



Latest news for our members and stakeholders

May 2022

This newsletter aims to keep you, our members and stakeholders, updated with the latest news from across the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

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Key updates

Welcome to our first newsletter as the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

On Friday 1 April, Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust (NDHT) and the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust (RD&E) formally merged to become the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Dame Shan, Chair of the Royal Devon, said: “I am delighted that our two trusts have integrated. This is a really important moment and I’m conscious our two trusts had been working in close partnership for a very long time.

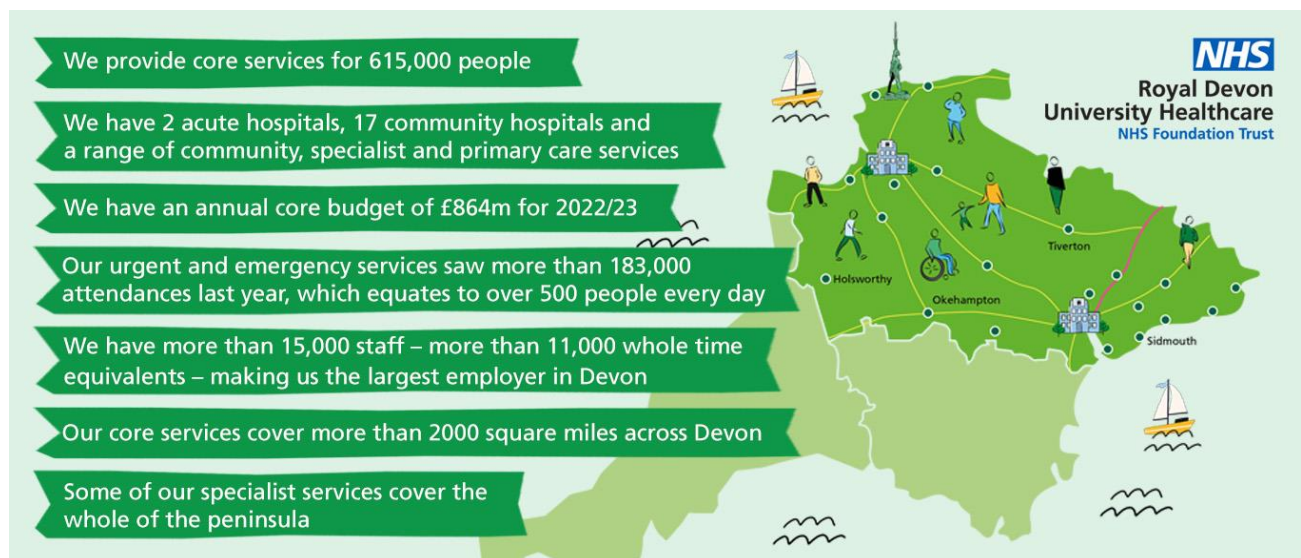
“The new Trust has very strong ambitions and strong values, building on the best of the two previous trusts.

“Congratulations and thanks to all our staff and to you, our community. Welcome to the Royal Devon.”



The name of the overall Trust has changed, but North Devon District Hospital, the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital (Wonford and Heavitree) and the Trust’s community services – including community hospitals – are still known by their existing names. The same services are still offered from all of our hospitals and teams.

Facts and figures about our new Trust



If you have questions or comments about the integration, you can get in touch with us at rde-tr.RDEComms@nhs.net.

Dame Shan Morgan takes up role as new Chair of the Trust

We are delighted to announce that Dame Shan Morgan joined our Trust as Chair on 1 April 2022.

Dame Shan has a wealth of experience from her career working in a variety of roles across the public sector.

Dame Shan has taken on the role of Chair for an initial term of office of three years and succeeds James Brent, who came to the end of his term of office on 31 March 2022.

For over a decade, James provided leadership, wisdom and unstinting support, and he has left our successful integration as his legacy. We are truly grateful for the huge contribution he has made.

[Read more about Dame Shan's appointment.](#)

Support your local NHS – become a member of the Royal Devon

As we look to the future as a newly integrated Trust, we need the support of local people more than ever before. As a Foundation Trust, we are a membership organisation, and we invite local people and patients to become public members.

If you were a member of the Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust before 1 April, you are already a member of our Trust – you don't need to do anything. Your membership has automatically transferred over. But you can help us by encouraging your friends and family to become members.

If you're not currently a member, you can sign up quickly and easily, and get involved as much as suits you.

Why should I become a member?

Membership is a great way to simply show your support for your local hospitals and the staff providing our services.

How much you get involved as a public member is entirely up to you.

- You can stay up-to-date with the latest news about our services by receiving this regular newsletter
- You could get involved in developing our plans for the future, which could be by completing a survey or attending a focus group. You'll hear about any opportunities through this newsletter.
- As a member, you can choose who you want to represent you in our [Council of Governors](#). Our next election, and our first as a new organisation, will be held this summer.
- You could even stand for election and join our Council of Governors. As a Governor, you would have a role in informing decision making across the Trust.

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- Plus – you can get discounts on big name brands through [Health Service Discounts](#), which is free to sign up to

How do I become a member?

Public membership is open to everyone 12 years and over who lives in England.

Joining is quick and simple – just [click here](#) and complete the online form.

Alternatively, we can send you a paper application form by post. Please email rde-tr.royaldevonmembers@nhs.net to request a form.



Update from John Palmer, our Chief Operating Officer

We are really grateful to our staff and everyone who has helped us to get patients back home.

Our acute hospitals, North Devon District Hospital (NDDH) and the Royal Devon and Exeter (RD&E) Wonford, saw a significant increase in the number of COVID-19 positive patients in March, far outweighing the numbers seen at the peak of previous COVID-19 waves.

Half to two-thirds of our bed base at both NDDH and the RD&E Wonford were occupied as a result of COVID-19. Amongst many other challenges, this made recovering our elective services really difficult.



The data and modelling suggest we are now past the latest peak, and we are pleased to see that our position has started to improve, with COVID-19 inpatient numbers, COVID-related staffing absence and care home outbreaks across our Eastern and Northern Devon areas continuing to fall.

We are really very grateful to all of our staff who continue to work tirelessly, doing all they can for our patients, local communities and each other.

I'd also like to recognise all those outside our organisation who support patients to get home. Each patient has a discharge plan created just for them and their situation, which often changes and often requires input from multiple staff across different organisations, including the voluntary sector. And of course, carers, family and friends play an absolutely vital role. Thank you to you all.

How we are using discharges lounges to support patient flow

On the RD&E Wonford site, we have created a discharge lounge which facilitates the earlier discharge of up to 30 patients every day. When services at NDDH have been under significant pressure, we have set up a temporary discharge lounge.

Our discharge lounges are staffed by registered nurses and healthcare assistants. These staff help to make final discharge arrangements for patients who are ready to leave hospital. This can include finalising discharge summaries, checking that patients receive their medication, ordering transport and contacting the patient's family, friends or carer.

Every patient who uses our discharge lounge helps another through releasing vital bed space. This improves patient flow significantly and helps more patients to receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

If you have a family member, friend or neighbour who is ready to leave hospital, there are a number of things you can do to support them returning home. This includes helping to organise transport, providing suitable clothing and shoes for them to wear when leaving hospital, and popping some milk and food in their fridge for when they get back. These small actions make a really big difference and help us to make sure that we're able to see new patients promptly.

Supporting our long-waiting patients

Waiting times for NHS services have increased significantly since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic across Devon and the rest of the country.

At the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, we pride ourselves on usually having low waiting times for providing care. However, there are now many more people waiting for our services compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic. We are working with our partners across Devon to better support patients on a waiting list.

The national [delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care](#) has been published, and we have been working hard to recover through looking at what we can do in the short, medium and long term to address our waiting lists.

We will share more information soon, but in the meantime you can read about some of what we are doing in the rest of this newsletter – see our articles on the **NHS Nightingale Hospital Exeter's first orthopaedic patients**, and our investment in a **new ophthalmology hub in South Molton**, North Devon.

Our aim is to reduce waiting times for our patients, and while they are waiting, support them as much as possible.

Our people

Staff survey results show staff are happier than the national average

Our annual Staff Survey results were published nationally on 30 March 2022. The survey was carried out before NDHT and RD&E integrated, and so the results are for each of our legacy organisations. Key headlines are [here](#) for Eastern services, and [here](#) for Northern services. Overall the results were very positive.

Suzanne Tracey, Chief Executive Officer, said: “The health and wellbeing of staff is a top priority for the Trust, and in light of continuing extreme operational pressures, I am encouraged to see that our scores in this area are still positive.

“We know that more remains to be done and are working to ensure that we are providing the support our colleagues need.”

We are now looking at where we have performed well and where we need to improve. We will be pulling together an organisation-wide plan as well as supporting teams to make improvements within their areas.

Over 400 nominations for our Extraordinary People Awards



We are incredibly proud of our staff and volunteers. Through our Extraordinary People Awards we aim to recognise and celebrate their efforts and achievements.

We asked for nominations earlier this year and have received over 400 nominations from staff, public, patients and carers. Thank you to everyone who took the time to submit a nomination.

Our finalists will be announced soon, watch this space!

Our winners will be named at a celebration event on Tuesday 21 June.

Accessible toilet opens at North Devon District Hospital

We were delighted to open our first fully accessible toilet last month at North Devon District Hospital.

The new facility is located in Outpatients B on Level 2 at NDDH. Access is by a key, which can be obtained from Outpatients B reception or the main helpdesk.

The toilet is one of only five in North Devon and Torridge to gain accreditation with Changing Places, a national directory of fully accessible toilet facilities for people with disabilities.

[Read more on our website.](#)



Performing the official opening of the accessible toilet at NDDH: Marsh Pullen, Capital Contracts Manager, Lisa Baker, Learning Disability Liaison Nurse, Shauna Philps, Ros White, Andrea Bell, Deputy Director of Nursing (Patient Experience) and Lucy Bates, Associate Director of Nursing for Surgery.

The here and now

Devon's Nightingale hospital tackles the region's waiting lists

The NHS Nightingale Exeter (Nightingale) was initially part of the national response to the first wave of the pandemic, providing emergency inpatient care for nearly 250 patients with COVID-19 from across Devon, Somerset and Dorset.



The Nightingale site has now been transformed into a state-of-the-art facility and is home to the following services:

- Southwest Ambulatory Orthopaedic Centre, which has two operating theatres for day case and short stay elective orthopaedic procedures
- Centre of Excellence for Eyes, which operates diagnostic screening services for ophthalmology patients and will run a high-volume cataract treatment hub
- Devon Diagnostic Centre, which is providing CT, MRI, X-ray, ultrasound, echocardiograms and fluoroscopy services
- Our Eastern rheumatology department which provides outpatient care and day case infusions.

[Click here for more information.](#)

“This surgery will change my life”

Over 15,000 people from across Devon have now accessed facilities at the Nightingale. This includes over 100 knee and hip replacements which have been carried out by the South West Ambulatory Orthopaedic Centre (SWAOC).

Paul, from Fremington in North Devon, was the first patient to have a hip replacement at the Nightingale.

Paul said: “This surgery will change my life – I’m only 66 years old, and thanks to my hip replacement, my body will be able to act the age I feel. I am looking forward to being able to work as a taxi driver pain free for the first time in two decades, but most importantly, I can’t wait to get back on my push bike!”



Paul with some of the Nightingale staff after his hip operation

Pat, from Teignmouth in South Devon, was also one of our first hip replacement patients. He told us all about his experience from start to finish – and he has some pointers for future patients too. [Read Pat's story here.](#)

Ann Newbury, from Honiton in East Devon, was SWAOC's 100th patient. She said: “I’ve waited over three years for my operation and I am so overwhelmed to have gotten it done. I hope that it will be life-changing for me. The Nightingale team were absolutely wonderful – I can’t praise the staff there enough – thank you all so much.”

Dr Andrew Redfern, a consultant musculoskeletal radiologist at the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Clinical Lead for the Devon Diagnostics Centre at the Nightingale said: “Diagnostic, orthopaedic and ophthalmology

testing services have been particularly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and despite our very best efforts, our waiting lists have grown. We are delighted to have this dedicated facility, which is helping us to better prioritise our most urgent patients and those who have been waiting the longest.”

Barnstaple’s COVID-19 vaccination centre moves to Tesco

A new, purpose-built mobile COVID-19 vaccination centre is now open in the car park of the Barnstaple Tesco Extra, replacing the previous site at Barnstaple Leisure Centre.

This new centre will help to deliver the vital COVID-19 spring booster to those people eligible for it, including anyone aged 75 and over, those who live in a care home for older people, or anyone aged 12 and over who has a weakened immune system.

Parents who wish to vaccinate their children aged 5-11 will also be able to do so at the new centre.

But remember – it’s also not too late for anyone who hasn’t yet had their first, second or first booster doses.

You can book an appointment, or can drop-in when the centre is open.

- **Monday – Friday** 8.30am – 7pm
- **Saturday and Sunday** 8.30am – 4pm.

[Read more about the new site on our website.](#)



The new vaccination centre at Tesco Extra in Barnstaple

ANPR parking systems now in place at NDDH and the RD&E (Wonford) and Heavitree

Our parking arrangements have changed at North Devon District Hospital and the RD&E (Wonford) and Heavitree sites, following the installation of ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) cameras.

The ANPR cameras will register when your vehicle arrives and leaves the car park.

Car park users simply park their vehicle, attend their appointment, and then pay via one of the car park payment machines before returning to their car.

Payment can be made with cash, debit/credit card, Apple Pay, Google Pay, or registering online and paying by app.

ANPR parking systems were installed at our RD&E Wonford and Heavitree sites in summer 2021, and at NDDH in April 2022.

Please [visit our website](#) for more information about parking at all our sites, including eligibility for free parking and options for regular visitors.



Embracing the future

Less than 60 days until we rollout our new Electronic Patient Record in Northern Devon!

MY CARE Northern Devon is our clinically-led transformation programme, which will see the launch of a new Electronic Patient Record (EPR) system called Epic across our Northern services. We are planning to go-live on Saturday 9 July 2022.

Our Eastern services went live with Epic in October 2020. Once Epic is in use across our Northern services too, we will have one shared patient record system across the whole Trust.

This presents us with a lot of opportunity to improve how we deliver care for our patients. Staff will no longer have to track down and access patient information using lots of separate computer and paper-based systems. Our electronic system means all the information will be in one place.

Improving the visibility of information between our teams will help improve safety and quality through supporting them to work together and make decisions. This will lead to better outcomes for patients.

Update from Jill Canning, Operational Director for MY CARE Northern Devon

“As we are now less than 60 days away from rolling out our Electronic Patient Record in our Northern services, our focus is on training those staff. Our staff are really engaged in this, and we have also recruited over 600 Super Users, who will provide extra support for their colleagues whilst going through this change.

“We are taking steps to provide our staff with the time to get used to working with the new system, ensuring we continue to provide a safe service to our patients and population during go-live.”



New £1.25m eye care hub for South Molton Community Hospital

People with eye conditions in North Devon and Torridge will benefit from reduced waiting times and access to state-of-the-art equipment when a new Ophthalmology Hub at South Molton Community Hospital opens this year.

The new hub is being part-funded by the hospital's League of Friends, who have generously donated £500,000 towards the project.

The former renal unit at the hospital will be redeveloped to create the new £1.25m facility. The hub will provide diagnostic services and treatments for people with new eye problems and people managing long-term conditions, such as glaucoma and medical retina conditions.

[Read more on our website.](#)



Dr Liz Wilkinson, Ophthalmology Consultant, receives the cheque for £500,000 from David Goodman, Chairman of the South Molton Hospital League of Friends, with members of the League of Friends and representatives of the Royal Devon

New research study in Exeter: Help us find a way to prevent bloodstream infections

People aged 60 years or older with a history of urinary tract infection (UTI) are at an increased risk of developing a bloodstream infection caused by E. coli bacteria.

The [Patient Recruitment Centre Exeter](#) at our RD&E Wonford site is looking for participants for a clinical research study to assess the effectiveness and safety of an investigational vaccine in the prevention of bloodstream infections.

If you are interested, or you know someone who might be, please let them know about the study and share [this participant leaflet](#) or the contact details below.

You/they may be eligible to participate in this study if you/they:

- Are 60 years of age or older
 - Have had a UTI in the past 2 years
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- Feel comfortable, or have a caregiver who is comfortable, using an application on a smartphone

If you or someone you know is interested, additional eligibility criteria will be assessed by the study team. To learn more about this clinical research study and see if it's right for you, please contact the site at:

Email: rde-tr.prcexeter@nhs.net Telephone: 01392 406289

The commitment for this study is approximately three years.

Follow the Trust on social media

Are you following the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust on social media?

To reflect our new integrated Trust, on 1 April 2022 we merged our social media accounts.

Follow our Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn pages for all our latest updates!



Would you like to receive this news direct to your inbox? [Click here](#) and complete the online form to become a member and receive our newsletter, amongst other benefits!