Technology is providing vital communication in the most difficult of circumstances for patients suffering from COVID-19 on hospital wards.

Visitors are not allowed on the ward so hospital staff were delighted when they were offered iPads to connect their patients with family for a virtual visit.

Staff were witnessing so many heart-breaking situations which could be made a little bit better if families could only communicate with their loved ones.

A chance message between a doctor on the ward and a colleague at Hull York Medical School saw staff from the medical school spring into action, donating and setting up the university’s iPads for use by the most vulnerable patients on COVID 19 wards.

Dr Hester Baverstock, whose message set the ball rolling, said:

“I couldn’t believe the speed with which our colleagues at the university reacted and their generosity in giving their own free time to set up the iPads to make this happen. In less than 24 hours we were using iPads on the wards so that the

Have you got a story?

If you have a story for a future edition of Staff Matters, we would love to hear from you! Contact:

Elaine Vinter, Media and Communications Officer: elaine.vinter@york.nhs.uk

Or email staffmatters@york.nhs.uk
Message from the Chair

Standing at my garden gate on Thursday evenings, clapping for the NHS, fills me with a huge sense of pride and deep respect for the Trust that we are and for the larger NHS of which we are an integral part.

If we have ever questioned our purpose or the value the population places on our work, now is the time to understand that our Trust, our NHS, has never had greater purpose and never had greater value. It fills me with pride.

What our organisation has done to prepare for patients with coronavirus is truly remarkable. We have worked at great pace, as a team and with absolute commitment to our patients. There are nearly 9,000 people in the Trust, and every single person will have found that something about their job has changed, something is different in their day to day routine at work and that something has grown and developed in the way we treat each other. This is a real achievement. Our Board continues to be hugely grateful to all staff for this adaptability and commitment to serving not just our patients, but also each other.

Of course, this has been a tremendously difficult time for most of us in our lives away from work too. The sadness of loss, the worry of infection, the change to our daily routines and distancing from those we love and care about. The Trust has sought to provide support for all staff during this period, to help with not just the challenges we are facing at work, but also those we face away from work as well. ‘We recognise that life is at its most difficult when these two areas come together. All this is made more difficult for us all because we can’t predict the future.

What we can do however is to keep going! By continuing to serve our patients in the very best ways we can, with kindness and compassion, and by serving each other, with openness and care, our Trust will continue to grow and develop in ways we could not have anticipated, becoming stronger and more resilient in the process.

Nothing will stop me from continuing my applause at the garden gate every Thursday! I will be applauding you all. Thank you.

Sue Symington
Chair

Delroy Beverley – a values-based leader with a focus on people and culture based leadership

A new managing director has been appointed for the LLP, the partner organisation of the Trust.

Delroy Beverley joins the LLP from Nottingham where he was executive director at one of the UK’s largest housing companies. With over three decades of senior leadership experience spanning housing, local government and the private sector, Delroy in 2018 was voted one of the most pre-eminent (Black, Asian, and minority ethnic) business leaders in the UK housing and property sector.

Since taking up his new role on 6 April 2020, Delroy has had a busy, hands-on few weeks getting to know staff within facilities, estates and capital projects and the Trust.

Delroy said: “While none of us could have envisaged the current situation which has swept across the globe, it has provided me a fantastic opportunity to see how colleagues within the LLP and NHS here at the Trust, have risen to the many different challenges. From catering, linen supplies, maintenance, portering to domestic services, every team is giving their all and we are very proud to be a part of this invaluable support. The challenge, post Covid, will be, ensuring we build on the ‘art of the possible’.

“I always knew there was something special about the NHS, and I would like to pay tribute to all colleagues who have reinforced in my mind all the reasons why NHS staff, and those providing invaluable support services from the LLP, are exemplars to all of us within society. I commend them all.”

Mike Keaney, Chairman of the LLP’s Management Group said: “We are delighted to welcome Delroy to the LLP, which delivers critical support services for our main client, the Trust. Delroy joins at an important time since the business was established and whilst we have made some progress, the Board has tasked Delroy with driving forward a number of business interventions over the next 18 months.”
One-minute silence

A minute’s silence was held on 28 April for key workers who have lost their life to Covid-19. Staff across the Trust stopped work at 11am to pay their respects.

iPads helping Covid patients and families

Continued from page 1

sickest of patients could see and speak to their loved ones.”

The Trust now has around 36 iPads for use on wards and these are also helping patients in other areas who cannot have their family visiting.

Hester, who is a graduate and clinical tutor for the medical school, continued: “It’s not a new idea but it’s been an amazing tool to help people in extremely upsetting and difficult circumstances.”

Cardiology consultant, Dr Nigel Durham, has backed the initiative and has drafted in volunteers and support staff to help organise regular virtual visiting times for patients via the iPads.

Nigel said: “We are very grateful to our colleagues at Hull York Medical School for providing this technology that is making such a difference to patients and families at these most difficult of times. Hester’s idea is inspirational.

“Our staff are working so hard in extraordinary circumstances during the coronavirus pandemic and it has been a great relief for them to be able to connect families whom are not able to be by the side of their loved ones. While the initiative is still in its infancy we are developing a strategy to make this available more widely for all patients within the hospital, who wish to partake, and we are already providing the service at Scarborough Hospital.”

The project has been given full backing and staff have been redeployed to support the virtual visits on the wards.

The Hull York Medical School student liaison teams based at York and Scarborough hospitals are helping coordinate the project and the Trust is expecting more iPads donated by Nestle and BT so the service can be made more widely available.

The hospital chaplains have also been provided with iPads so staff can arrange virtual visits for patients.

A booking system is being made available so relatives can book a ‘virtual visit’ with their loved ones. Families can email Rebekah.Boulton@york.nhs.uk where they can book a visit or they can call the wards directly.

A minute’s silence was held on 28 April for key workers who have lost their life to Covid-19. Staff across the Trust stopped work at 11am to pay their respects.

Join us in making history...

THESE are extraordinary times and the NHS is making history every single day. The nation couldn’t be prouder of their NHS and those who work in it.

People have shared so many proud and wonderful moments on social media and with the communications team. Our staff have done some amazing things - teams have gone above and beyond, individuals have been separated from their families, some have slept at the hospital instead of going home, and overwhelmingly people have walked towards the threat instead of running away.

We would like to capture this in your pictures and videos – and even a story or just a few words if you feel like sharing. Please email them to commsteam@york.nhs.uk or send via Facebook message. We don’t yet know what this collection will look like but you are all part of a something huge and we want to try and capture it.

We look forward to hearing from you.
Specialist Nurse, York Hospital
Tricia Fairburn, Diabetes Inpatient

all colleagues were very grateful. It made a huge difference to a team who were waiting a senior review.

They saw how busy the department was
SDEC was holding a lot of patients. The department was really busy and the clinic and staff were struggling. The colleague who nominated Tricia said that without this action the patient would have had to stay over the weekend due to lack of seven day diabetes cover. Instead the patient was started on insulin, educated about diabetes and discharged the same day saving a bed space for the Trust. Tricia also provided much needed support to the family members who were with patient. Despite being busy with her own family life on a Saturday during the busy festive period Tricia prioritised patient care and went that extra mile.

Elaine Hildrick, Senior Community Nurse, Community Services
It was Christmas Eve and Elaine found a patient in distress in their own home who needed support to keep them safe and to prevent a hospital admission. Elaine spent four hours in the patient’s home staying late to help sort them out - including ensuring they were safe, making sure they were warm, clean, fed and had taken the correct medication. She even cleaned the house to an acceptable standard to ensure safe food preparation and ensure falls prevention. Elaine is nominated by a colleague for going above and beyond, as she even took a call from the patient’s GP late into the evening when off shift to make sure the correct information was shared.

Laura Scott, Midwife, York Hospital
Nominated by a patient for her care and support in an extremely upsetting situation, Laura is described as making an unbearable situation manageable. Mum, Sophie, was admitted twice over the Christmas period after her waters broke prematurely at 22 weeks pregnant. Frightened and anxious, Sophie spent 10 days between York and Hull hospitals on bed rest knowing that she would be delivering a severely premature baby who would likely not survive. Laura spent hours talking to Sophie, discussing the family’s wishes and calming their fears. When the baby was born Laura was with Sophie, caring for her and staying with her in the aftermath while her partner held their little girl for the short time that she had. Sophie says she never for a second felt alone because of Laura and that she will hold a special place in their hearts for the rest of their lives.

Sinead Cleary, Physiotherapist and Jeanette Husband, Therapy Assistant, York Hospital
Sinead and Jeanette both cover the extremely busy Ward 34. They are nominated by a colleague for their passion and selflessness for a long stay patient whose mood was deteriorating rapidly due to her condition and having spent 12 weeks on the ward. The patient could only be moved by hoist and her legs were so painful that she couldn’t bend her knees which left her spending most of her time in bed. As the patient faced another four weeks in hospital as well as the prospect of never walking again, Sinead and Jeanette decided she needed a change of scenery. After much trial and error they acquired a wheelchair adapted for amputees with extended leg pads, propped her legs with pillows and took the patient off the ward for the first time in over 12 weeks. The patient broke down in tears of joy as they left the ward so she could have a meal in the hospital restaurant.

Tricia Fairburn, Diabetes Inpatient Specialist Nurse, York Hospital
After hearing about a newly diagnosed diabetic patient while on a staff

York Hospital was cut off due to a leaking pipe. This meant there was no running water for drinking, washing, hand hygiene and toilet flushing. Staff from estates and facilities worked through the night to ensure the water supply was restored and safe for use as quickly as possible, and to ensure bottled water and other contingency supplies were available. Due to their hard work the risk to patients and staff was minimised, and interruptions to outpatient and elective services could be hugely reduced. The award would like to recognise the following staff from Bridlington Hospital - Dave Morrall, Sarah Goldsmith, Franco Villani, Kevin Hobson, Andrew Thomas, Tim Crossland, and Josh Morrit a facilities operative assigned to estates for training and stayed to help. Head chef Ken Brown got water supplies from the contractors and stayed behind distributing water to staff on wards. Staff From Scarborough who came to help were - Ross Chamberlain, Jamie Ollis, Cameron Addison and Shane Weaver, and Andy Whitfield, infection prevention nurse.

Tricia Fairburn, Laura Scott

Scarborough Hospital's Emergency

It was a particularly busy session in Scarborough Hospital's Emergency Department in the SDEC ambulatory clinic and staff were struggling. The department was really busy and the SDEC was holding a lot of patients. Junaid had arrived to drop off some papers for a fellow colleague and when he saw how busy the department was he joined the team and started seeing patients. By pitching in he helped them clear the beds, discharging those who were waiting a senior review. It made a huge difference to a team that was feeling the pressure and all colleagues were very grateful.

Tricia Fairburn, Diabetes Inpatient

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Mental health first aid course

A free online Mental Health First Aider course is being launched for Trust staff. The course lasts for three weeks and involves three to four hours study a week with webinar support.

Carol Dickinson, Health Promotion Advisor, said: “Mental Health First Aiders are a first point of contact at work, and can be there to listen to colleagues and signpost them to the support they need. “We don’t expect people to offer qualified counselling skills, it just involves being non-judgmental and a good listener and knowing where to suggest someone might look for further mental health support.”

To join the course people will need the support of their line manager and should email wellbeingteam@york.nhs.uk by Monday 18 May.

Access to wellbeing advice for all

There is a wide range of advice for to help with stress, self care, sleep and worry on the Covid-19 section of Staff Room.

This can be accessed 24 hours a day by completing a one-time registration from your work email so that your details can be verified.

To register for remote access click on this link: www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/covid-19 and follow the instructions sent to your email.

Your email account must end with either nhs.uk or nhs.net to ensure that only staff employed by the Trust can access the information.

Psychology helpline

Occupational health have set up a psychology helpline for anyone who is anxious themselves, or who would like some support in dealing with distressed patients.

The staff helpline number is 01723 342470 and available 8-10am, 12-2pm, 3-5pm and 6-8pm.

Value of coaching in tough times

The Organisation Development and Improvement Learning team (ODIL) are offering the opportunity for all staff to access a coaching and mentoring buddy. This is someone you can call on for a supportive, confidential conversation and a listening ear during the Covid-19 crisis, and afterwards.

Gail Dunning, Head of Organisational Development & Improvement Learning, said: “The team has introduced an ODIL ‘buddy’ system, a named person linking directly with the care groups, corporate services, LLP and across all sites. They are there at the end of the phone to listen without judgement, support and encourage and can arrange a conversation with you by telephone or video call at a pre-arranged time, or even an initial email contact or conversation if you prefer.

“A coaching conversation not only offers space to acknowledge your thoughts and feelings and voice them out loud, it can explore hidden strengths and leadership qualities and provide support if you’re asked to move out of your normal role or to step up into another role.”

The team can be contacted on the helpline number 01904 724062, Monday to Friday 8am-4.30pm where they will put people in touch with their ODIL ‘buddy’ or email ODIL.SeniorTeamRequests@york.nhs.uk at all times.

Gail Dunning, Head of Organisational Development & Improvement Learning
Covid-19: An extraordinary effort

How Covid-19 changed everything...

The arrival of Covid-19 has turned the world upside down, bringing sharply into focus the value of the NHS and all the people who work in it. The Trust’s preparations began in earnest at the end of January with a phenomenal response from the operations team and emergency planning. Since the early days of preparedness every single person in the Trust has been affected, whether it’s working from home, changing roles to help where it’s needed most, or simply doing what you do best under much more difficult circumstances.

Whether it is wards, community services, estates and facilities, laboratories – there have been enormous efforts to respond to the Covid-19 crisis, to keep patients and staff safe and to continue to provide the best care possible in extraordinary circumstances.

Specialised training from Postgrad

As the Covid-19 pandemic began to hit in mid-March a variety of staff at Scarborough Hospital took part in a clinical skills training day in preparation for the management of patients with severe Covid symptoms.

The clinical skills ward and laboratory were opened to accommodate two scenarios, and an area to manage PPE. During the afternoon the training moved from simulation in the postgraduate centre to in situ, where the simulated patient was treated in A&E and transferred to ICU.

Staff were trained in donning and doffing of PPE and treatment of the critically ill patient who had recently returned from an overseas trip. The scenarios started from the patient walking in with a fever and deteriorating, ending with the transfer to ICU.

Maria Wilkinson, Medical Education Manager, explained: “The Postgraduate Medical Education team used their manikins as patient simulators, including their hi-fidelity Sim Man ALS. The manikin’s vital signs, chest movements and breathing sounds were programmed to respond to the symptoms of the Covid-19 virus and displayed on a tablet PC mimicking a patient monitor.”

The day was a huge success and proved invaluable in Scarborough’s preparedness for the impact of the virus.
Covid-19: An extraordinary effort

Rising to the Covid testing challenge

Microbiology and laboratory medicine have responded to an incredibly challenging time by ramping up testing, creating a lab out of an office, changing shift patterns and learning to use a whole new set of equipment.

Lisa Mead, Head Biomedical Scientist in Microbiology, said: “Our department has now completed well over 3,000 tests when just a few weeks ago we didn’t have a platform in which to test samples for the Sars-Cov-2 virus that causes Covid-19. We knew how important this service was to our Trust and our patients, so we set out to achieve this immediately.

“We acquired some new diagnostic equipment - and with the permission of the quality team – turned their office into a lab. With one day’s training, lots and lots of extra hours worked and sheer determination we got a procedure together and started testing live.

“We would also like to thank our York University colleagues who have helped us to increase our capacity by donating their equipment and their time to teach us how to perform the traditional PCR technique of manual extractions. This has significantly increased the amount of tests we can carry out and the speed of getting the results back to the patient. As testing now needs to be increased further, our York University colleagues are coming back to help us.”

Dr Dave Hamilton, Lead Clinician for Microbiology, said: “Health Protection England tell us testing is central to controlling Covid-19 so the resilience and extra tests the team have provided with the help of York University is essential.

“York Hospital now has capacity to undertake 160 Covid-19 tests daily and is balancing patient and staff testing to diagnose and protect as many people as possible. Everything about Covid-19 is happening incredibly quickly including testing. I am proud of the team in Microbiology for all their extra effort, particularly learning to carry out the PCR tests so quickly. Learning to operate this difficult and hazardous test is like taking people with a driving licence and asking them to learn to fly a plane.”

Testing for Covid-19 started on 22 March at the Trust with the seal of approval from Public Health England. Since then the team have changed shift patterns so they can test night and day, increased social distancing and shared some of the routine testing work with the labs in Scarborough.

Lisa added: “We’ve completely redesigned the way we work since we started this service. This has helped our teams manage their work life balance for child care, the ability to adhere to social distancing and to maintain a fantastic diagnostic service for our colleagues and staff. I’d like to thank each and every one of the microbiology team - you are amazing!”
Covid-19: An extraordinary effort

MATERNITY

Maternity team provides online support for mums-to-be

National guidelines to help reduce risks for expectant mothers and staff has meant taking drastic action by limiting birth partners to just one person and asking women to come to appointments and scans alone. This is to reduce footfall and meet social distancing as much as possible. Some of the examination rooms are small, which means it is essential that women attend alone.

Freya Oliver, Head of Midwifery, said: “We understand it is really difficult for families, having a baby can be a very anxious time and we are doing our best to reassure everyone. We are keen to protect the birth experience for a couple and provide as much support as we can under difficult circumstances. Birth partners are welcome to attend the birth provided they are free of symptoms of Covid-19.”

To help allay fears the team have introduced a virtual ‘Ask a Midwife’ session on social media where midwives will be around between 10-12 and 2-4 every week day and will answer people directly.

Michala Little, Deputy Head of Midwifery, said: “The current situation around Covid-19 may be causing women some anxiety so the maternity team has introduced the sessions where women can privately message the York and Scarborough bumps2babies Facebook page with a query.

“So far we have we helped around 65 people with concerns which have ranged from more information around support in labour to whether they should be attending scans and other appointments.

“It’s a new way of working so we are engaging with women on the Mumbler and Maternity Voices Partnerships pages. Feedback so far has been that it does seem to offer that bit of extra reassurance and lets people know we are there for them.

“We want women to feel able to access us for support and to really encourage access to our services for any concerns.”

COMMUNITY

Community palliative care teams up with Hospice@Home

IN PREPARATION for increased demand on end of life care services in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the community palliative care team has joined forces with St Leonard’s Hospice@Home team to create a single point of contact to support patients in their own homes.

The newly formed team are based in the Sunflower Centre at St Leonards Hospice.

The services were brought together by Caroline Allison, Community Macmillan Palliative Care Team Leader at the Trust and Alison Skelton, Senior Sister for Hospice@Home.

Caroline said: “We have worked incredibly hard to develop a service that can rapidly respond to patient and family needs in challenging and highly emotional situations. Every day brings new challenges but the team work together and support each other to deliver an exceptionally high level of service for patients and families in and around York.”

The triage service receives in excess of over 50 phone calls per day from patients, relatives, GPs and district nurses for advice and support.

Steve Reed, Head of Community Services, said: “This is a great example of teams putting aside organisational boundaries to meet the needs of patients at this difficult time. They continue to collaborate with wider health and care teams across the community to deliver great palliative care to local people.”
It’s been a huge change for some of the community teams with many staff either working in a different way or being redeployed to support community nurse teams with their patients.

Since the start of the COVID pandemic community nursing has seen an influx of staff that have been redeployed to the service. Over 40 staff from a variety of areas have been redeployed, including staff from sexual health, podiatry, dermatology, health visiting, school nursing and practice nursing.

District Nursing Sister, Christine Burke and Clinical Educator for Community Nursing, Lyeanda Berry, have developed a social distanced training programme for the redeployed staff.

All day training sessions have been taking place twice a week for the past five weeks with some training provided virtually. The sessions include catheterisation, bowel care, syringe driver management and end of life care, antimicrobial therapy, tunnelled lines management, verification of expected death, wound management and sepsis screening.

Lyeanda said: “These staff are helping the community nursing service provide care to patients during this difficult time to ensure that we are meeting the national priorities expected for managing patients at home. Community staff have welcomed the additional nurses to the service and are grateful for their contribution.

“The redeployed staff have have years of experience and knowledge to bring, however we have created training sessions to ensure the staff have the correct skills required to practice in community nursing. The redeployed staff have taken on this challenge admirably and have embraced it with a real positive attitude in what is a daunting time for them.

“They also report how the community nursing teams have made them feel welcome and part of the team and they have developed an increased understanding of what community nursing is about.

“The community nursing teams have risen to the challenge of working differently during this pandemic and have worked hard to support redeployed staff in developing their skills. The nurses are working in unchartered times but are always supportive of each other despite these challenges.”

Specialist continence nurses from the adult bladder and bowel team have temporarily been redeployed to work alongside the community district nursing teams. Continence Specialist Nurse Team Leader, Ann Potter, and her admin team are keeping the service running by triaging all incoming calls, referrals, continence assessments and the home delivery service.

“Community nursing teams have risen to the challenge of working differently during this pandemic”
Covid-19: An extraordinary effort

ICU

Headsets donation transforms communication on Covid wards

Staff on the Intensive Care Unit at York Hospital are using cutting-edge technology to better communicate as they care for the sickest patients with Covid-19.

Wireless open ear headsets and microphones that work by bone conduction have been generously donated to the ward by York business man James Talbot, who owns technology company Damson Global.

The headsets help staff speak to each other when they are wearing full personal protective equipment.

Dave Yates, Consultant, said: “We have been planning for this pandemic for several weeks now on the Intensive Care Unit but it’s only when patients start being admitted that processes can truly be tested.

“Some of our doctors and nurses have to wear rather cumbersome hoods as part of their personal protective equipment against the virus.

The hoods are effectively sound insulated and have noisy ventilation fans in them making communication very difficult.

“James’ headsets and microphones allow team members to communicate more effectively which is absolutely crucial when looking after the sickest patients in the hospital. We can’t thank him enough for this donation and his help in setting them up.”

James said: “The bone conduction headsets sit in front of the ear so the nurse can still monitor equipment, like the ventilators, and also hear the patient.

“We’ve worked out a way that the headset will connect with an Ipad that is left inside the unit, and then the nurse can communicate over Skype or Zoom to others in the ward. They are working inside the ward with one of the most contagious diseases we have ever known. It must be harrowing. Anything that can be done to help them feel less isolated is good.”

150 extra staff trained in vital ICU skills

WHEN the pandemic was declared in March ICU were asked to triple their capacity to provide care for 36 ventilated patients.

Staff from theatre included PACU nurses, theatre nurses and ODPs – all who were redeployed to this highly specialised area where they needed to use new skills.

This meant training 150 staff to give them basic knowledge on how to look after a patient on a ventilator and practice safely in the unit.

Bertrand Porhel, Clinical Educator, explained: “It was a challenge to get everyone up to speed – it was basically a crash course on critical care nursing.

“Since the course has been delivered, theatre staff have been fully incorporated in the critical care team and have made a massive difference on how we have managed the crisis.”

Bertrand, with the help of AV Technician Tim Hunt, has produced a video that summarises the training staff have received that can now be used as a resource for learning and refreshing their skills.

Staff at the start of preparations for coronavirus – prior to social distancing – learning how to wear PPE and preparing wards for an influx of seriously ill and highly contagious patients
Covid-19: An extraordinary effort

ICU continued...

Knitted hearts connect people

In an emotional response to the heart-breaking situations they were witnessing on ICU, the relative of a nurse put out an appeal on social media for people in the community to knit or crochet matching hearts to connect patients with their families.

Not being able to allow visitors on wards makes it extra tough for patients and ICU staff are used to providing support for the whole family. In this one small gesture patients and families could stay connected by giving them a small knitted heart – one for the patient and one for the family. The heart stays with the patient throughout their time in hospital, hopefully to be reunited with their family when they recover, although sadly this has not always been the case.

POST GRAD

3D printer makes visors

Scarborough Hospital’s postgraduate medical education team has made maximum use of their 3D printer to create face visors.

Dr Justin Ghosh, Consultant Cardiologist, approached the team as he knew they had a 3D printer on site.

Dr Ghosh explained: “Research shows that Covid-19 is spread through hand to face contact. For example when someone touches a door handle which may be contaminated and then touches their eyes, nose or mouth, the virus can spread. It is very difficult to stop the habit of touching the face.

“The visors create a barrier to stop people from doing this, therefore reducing the chance of the virus spreading.”

Maria Wilkinson, Medical Education Manager, said: “We already create and use 3D printed models for training doctors in various medical procedures. When Dr Ghosh asked us to look at printing the visors we jumped at the chance to help. The technical team, Ian and Joe, have set up a small production line in the workshop and are printing around 10 visors per day.”

Any departments or individuals who would like visors can contact the PGME team on 771 5087.

The Scarborough team are not the only ones to offer the visors and there have been many local individuals and organisations who have donated to the NHS. In Selby two design and technology teachers from Selby High School have been making visors for local organisations, including Selby Hospital.

Healthcare assistant, Angela Silk, was having problems getting the right fit for a PPE visor over her spectacles and has been delighted by the donations which have helped her immensely.

Scarborough College teacher, Emma Speake, is also one of the people who has produced visors, kindly donated to the Emergency Department, chemotherapy nurses, acute oncology CNS and palliative care CNS at Scarborough Hospital.
Covid-19: An extraordinary effort

Redeployed staff making a difference to their teams

With so many changes for wards and departments because of Covid-19 some people have found they have less to do while others have a lot more.

This has led to staff from a variety of backgrounds and roles within the Trust volunteering to work on wards to help out in these busier areas to cover for staff sickness and other moves.

Amanda McGale, Bed Manager, said: “I am delighted to welcome eight staff members who have volunteered to become discharge liaison officers during the Covid outbreak. It is a big change for some of them to be ward based and they will support the nurse in charge and other members of the ward’s multi-disciplinary team, to ensure delays to patients are minimised or eliminated.

“It can be very daunting for staff who are not used to working on a ward and I have been really impressed with everyone’s enthusiasm and determination to help and support colleagues working on wards during this difficult time.

“I am sure all our volunteers will take some valuable knowledge and experience back to their core role. Staff tell me it is always a real privilege to get the opportunity to work closer to patients and clinical staff to see directly the positive impact they are having.”

Lou Young from the patient experience team is helping to support the patient flow teams with secretarial support and is also coordinating the new discharge liaison officers into their new role to ensure they receive help and support. Lou said: “I am really pleased to be helpful where it is most needed.”

Charlotte Martin, Health Science Assistant: “I am always happy to help out where needed”

Karen Cleverly, Sexual Health Admin: “I like to be helpful in time of need”

Jacqui Pringle, Sexual Health Admin: “I am enjoying the challenge and the opportunity to learn new skills”

Tracey Melton, Ward Clerk Operating Theatres: “It is a national health service so I feel we should offer our help where most needed”

New online workshop – give us your views

The Covid pandemic has presented a serious challenge to the NHS, however as is often the case when faced with adversity, it has highlighted the rapid change and innovation across the organisation. The Trust is looking to capture these changes and ideas, so that they are not lost and things don’t go back to how they were before.

Simon Morritt, Chief Executive, said: “Due to the pandemic we have had to put a pause on the earlier work we did around our proposed vision, values, behaviours and a possible new name for the Trust.

“I’ve heard countless stories about how you have risen to the challenge, and as a result I am launching an online workshop, similar to those we’ve run before. I know there are many examples of incredible work being done, and I’m immensely proud of what we’ve done so far.

“Please log on and take the opportunity when you can to share your ideas, help us support your health and wellbeing, and to simply say thank you.”

The new online workshop has been designed to capture the great work going on in the Trust in response to the outbreak that may be continued in the future. Staff are encouraged to offer suggestions on how the Trust can support their health and wellbeing during this sustained period of uncertainty. It is hoped it will provide a space for people to say thank you to their colleagues, and to share their stories about someone who has made a difference. Everyone should receive an email with a personal login. Anyone without a Trust email can still join the conversation with their personal email by contacting support@clevertogether.com

This online workshop is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It will be left open as long as it is needed, and a small team will be reviewing your contributions to make sure we can respond to any ideas that can be implemented quickly.
Covid-19: An extraordinary effort

ESTATES AND FACILITIES

York and Scarborough sites rise to the Covid challenge

The estates and facilities teams have risen to the Covid challenge with some teams finding their workload doubling.

In just one example of providing extra capacity, the linen team at York Hospital usually launder and distribute 500 sets of scrubs a day – this has now increased to 1,000.

The catering team has pulled out all stops across the Trust to provide over 12,000 free packed lunches per week to all staff members at York, Selby and the community. At York Hospital hot food is being provided for staff on blue Covid wards and in the Emergency Department as well as continuing to service to patients on all wards all over the Trust.

Suppliers and local businesses have contributed with kind offers of support with labour and donations.

John Etterley, Catering Manager at Ellerby’s, said: “I’d like to thank the whole team for their continued hard work, going above and beyond normal duties and staying positive through a difficult and challenging time.”

At Scarborough Hospital work has changed dramatically for everyone and none more so than the facilities teams who fulfil essential roles such as domestics, porters, maintenance and environmental services.

Staff have had to change every area of their work, from staff being fit tested and learning about donning and doffing so they could work in highly infective areas, to dealing with huge increases in environmental waste, how meals are served, and even how patients are moved between wards.

Deputy Facilities Manager John Pownall described some of the ways their work has changed and the impact on the workforce.

“We first had to make sure any staff with underlying conditions were moved to a different area to help them stay safe. People are loyal to their wards and teams and it was a huge wrench for some staff to be moved from the team where they have worked for years.

“The environmental waste and linens teams are dealing with a massive increase in workload and we have had to train extra staff to keep up with demand.

“Everyone has had to learn how to work safely in the different areas of the hospital and understand what they need to do when they move from a ‘yellow’ to ‘blue’ area. This all takes extra work, attention and commitment for our staff.

“It has been a big change for porters too. Our corridors at Scarborough are quite narrow so when we have to move Covid patients we have a specially trained Covid transfer team where one porter goes ahead to clear the way, another transports the patient and a cleaner follows.”

Until recently the domestics had to do a double clean of every area affected by Covid which was hugely time intensive. A successful trial of Tristel, a new cleaning product that works after one round of cleaning, has transformed this practice much to the relief of the facilities department.

John continued: “One of the most positive things about this experience is that everyone recognises the value of each other’s skills. It has cemented the bond between support staff and clinicians, highlighting how much we all need each other and that overall we are part of one big team.”

The team has even taken advantage of the situation to go into wards and areas that are not in use where it has given them the opportunity for a thorough deep clean.

Jenny Louth, Deputy Facilities Manager, said: “It’s been a challenging time and anyone who works in a clinical area knows that teamwork is key to providing the best care for patients. It has never been more important to recognise and appreciate the skills of colleagues and the part they play and I’m so proud of the way everyone has stepped up and pulled together. Thank you to everyone in the facilities department – you are brilliant!”
**Covid-19: An extraordinary effort**

**Rapid diagnosis approach for worrying symptoms**

A new service launched in January for patients with symptoms that are cause for concern but do not meet the criteria for urgent referral for cancer, has continued to assess patients despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

The new Rapid Diagnosis Centre (RDC) for suspected cancer is clinically led by James Turvill from Gastroenterology and James Haselden from Radiology.

James Turvill said: “When a patient goes to their GP with symptoms such as unexplained and unintentional weight loss, unexplained loss of appetite, fatigue, nausea, bloating or vague abdominal or unexpected or progressive pain, the GP often has a ‘gut feeling’ of a possible cancer diagnosis.

“Unfortunately, in the NHS system is there is no clear referral pathway for patients with serious non-specific but concerning symptoms unless patients have findings that meet the two week criteria for a site specific urgent referral pathway for cancer.

“The rapid diagnostic one stop clinic is an exciting breakthrough for the Trust and fantastic news for patients who visit their GP with worrying symptoms.”

The early diagnosis initiative involves two Primary Care Networks consisting of 11 GP practices to test and refine the new pathway.

Spencer Robinson, Improvement Lead for the rapid diagnosis centre, designed the new service.

Spencer said: “We are very proud to have developed this new cancer pathway from scratch and launched it on time. Unfortunately circumstances have changed and we have had to modify the service for a period of time in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

“We are still accepting referrals but the ‘one stop approach’ is suspended due to limited access to endoscopy and CT scans. Patients are still being assessed and if they are emergency or a high risk are offered diagnostic tests followed by a video or telephone consultation with the RDC consultant regarding outcome and next steps.

“Low risk patients are supported by the RDC Coordinator and RDC Advanced Nurse Practitioner via telephone with six weekly follow up telephone assessments to reassess their symptoms.”

The centre is supported by Cancer Care Coordinator, Laura Brett and Cancer Nurse Specialist Jo Clark.

Laura said: “The patients we have had through the pathway so far have found the one stop approach to be really valuable, even though it has been a long day for them. We are looking forward to being able to resume the full service.

“The most rewarding part of my role is getting to meet our patients and provide any support they need throughout the RDC pathway.”

Cancer Nurse Specialist Jo Clark has been working with patients with cancer for over ten years.

Jo said: “The RDC pathway is personalised, reduces unnecessary appointments and tests and improves delays in diagnosis.

“I have seen the effects that waiting for tests and results can have on patients so improving this part of the patients journey is such a positive step.

“Even though we are limited by the current circumstances, we discuss and review the patient’s pathway frequently to make sure we are supporting them the best way we can through this difficult journey.”
Charity responds to crisis

The coronavirus pandemic has had a devastating effect on charities and at the start of the Covid-19 crisis the York Teaching Hospital Charity team were feeling completely disheartened by having to cancel events they had planned.

Supporters were also cancelling their fundraising events, and the team were unsure how the charity was going to move forward at a time when funding in the NHS would be needed more than ever.

Rachel Brook, Fundraising Manager, takes up the story: “Our spirits plummeted not knowing how the charity could function without our fantastic fundraisers. We very quickly realised we did not need to worry and we have been inundated with generous donations of all sorts of wonderful gifts from the public and local businesses.

“This included food, drink and toiletries to be shared out amongst staff, and also money to help purchase PPE and iPads.

“As well as responding to Covid requests, we are still processing the usual applications for funding so we would ask teams to get in touch if they need our help.”

Despite fears that fundraising would grind to a halt, the charity report more activity than ever, and have had to quickly respond to hundreds of enquiries and offers.

The charity has received and distributed donations including more than 6,000 Easter eggs from over 20 different companies, schools and individuals, 5,000 KitKats, chocolate and sweets, toiletries, plants and reusable water bottles and many other items. Over £15,000 has been donated towards the purchase of PPE as well as money to buy tablets and iPads, and items such as walkie-talkies and mobile phones have been given.

Rachel added: “The number and scale of donations has at times been overwhelming but we have managed to get things out to staff where appropriate and we have kept a record of everything that has come through the charity so people can be thanked.”

The charity has funded furniture, fridges, toasters, kettles for newly created staff rooms and the items needed for the new ‘calm’ spaces such as furniture, colouring books and pens, and lamps.

After tweeting a request for fold-up beds so that doctors could stay over if they needed to, Malton resident Adrian Tolhurst responded. Within four hours he had bought three beds, collected and delivered them to York Hospital.

Rachel continued: “The latest project is to create toiletry packs for patients who have come into hospital without anything. A local group have kindly sewn wash bags and thanks to donations of items and funds, we have been able to produce an initial batch of 300 washbags with toiletry essentials.”

Care boxes

A major project for the team has been to provide care boxes for staff in all wards across the Trust.

Thanks to generous donations from the Friends of York Hospital and Scarborough fundraiser Jill Kelly, over 200 boxes of essentials have been packed and delivered to keep staff going at busy times. The care boxes include basics such as coffee, tea bags, hot chocolate, squash, porridge, cereal bars, biscuits, sweets, soups and snacks. Some have toiletries, and many were treated to donated KitKats and Easter eggs.

Rachel said: “The care boxes have been well received and we have had some lovely messages thanking us. We will be around again to top up the boxes in a couple of weeks.

“We are so grateful to the transport team who came to our rescue at Tesco with a Luton van and the volunteers who helped us pack boxes while keeping a professional distance!”
Your hospital charity

To get in touch with the charity team, please email charity.fundraising@york.nhs.uk or call 01904 724521. Follow us on Facebook @YorkTeachingHospitalCharity

Continued...

Stars for NHS heroes

After all upcoming events were cancelled the charity launched a virtual fundraiser where people can choose a star, make a donation and leave a message for their NHS heroes. Over 100 stars have already been selected and some lovely messages have been received, which we have shared on social media. Visit www.visufund.com/supportyourownheroes to choose a star.

NHS Charities Together

NHS Charities Together is the umbrella charity of all NHS charities and has raised over £103 million to date. Captain Tom Moore famously walked 100 laps of his garden before his 100th birthday to raise money for this charity and as one of over 200 members of NHS Charities Together, York Teaching Hospital Charity will be lucky enough to receive grants from them. We have already received £98k which has been used to fund some of the free staff lunches and the calm spaces which have been set up across the Trust. Further grants will be available to apply for with certain criteria for spending. Fundraiser Louise Dale, has drawn a picture of Captain Tom Moore and is donating it for the charity to auction off or use how we wish.

Clap for Carers donations mount up

Every Thursday night at 8pm the nation gathers to Clap for Carers. The #onemillionclaps text donation was set up to raise £5m for the NHS. People can donate £5 by texting ‘CLAP’ to 70507. They can leave a message for staff in our hospital, which we are sharing in on our noticeboards and on social media.

York Teaching Hospital Charity will also receive £5 for each message sent within our Trust’s region.

Scarborough donation point

We were saddened to discover that someone had broken into the donation point at Scarborough Hospital. After posting this on social media with an appeal for information, two people set up JustGiving pages and the charity had several offers from companies happy to mend the box for free.

Organising events

With everyone in lockdown, the usual fundraising activities have had to be cancelled. Thankfully we have lots of supporters who have come up with their own amazing ways of raising money for the charity. Just a few of their novel ideas include growing a Mohawk for the NHS, bike rides in fancy dress, climbing Mount Everest by climbing their stairs and selling blue bows to stick on doors. Thank you to all the children raising money for the charity – you are doing brilliantly!

#clapforourcarers