey added: "This is the first visit we've done and we've loved being here. Seeing the faces of the children and their families light up when they see that someone is bringing them presents and wants to chat to them is something we'll remember for a very long time."



# Celebrating our dedicated staff



Staff who have dedicated their working lives to the RFL were recognised at the annual long service awards last month.

Members of staff reaching 25 or 40 years' service over the last year were invited to attend the event at BH, along with their family and friends. The awards ceremony was led by Deborah Sanders, interim chief executive at BH and RFL group chief nurse, Kate Slemeck, RFH chief executive, and Peter Ridley, RFL group chief finance and compliance officer.

Midwives, healthcare assistants, pharmacists, nurses and doctors were among those who attended and all the winners received a certificate and gift voucher.

Deborah Sanders said: "We are proud to be celebrating 43 long-serving members of staff today, who between them have a staggering 1,135 years of service. Each one of them has made such a difference to our hospitals and we thank them for their dedicated service."

Once the certificates were presented, staff and guests enjoyed afternoon tea in the hospital restaurant. Tables were decorated with balloons in NHS blue, gold star confetti and there was an array of cake stands with finger sandwiches and macarons.

Balu Chauhan, a pharmacy assistant who has worked at the RFH for 40 years, said: "Next year I will be celebrating 50 years in the NHS, so it is amazing to be recognised for my 40 years of service with the RFL. I retired 10 years ago but came back because I missed it!"

Anissa Rahemtulla, Caroline Caney and Hansa Gosrani, all celebrating 25 years in paediatrics at BH, said recognition of hard work makes a positive difference.

Anissa said: "We are like a family in so many ways. The hospital is like a second home, the colleagues we work with are brilliant and you feel like you're making a real difference to people's lives. Someone I cared for 25 years ago came to see me today and it was really special."



# Ready for winter



We are seeing record attendances at our emergency departments and winter is very much here – a huge thank you to everybody who is working so hard during this challenging period.

We need the help of everybody across our hospitals to ensure patients have the best possible experience. Please support your colleagues by creating capacity and safely reducing length of stay. You can do this by planning discharges as soon as patients arrive on the ward, conducting senior clinical reviews earlier in the morning and planning your rotas in advance.

At BH and at the RFH, the focus has been on improving patient flow and reducing pressure on the emergency departments.

At BH, staff discharged 40 more patients than predicted during a single day thanks to the multi-agency discharge event (MADE). There is more information opposite.

While at the RFH, Free Flow Week increased patient flow through the hospital – more than 359 people were discharged home.



## Free flow week at the RFH

Good patient flow is central to patient experience, reducing pressure on staff and providing the best possible healthcare.

Free flow week at the RFH focused on improving timely discharge and reducing the length of time that patients spend in hospital, with a different focus for staff each day.

Divisional team members were on wards supporting daily board rounds and leads were identified to ensure the discharge market place in the ops centre acted on instructions on post-it notes. There was also an awards ceremony at the end of the week with prizes for high achieving areas and staff.

### Welcome to the morning board round at the RFH adult assessment unit (AAU):

At the start of a new day, the unit is a hive of activity. The team – including nurses, doctors, healthcare assistants and pharmacists – gather around a giant whiteboard at a daily meeting known as a board round.

Also present are the therapy team, the triage and rapid elderly assessment team, colleagues from the emergency department, the geriatric medicine service, and the Camden accelerated discharge service, which facilitates timely discharge for patients who live in the borough.

The aim is to treat every patient safely and to get them back home, or to an assisted care setting, as quickly as possible. This frees up beds for new admissions and means patients who are well enough can continue their recovery at home.

Dr Larysa Kwintiewicz, locum consultant, leads the discussion. The team talks through the progress of each patient, and how they can get home sooner including what is needed to help this happen.

Dr Kwintiewicz explains: "Open communication between us is so important. When everyone works together, we are able to give the best care to our patients and ensure they move through the unit and the hospital as swiftly as possible. Board rounds enable us to take stock and get a sense of what's going on and what needs to happen."

## MADE at BH

Meanwhile at a multi-agency discharge event (MADE) at BH, clinical commissioning groups, community and local authority services came together to work with our teams to improve patient flow.

During the event doctors, nurses, operational managers, therapists and system partners roamed the hospital to help discharge patients. They focussed on the following areas:

- Reviewing all patients with a length of stay over seven days and understanding why this is the case
- Ensuring all patients have a clear medical plan and a clinical criteria for discharge
- Identifying support requirements at ward level
- Determining where to focus resources for improvement

Sally Dootson, director of operations for BH, said: "No patient should stay in hospital longer than they need to, so as soon as it's possible we want to make sure they can go home or to the right place to meet their needs.

"Thank you to all the staff who contributed to MADE. The event had a huge impact on our planned discharges – patients and staff will have felt the benefit."

Staff at BH's MADE



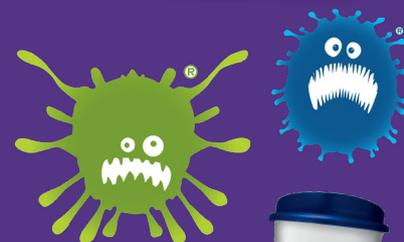
## Flu is in our hospitals – please get your jab today

It is more important than ever for frontline staff to get their flu jab – to protect themselves, their patients and their families over the festive season.

There has been an increase in flu cases in London, and across the whole of the NHS, and we have 12 cases in our trust, double the number we had this time last year.

Cases of flu have passed the threshold where the chief medical officer for England instructs GPs to prescribe antivirals to patients – a point which was not reached until New Year's Eve last flu season.

Please do not hesitate to get your jab today if you haven't had it already. And don't forget you can claim your free reusable cup – so you'll be saving the planet and getting money off every hot drink you purchase.



# Marsden Lecture: Founder would be proud of RFL innovation

The RFH's founder, William Marsden, would be proud of the trust's willingness to adapt and innovate, healthcare expert Derek Feeley told staff, patients and governors.

Speaking at the annual Marsden lecture, Derek Feeley, president and chief executive of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, praised the RFL for the improvement work it was doing but also challenged the organisation and each member of staff to go even further.

At the beginning of his talk, 'Is it time for radical redesign?' he warned: "The solution is not running faster. We need genuine transformation. We need to be proactive about engaging with people. We are talking about a paradigm shift."

Mr Feeley (pictured right with Chris Streater, RFL group chief medical officer) said there were a variety of things that had been proven to deliver better health outcomes and patient satisfaction including promoting wellbeing in patients, creating 'joy in work' and standardising what makes sense.

Mr Feeley highlighted the Nuka System of Care developed by Southcentral Foundation in Alaska, which is recognised as one of the most successful and innovative primary care systems in the world.

He told the audience it had achieved its success through pioneering a community-led model of 'customer-ownership', in which users provide regular feedback to inform the development of services that more effectively meet their needs.

Mr Feeley concluded: "William Marsden was bold. You could argue that without him there would be no NHS because he founded the Royal Free Hospital in 1828 on the principle that poverty and sickness are the only passports. He was willing to contemplate things that no-one else was willing to contemplate. So can you."



# 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

## Intensive Care Unit



## How self-rostering brings joy in work

The huge improvements in staff retention brought about by the introduction of electronic self-rostering have been highlighted by NHS Improvement as an area of best practice.

Self-rostering – which enables staff to choose their own shifts - was piloted at the RFH's ICU in January 2018 and then implemented in 32 in-patient areas across the trust from September 2018 to May 2019, in three phases.

NHS Improvement has now published a report on how self-rostering has led to a happier workforce and reduced vacancy rates.

In the ICU pilot site, vacancy rates improved from 33.6% in January 2018 to 27.1% by May 2018. In January 2018 the turnover rate was 29.8 % and steadily reduced to 17.2% by June 2019.

The overall (trained and untrained combined) vacancy rates fell from an average of 18.2% to 10.2% by September 2019.

Kathy Burke, ward manager at BH, was an early adopter of self-rostering. She said: "It has empowered staff to choose their own shifts to work and they would not go back to the old way. It has also cut down the amount of time I previously spent doing the roster."

Ragini Patel, deputy director of people, said: "Self-rostering is great for attracting new staff, but is also helping to retain our valuable staff. Staff are able to access better flexible working options, which is a key focus of the interim people plan and our own people strategy."

There is more information about self-rostering on Freenet.

# New governors welcomed by trust chair

The trust chair Dominic Dodd says he is delighted to welcome the newly-elected members of the council of governors.

Dr Emma Cox, Esther Samuels and Prof Victor Hoffbrand have been elected public governors. Neil Wolstenholme and Samuel Collins are the trust's two new patient governors and Bimbi Fernando is now a staff governor. Sneha Bedi has been re-elected as a patient governor for a second term.

The new governors attended their first council meeting on 19 November.

The outgoing governors are Frances Blunden, David Bedford, Lata Mistry and Effiong Akpan.

Dominic Dodd, RFL chair and chair of the council of governors, said: "I'm delighted to welcome our new governors to the Royal Free London. Governors play a vital role in making sure that the interests of patients, the public, our staff and our partners are firmly at the heart of what we do. Thank you for making this commitment to the Royal Free London and I look forward to working with you as we all shape the next chapter for the trust."



## Staff tuck into a cracking Christmas lunch

Teams at BH and RFH have been enjoying Christmas lunch – courtesy of the Royal Free Charity. The education and the neurotherapy teams, pictured here, are two of the services who have been tucking in their three-course meals. If you have any pictures of your Christmas lunch, please send them to the communications team and we would be happy to tweet them – [rf.communications@nhs.net](mailto:rf.communications@nhs.net).



# RFH School given outstanding rating



Staff at the Royal Free Hospital Children's School (RFHCS) have been praised for their exceptional teaching after receiving an outstanding rating from Ofsted.

Head teacher Alex Yates said that staff were delighted with the results of the inspection and that it reflected their determination to ensure pupils were well supported to manage their conditions and to focus on learning and achieving their best.

The school provides education to children who are in-patients at the RFH.

Inspectors praised the school, saying it provided an "exceptional quality of education" and that pupils were "settled, safe and happy".

Their report said: "Leaders reassure pupils who are admitted to the ward that they can continue learning and keep up with school work. Teachers help pupils learn at their bedside or in the classroom."

Ofsted were also impressed to discover that pupils complete an 'all about me' booklet so that all adults at the school understand the pupil's personality, interests and goals for the future.

Teachers were praised for ensuring work was suitable for individual pupils and for their help and support.

Alex said: "Often our pupils have to overcome considerable gaps in their education but they study successfully for a range of GCSEs and other qualifications. Almost all pupils rejoin their main school or go on to college. I'd like to pay tribute to the hard work of teachers, support staff, governors and all the volunteers from the Royal Free Charity who work with us."

RFHCS pupil Ray Fowler, 15, said: "I'm proud of how the students look after each other in my group and how staff always help us when we need further support. We have lots of opportunities to make progress."

# 60 seconds with...

Lee See King, senior neonatal sister on Starlight, the neonatal ward at BH.



## Tell us about your job

I'm in charge of the day-to-day supervision of the unit. I supervise the junior staff and have to assign the right skill mix of nurses to different areas. It's up to me to make sure everyone has done what needs to be done, to follow up on any instructions from consultants on their ward rounds and make sure I always have the most up to date information about the babies for them.

## Where will you be on Christmas Day?

I'm actually working on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. I always work Christmas Day and see my friends on Boxing Day. Women don't stop giving birth just because it's Christmas Day and it's usually busy so I'm definitely needed! Also I don't have family of my own and I enjoy the atmosphere on the ward. It's a very special time.

## What's your career path been to date?

I'm originally from Malaysia and came to the UK with a friend from school who also wanted to train to be a nurse. I knew I wanted to be a nurse even when I was quite young and started looking after my neighbour's children. I started my training in 1975 and when I qualified I began at BH. I did my neonatal course at Edgware Hospital but even when I signed the contract there it said Barnet Health Authority so really I've never left! My friend is still in nursing as well – we're friends for life.

## What's the best bit about the job?

Every day there is something special. For example this morning I helped show a woman with premature twins who was really anxious about feeding her babies the correct method. To see her relax and enjoy feeding was just one of those great moments which I never take for granted. Seeing families leave the units with their babies is fantastic and they often keep in touch and come back and visit us which is a bonus. Other milestones include when we can take the tubes away and a baby can breathe on their own. Those moments just all add up to a very fulfilling and rewarding job.

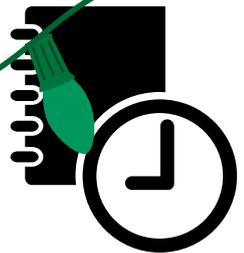
## What do you find the most challenging?

Not every parent gets to take their baby home and that's really hard. We have some very poorly babies on the ward – whether they are premature (we take babies from 27 weeks onwards) or full term but with significant health problems. Many more babies survive than they did when I first started in this job because of the medical strides that have taken place and I do take comfort knowing that we all do our very best and the care we give is second to none. If someone was thinking about doing this job I'd encourage them to give it a go.

## What do you do for relaxation?

Meeting friends for a meal or going shopping and I love travelling. I go back to Malaysia once a year to see friends and family but I also travel while I'm there. In addition each year I go away with a group of girlfriends for a week, there's a strict 'no husbands allowed' policy!

# Dates for your diary



## Chief executives' briefings

This is your opportunity to hear the latest news from around the trust and ask any questions you may have.

Please see Freenet for the dates of upcoming chief executives' briefings.

## Medicine for Members

**Becoming frail: Living and dying well**

This event will explore early recognition, staying well and then planning end of life care.

Wednesday 8 January 2020, 6-8pm

Lecture Theatre, BH

If you wish to attend please email: [rf.membership@nhs.net](mailto:rf.membership@nhs.net)

## QI training sessions in 2020

Want to know more about quality improvement (QI)?

This introductory training session will give you an overview of what QI is and show you the basic tools and methodology needed to start your own QI project.

BH Thursday 30 January 9am-12.30pm

CFH Friday 28 February, 9.15am-12.45pm

ECC Monday 27 January, 9.15am-12.45pm

RFH Tuesday 14 January, 9.15am-12.45pm and  
Wednesday 12 February, 9.15am-12.45pm

To book your place email: [rf.qi@nhs.net](mailto:rf.qi@nhs.net). There is more information on Freenet.