Front cover: An at-a-glance guide to nursing uniforms in the Trust. See pages 16-17.
Sikh prayers in Faith Centre

The spiritual and religious needs of Sikh patients and staff were brought to the forefront in November as local Sikh leaders visited the Faith Centre in Bexley Wing at St James’s to lead prayers.

Many staff took part in the event which highlighted the vocational nature of care and its roots in religion, and as the Trust works to promote equality and respect for all its patients and staff, it was a reminder of the rich diversity present in the organisation.

This year the Chaplaincy Department appointed its first Honorary Sikh Chaplain, Dr Satwant Rait, who is working to support patients of the Sikh faith and the staff who care for them.

Welcoming the visitors, Rev Chris Swift, Head of LTHT Chaplaincy, spoke of the valuable links being formed between the Trust and local faith communities:

“This event signals closer contact between the Trust and Sikhs in Leeds. It is essential that good care takes account of difference in order to be fully effective in supporting the individual. I hope that the prayers today will help our hospitals to be places where all are treated in a respectful and dignified way - and that includes honouring our spiritual diversity”.

After the prayers Rev Swift received a donation of Sikh Prayer Books from the visitors which will be made available to patients.

The idea for the event came from the UK Sikh Healthcare Chaplaincy Group and saw hospitals right across the country hosting prayers during the first week of November. It is intended that it will be repeated next November.

Three decades service for Lynda

Lynda Hargreaves, Sister on the Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit (ward 6), was awarded a long service badge in honour of her 30 years service to the Trust.

Lynda started her nurse training in 1980, followed by two years on an Ophthalmic ward. She then went on to work in Critical Care, including General Intensive Care, Cardiac Intensive Care and finally Neurosurgical Intensive Care. She has been a Sister on the Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit since September 2006.

Denise Chappell, Senior Nurse in Neuro ICU, said: “Lynda is our third member of staff still working on the Unit to receive the 30 year service badges. The other two are Sister Felicity Fisher and Sister Kathleen Hill. We also have a Staff Nurse Pearl Knight who has nearly 38 years service with the NHS”

“I am proud of our dedicated team here in Neuro ICU. They are totally committed to their work and always do their best for our patients.”

Hi-tech role for new Centre

Experts from the Trust and the University of Leeds are working together to accelerate the commercial development of new medical technology products and services through the recently-established Innovation and Knowledge Centre in Regenerative Therapies and Devices (IKCRTD).

The centre, set up in late 2009, has just secured a further £3.3 million in external funding, which will be used to work with a range of technologies, from implantable devices through to regenerative therapies, facilitating collaboration between companies, engineers, scientists and clinicians to develop innovative technologies that help the body repair and restore function.

John Fisher, IKCRTD Academic Director said: “This next phase of funding will support a further important step in establishing Leeds both nationally and internationally as one of the leading research technology and innovation centres in medical technologies, regenerative therapies and devices. It will support innovation for a community of over 200 academics and researchers in the University and at Leeds Teaching Hospitals.”

Overall the Centre has plans which have identified research and innovation funding in this area of over £110 million during the initial five year period of its activities.
So far 95 apprentices have been recruited onto the programme and 35 have already completed the course, with 32 already started or about to start in a permanent clinical support worker post at the Trust. Recruitment for the next cohort started in earnest again in January with an Open Day held in Bexley Wing. The successful applicants will undertake 18 weeks of clinical placements and a five-week study course. If successful, they will be awarded an NVQ Level 2 qualification in health and social care and a technical certificate.

Clare Linley, Deputy Chief Nurse, said:

The apprenticeship scheme has been a big success so far with real enthusiasm from those taking part, particularly as this is a really good opportunity to get a first step on the career ladder and find rewarding work helping patients in hospital.

Two examples of people who successfully completed the programme last year and are now employed as Clinical Support Workers at the Trust are Jack Daniel and Joanne Marshall.

Jack was 19 when he started his apprenticeship. He had been unemployed for 8 months and was referred through Job Centre Plus. Successful completion has resulted in a permanent post on a surgical ward for Jack.

He said: “I hadn’t thought of a career in healthcare previously but I really enjoy caring for the patients, the variety of work and I’m always busy.”

He is not sure of his future career path but is eager to see where his first post takes him.

Joanne had many years running her own public house and is a mother to 5 children but had always been interested in a healthcare career.

She applied through NHS Jobs and was successful in gaining a place on one of the Trust’s older people’s wards. She has already been offered a permanent post and is keen to develop her career and plans to progress to become an assistant practitioner.

Parachute jumpers needed to help fundraising soar

The Leeds Children’s Hospital Appeal is looking for brave volunteers wanting to fulfil their lifetime’s ambition of a parachute jump over Yorkshire for a very good cause.

The event will be on Sunday 26 June and the charity - which supports the Leeds Children’s Hospital based at LGI - is hoping to recruit a willing army of novice skydivers. No experience is necessary, as it will be a tandem skydive, attached to a professional instructor.

Training is given prior to the event, and people who raise £400 or more get to skydive for free from the airfield, near Bridlington.

One person who can recommend the experience is Selina Blenkin, from Leeds. Selina’s sons Jack (6) and Jorge (2) receive ongoing treatment on the children’s renal ward at LGI for a rare metabolic disorder.

“It was fantastic, a great thrill and even better to be doing it to raise money to help other sick children from all over Yorkshire and the hospital which cares for them,” Selina said. “I’d dare anyone to give it a go.”

People wanting more information can contact the fundraising office on 0113 392 6803 or 392 5140.
The £450,000 twelve bed facility was built to replace the existing Teenage Cancer Trust unit at St James’s, specifically for 13 to 18 year olds diagnosed with cancer. It includes an eight bed unit with a four bed bay, four single en-suite bedrooms, a recreational room and a parent’s room.

In addition to the unit, Teenage Cancer Trust has joint funded, with Candlelighters, four en-suite bedrooms within the Bone Marrow Transplant Unit and funded the enhancement of a three bed bay and waiting room in the Day Unit on Ward 79. This new facility will compliment the charity’s existing nine-bed unit for young adults, aged 19 to 24 years, at St James’s.

All beds on the new unit are equipped with Sky TV and DVD/CD playing facilities and a parent’s recliner chair/bed, and will provide a home from home for many young people and their families. Unlike ‘ordinary’ hospital wards, it has a recreational space with a lounge area including a pool table, digital jukebox and gaming zone, a kitchen with built in appliances, an outside patio as well as access to media facilities such as the internet, TV and music.

Speaking at the opening, Angela Griffin said: “Dealing with cancer is frightening. Being taken away from your normal life - your friends, your environment – and put in a cancer ward with small children or older people is unimaginable. Teenage Cancer Trust doesn’t believe this is right as teenagers with cancer shouldn’t have to stop being teenagers. These units are great and become a home away from home from the young people treated on them.”

Stacey Hunter, Director for Children’s Services at LTHT, said: “Millions of pounds have been invested to bring hospital beds for children together in a single location in the Leeds Children Hospital, and this gave us the opportunity to create a much improved environment for all our young patients.

“The cancer unit is a fantastic example of just what can be achieved, and our staff have been delighted to work with the Teenage Cancer Trust to create one of the best such facilities anywhere in the country.”

Simon Davies, Chief Executive of Teenage Cancer Trust added, “We are incredibly excited to see the unit up and running and are confident that our patients, their families and unit staff will benefit from the specialist support and care it provides. I would like to say a huge thank you to the Hospital and to everyone who has been involved in supporting Teenage Cancer Trust locally over the last few years.”

Every day in the UK, six young people are told they have cancer. This is a rising figure and there are already more young people than children with the disease. Teenage Cancer Trust understands that teenage cancer requires specialist care, provided in an environment suited to their specific needs.

To find out more about the work of the Teenage Cancer Trust, including how to donate, visit www.teenagecancertrust.org
Topping donation from pizza company

During the month of November Leeds pizza delivery company Boxpizza pledged to donate 50p to Leeds Children’s Hospital for every order they received over £15.

One of Boxpizza’s founders, James Sturdy, was particularly keen to support Leeds Children’s Hospital because his son received treatment at the Leeds General Infirmary.

Thanks to their efforts the Children’s Hospital Appeal was presented with a cheque for £385.

Fundraising co-ordinator, Stephanie Burland, said: “We are very grateful to James and his colleagues at Boxpizza for their kind donation. Every pound raised helps makes a child’s stay with us brighter and happier.”

A high profile campaign to urge members of the public to be “bug wise” and avoid spreading the flu and winter vomiting illnesses is underway in Leeds.

The Trust and NHS Leeds have worked together on the campaign which has seen posters and leaflets on display in hospitals and other health premises across Leeds and being sent out with mail such as hospital appointment letters.

Ruth Holt, Chief Nurse and Director of Infection Prevention and Control has been extremely supportive of the campaign as a way of keeping a lid on the spread of infections on wards and in departments.

“Public places where people are in close proximity create the conditions germs love, as they can spread very easily from person to person,” she said.

“This problem is particularly serious in places where people may already be sick and thus particularly vulnerable to infection, for example in hospitals, health centres and GP surgeries.”

Simon Balmer, Public Health Consultant for NHS Leeds added: “We already know there are increased levels of flu-like symptoms in the community across Leeds, as well as unpleasant bugs which cause diarrhoea and vomiting.

“While these bugs are an inevitable fact of life, we can all do our bit to keep them under control if we are unlucky enough to be affected ourselves or have a family member with those symptoms.”
The judges were impressed by the commitment and motivation they showed in ensuring a smooth transition from student to newly qualified midwife, by developing a preceptorship package to support newly qualified midwives and to improve recruitment and retention of midwives at the Trust. The ultimate goal is that high standards of care are maintained to women and their families in Leeds.

The package the team developed starts before the midwives qualify and involves going into the local university to promote being a midwife in Leeds. This helps to ensure that the Trust fills its midwifery vacancies, and that newly qualified staff are supported during their first eighteen months.

The newly qualified midwives are then introduced to the Trust on an induction day which covers issues such as arrangement of mandatory training, accountability, record keeping, and clinical decision making. The aim is to ensure that the midwifery workforce is experienced in all areas of midwifery care once the package is completed.

Retaining midwives was also a part of the award criteria and one of the Trust’s aims. Ongoing support is provided by a local campaign midwife and team leaders in each area. The whole process is then evaluated through verbal feedback from midwives, questionnaires after being in post 3 months, and measuring retention rates.

Cathy Warwick, General Secretary of the Royal College of Midwives, said: “This award highlights the important, innovative and pioneering work being done by Tracy and Gail and demonstrates the value of midwifery care.

“It is important for people to know that midwifery practice does not stand still. When midwives are given the resources, support and freedom to develop their work, the result is better services, better care and better outcomes for mothers, babies and their families.”

Tracy and Gail commented: “We are delighted to have won this award particularly in view of the strong competition we were up against. This was a real team effort which involved midwifery management, our human resources colleagues plus administrative support. We are now committed to build on this achievement with a future recruitment drive.”

Ruth Holt, Chief Nurse, added: “This is a tremendous accolade for Tracy and Gail and the team they have worked with on developing this important project. Recruiting, supporting and retaining highly skilled midwives is vital to enable us to deliver the high standards of care women using our service know they can expect here in Leeds.”

The awards were presented at a glittering ceremony at the Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington, London.
Bexley Wing atrium was brought alive by the rhythmic moves of RJC Dance - a black British dance company from Chapeltown - who came to the hospital to run a workshop for teenage and young adult cancer patients. The dancers use a technique called D-TURF - Dance Training Using Rhythmic Frequency - a movement and sound based approach which uses various sports equipment such as hoops, skipping ropes, bean bags, balls, focus pads, and cones, against the floor or using the dancers’ own bodies. The exercises are designed for able bodied and sick/disabled people of all ages, and many staff and visitors took the opportunity to get involved in the lunchtime introductory workshop in the atrium. The dancers then went to Ward 94 to deliver a specially designed programme for young cancer patients, who were accompanied by their physiotherapists. Teenage Cancer Trust Nurse Consultant, Sue Morgan MBE, who set up the workshop, said: “It was a great success and so much fun for both patients and staff. As well as the physical benefits of this type of dance, it also helps to improve self confidence which can be important for our patients. “At the end of the session the young people were energised and stayed out of their beds; the smiles on their faces said it all! It is planned that this will become a regular event for young cancer patients at LTHT.” For any further information please contact sue.morgan@leedsth.nhs.uk

Getting into the groove

The garden in front of the Clarendon Wing at LGI is set for a colourful new look thanks to fundraising by a leading set of barristers chambers in the city. Zenith Chambers in Park Square had a festive party with a winter wonderland theme and during the event raised more than £1,400 which they decided to donate to the Trust for the garden project. Building work as part of the Leeds Children’s Hospital resulted in much of the previous gardens being covered by a builders’ compound, meaning they now need to be replanted. The Chambers approached Planning Manager Angela Bradshaw, who has been involved in co-ordinating parts of the Clinical Reconfiguration Strategy, and together with Head Gardener Ben Williams they came up with the garden idea. Paediatric surgeon Mr David Crabbe said: “The first impression many of our patients and families get is from how the approach to the hospital looks. “This donation will allow us to create these new-look gardens which will be a colourful feature for many years to come. We are extremely grateful to Zenith Chambers for this very kind donation.” The money will be used to plant 115 low maintenance shrubs of a variety of shapes and colours which will help make the gardens a really eye-catching sight.

Legal eagles dig deep for children’s hospital garden

Ground force: Ben Williams, David Crabbe and Angela Bradshaw with Natalie Rodgers and Ruwena Khan from Zenith Chambers

Ground force: Ben Williams, David Crabbe and Angela Bradshaw with Natalie Rodgers and Ruwena Khan from Zenith Chambers
The need for a new facility was prompted by the transfer of Children’s services, particularly paediatric oncology and haematology, to the LGI site, which increased the demand for cytotoxic chemotherapy beyond its existing capacity.

Staff were involved in the final design to ensure it fitted their needs as well as those of the service, and feedback so far has been very positive.

Aseptic dispensing is the preparation of sterile injectable medicines which are ready-to-use and require no further manipulation in the clinical area. Some are hazardous, and require special handling, such as cytotoxic chemotherapy.

Others are very complicated, necessitating specialist compounding equipment such as intravenous nutrition and electrolyte solutions. All require preparation in a controlled environment to maintain sterility and minimise the risk of contamination and subsequent patient infection.

Last year, the Pharmacy Aseptic Service supplied 90,000 doses of intravenous antibiotics and other medicines, 46,000 doses of intravenous chemotherapy for cancer treatment, and 13,500 intravenous nutrition solutions for patients unable to be fed by mouth. The service is provided 365 days a year.

Liz Kay, Clinical Director for Medicines Management & Pharmacy Services, said: “I would like to say a big thank you to everyone on the project team for their hard work, and also to the aseptic team back in the Bexley Wing, who coped with all the disruption that the new build entailed.

“We maintained the same level of patient service during the planning, building, and occupation of the new unit with no disruption to patient care. It was a great team effort.”

“Everyone is very proud of our new facility, and it is highly regarded by the staff who work in it. As for the future, our intention is to continue to develop and improve aseptic dispensing services to all patients of the Trust”, she added.

Chairman, Mike Collier, commented: “Delivering a project to the required quality, on time and on budget, has been a tremendous achievement, which reflects well on all the staff involved. Well done to everybody.”

Hi-tech: A member of the aseptic team at work in the new facility.

Proud achievement: (l-r) Brian Godfrey, Divisional General Manager, Neil Chapman, Director of Finance, Liz Kay, Clinical Director for Medicines Management & Pharmacy Services, and Chairman Mike Collier who officially opened the new facility.

New facility transforms dispensing at LGI

A new hi-tech aseptic dispensing facility which meets the needs of patients and staff was officially opened in Jubilee Wing in January by Chairman, Mike Collier.
Daniel Peckham, Clinical Lead, opened the evening’s celebrations by praising staff in the department. He acknowledged that although there are huge challenges within the NHS, Respiratory and Immunology staff get fully involved and make a big difference to the services provided for patients.

He said this was as result of their dedication, specialist expertise and innovative approach. “Our achievements include having the first ‘COW’ - computer on wheels - in the Trust, excellent non-invasive ventilation, home IV and immunology services, the establishment of various multi-disciplinary teams and the Respiratory Care Unit. The future is bright…the future is within Leeds Respiratory and Immunology!”, he said.

Staff were invited to nominate their colleagues and over 100 nominations were received in the various categories, covering areas such as dedication, leadership, team working, innovation and a special achievement award.

The awards were presented by Daniel Peckham, Clinical Lead, Joanne Wood, Director of Nursing, Stephanie Lee, Business Manager, and Sarah Miller, Acting Matron.

The winners are as follows:
Dedication Winners: Toby Capstick, Pharmacist; Craig Patterson, Healthcare Assistant; Anne Wood, Sister Ward 7; Julie Scholes, Ward Clerk.
Leadership Winners: Sarah Miller, Acting Matron; Lynn Earl, Assistant Patient Services Co-ordinator; Sue Thackray, Sister Ward 9.
Team Working Winners: Gina Parr and Joanne Spencer, Housekeepers Ward 6 & 7; Heidi Ridsdale, Physiotherapist; Bronchoscopy Nurses: Pauline O’Leary, Amanda Lingard, Mandy Webb; CF Liaison Nurse Team: Sarah Wynne, Jill Harris, Julie Johnson, Lindsey Gillgraff & Emma McPartling.
Innovation Winners: Tina Payne & Alison Anderson, Medical Secretaries; Respiratory Physiology Team: Dr Mark Elliott, Dr Dipansu Ghosh, Martin Latham, Jampa Choeden, Mitch Nix, Lisa Emmett, Sue Watts, Audrey Rowe, Susan Leigh, Sarah Corbett and Paul Coe.

The Special Achievement Award went to Charlotte Lees, Pharmacy Technician who helped develop a new system for dispensing eDANs (electronic discharge advice notices) on the wards to speed up the discharge process. Charlotte received her award from Dr Greg Reynolds, Clinical Director in recognition of her hard work and dedication.

Staff who have worked at the Trust for 30 years or more were also acknowledged. They include Julie Johnson, Nurse Specialist CF Unit, Helen Richmond, Clerical Officer, and Kathryn Marsden, Medical Secretary.

Clerical Officers, Jessica Stocks, Sharon Mobbs and Paula Barker received recognition for achieving an NVQ 2 in Customer Services.

The evening was enjoyed by all and plans are already being made to hold another event next year.”

Team Working Winners: Gina Parr and Joanne Spencer, Housekeepers Ward 6 & 7; Heidi Ridsdale, Physiotherapist; Bronchoscopy Nurses: Pauline O’Leary, Amanda Lingard, Mandy Webb; CF Liaison Nurse Team: Sarah Wynne, Jill Harris, Julie Johnson, Lindsey Gillgraff & Emma McPartling.
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Celebrating success in Respiratory and Immunology

Staff in the Trust’s Respiratory and Immunology Department took time out to celebrate their successes and achievements at the Park Plaza Hotel, Leeds, in January.

Making a difference: Winner of the Special Achievement Award - Pharmacy Technician, Charlotte Lees.
Key Olympic role for Trust consultant

Dr Phil O’Connor, Consultant musculoskeletal radiologist at Chapel Allerton Hospital, has been chosen for one of the leading medical roles at next year’s London Olympic Games.

He will lead a team of over 200 people, including 80 radiologists, 130 radiographers and around 80 radiographic assistants who will diagnose and help treat sports injuries at the 2012 games.

The team will provide a full imaging service for 20,000 athletes and the extended Olympic family for the duration of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and expect to carry out up to 60 MRI scans per day.

The imaging service will be state of the art including MRI, CT and ultrasound services and digital radiography. Two hi-tech 3T MRI scanners, a multislice CT and five ultrasound scanners have been purchased solely for the delivery of the service, at a cost of over £6 million.

The main imaging centre will be in the Athletes village and will be part of a polyclinic medical facility that also contains an accident and emergency department, anti-doping facility, treatment rooms, physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, sports massage, dental, and ophthalmology units. A full Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) is also being installed.

“Leeds has a fantastic reputation in sports imaging circles which really put me in the running for the position.”

The Chapel Allerton radiology service, where Dr O’Connor works, has an international reputation for sports imaging, built up over 15 years. Dr O’Connor has previously led the imaging service for the Commonwealth Games in Manchester and World Indoor Athletics in Birmingham.

He commented: “It is the opportunity of a lifetime and I feel very proud to have been chosen. Leeds has a fantastic reputation in sports imaging circles which really put me in the running for the position. It is a reputation that has been built up with my colleagues Andrew Grainger and Phil Robinson and none of it would have been possible without them.”

“Andrew and Phil are in the core team of 10 radiologists who will be supporting me in my role. Two other colleagues, Carole Burnett and Carol Bailey have also been chosen as Lead radiographer, and Imaging service co-ordinator respectively.”

Dr O’Connor’s preparations for the Games started in late 2005 soon after the announcement of the successful London bid in Singapore. His responsibilities include authoring IOC policy documents, recruiting volunteers, equipment specification, purchasing and supervising equipment installation and finally delivering the imaging service throughout the duration of the Olympics.

A staggering 70,000 volunteers will be recruited for the Games, and Dr O’Connor is relying on the good will of radiologists and radiographers around the country to come forward to volunteer their services for a total of 13 days. Over half of the required imaging volunteers have already been recruited.
Last month saw the launch of major ITV drama Monroe, starring James Nesbitt in the title role as a neurosurgeon. In preparation for his role, the actor worked closely with the neurosurgery team at Leeds General Infirmary, observing four operations.

“It was incredibly generous of the patients and the medical teams to allow me this access,” Mr Nesbitt said. “I’ve seen how neurosurgeons drill through the skull, pull back the skin on the head and make an incision into the brain.

“I’ve seen how difficult this job is and the decisions that have to be made very quickly when faced with an emergency. Thankfully I’m not squeamish, but I was incredibly nervous and very fascinated.

“What you come away thinking is just how fragile everything is and how fleeting life can be. It’s magnificent that neurosurgeons can extend people’s lives by years.”

Monroe - which has been billed as the British answer to American TV drama House - was filmed on location in various parts of Leeds, and eagle-eyed viewers will recognise some scenes shot at the LGI itself, particularly the exterior of the Gilbert Scott building.

Kind-hearted donation boosts cardiac training

Cardiac services at the Trust have received a £125,000 boost thanks to the generosity of the Heartbeat Appeal and the Lord Mayor of Leeds. The new state-of-the-art facilities in the Jubilee Wing at LGI will ensure patients continue to benefit from the latest technological advances and will enable heart specialists to develop their skills in a purpose-built environment.

Consultant cardiologist Dr Gordon Williams said: “Leeds has a tradition of being at the forefront of cardiac ultrasound, so it exciting that we have been able to develop the concept of a dedicated training room.

“Thanks to this very generous donation we have a facility that will benefit both patients and staff.”

Cardiac Ultrasound Services Manager, Gina McGawley added: “A dedicated training room allows space and time so that specialists can fully develop the skills required to work to a high standard and it also helps to free up more time for staff to devote to patient care.

In addition to a new high-specification ultrasound machine, the training room is fitted out with a study area, a range of online training materials, a mini reference library and a specially designed examination couch.
The unit comprises two newly refurbished wards - 44 and 46 - which from April will hold 30 beds, and provide dedicated care for patients aged 65 years and over. This is complemented by 8 existing acute stroke beds on ward 21, for patients under 65. Lyn Dean, Senior Sister on wards 44 and 46 commented: “Locating all the acute stroke beds to the LGI is a great step forward for the stroke service. All stroke patients who are FAST test positive will be brought to the LGI and if confirmed to have a new acute stroke will be admitted directly to an acute stroke bed.

“This service will be provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Evidence suggests this will increase the likelihood of better outcomes for patients.”

The two wards also offer single sex accommodation, significantly improving privacy and dignity for stroke patients, and the availability of more side rooms.

Matron for Elderly Medicine, Alison Raycraft, said: “Centralising the acute stroke beds to one site has simplified the pathway for patients, General Practitioners and the Ambulance Service thereby promoting patients being seen at the right place, first time, more often.”

“Having an acute stroke unit on one site means that our skilled and experienced workforce led by a team of Specialist Consultants, Doctors, Nurses and Therapists in Elderly Medicine and Neurology are all on hand, offering a better overall patient experience.

Helen McGarvie, Matron for Neurology said: “This is a fantastic opportunity to ensure there is a positive experience for our stroke patients. The teams are working very hard to develop this important service.”

Patients will transfer to the St James’s or Chapel Allerton hospital sites if they need hospital based rehabilitation after their stay on the acute stroke unit. Outpatient clinics for stroke patients will continue to take place at St James’s, LGI, Chapel Allerton Hospital and Seacroft Hospital.
Enter now - if you’re not in, you can’t win!

The Hilda Knowles Award for Innovation and Excellence has become a yearly date in the Trust’s diary to celebrate the outstanding contributions of staff to the care of patients at our hospitals. In previous years the award was limited to those caring for older adults, but this year it has been extended to staff caring for any adult patient.

The application process is straightforward and the £1,000 award can help improve patient care even further. Last year’s winner, Clinical educator, Pauline Newsome shares her experiences of winning the award.

“When I completed the Hilda Knowles Award application last year I never imagined that I might win. The application is so simple I thought that lots of people would submit for the award. So you can imagine my surprise when I was told I was the winner!

In her new role as Clinical educator, Pauline wanted to bring the element of ‘the person’ not ‘a patient’ to the ward environment, and also offer some mental stimulation for patients who were isolated by their condition or environment. Pauline explains: “With the help of my wonderful volunteer, Adele, we meet with a group of patients once a week who would benefit from some company. We reminisce with old photographs of Leeds, test their memories with pictures of old movie stars and films, have a bit of Vera Lynn singing in the background and sometimes in the foreground if they want to sing along. Then we have a game of Bingo - all free. Adele and I provide the prizes.

“I aim to have a healthcare assistant attend each session, staffing levels permitted, as they normally deliver most of the physical care to those with complex needs. The aim of this is to help the nurse see the person, not the condition.

“The money I won from winning the award went towards purchasing new chairs for the meeting room, so that the patients who attend the sessions are seated correctly and comfortably.”

To be in with a chance of winning this year’s award, click on ‘Apply now for Hilda Knowles Award’ on the front page of the intranet and follow the link to the application form. Alternatively, contact Chris Hewitt, Senior Nurse on ext. 66405. The closing date for applications is Wednesday 28th April.

This year’s categories include privacy and dignity; listening and responding to patients and their carers; patient safety; improving the patient experience; and infection prevention.

The Chief Nurse will chair shortlisting of the entries on 3rd May and the award will be presented at the Nursing and Midwifery Conference, ‘Care with Compassion’, on 18th May.

On the buses to help helideck

The LGI Helideck Fire Response team has received a boost from local bus-building company Optare Ltd who have been fundraising by selling calendars and holding a raffle, raising £300.

Chris Wise, commercial director of Optare, is the father of Sarah Wise, a former patient helped by the helideck crew after she was in a horrific road accident and needed flying by air ambulance to LGI. Chris wanted his company to do something to help thank the service at the hospital.

Sarah posed with members of the crew for their 2011 fundraising calendar, which is aiming to raise money for floodlights to extend the opening hours of the facility during the darker months of the year.

• Copies of the calendar are still available from the Trust Fundraising office - please ring Sharon Edwards on extension 26803 (0113 3926803 externally).
Campaign well underway to keep children’s heart surgery in Leeds

A public consultation has now started which will decide the future of how children’s heart surgery is carried out across England.

Leeds General Infirmary is currently one of 11 specialist centres nationally but there is a very real risk the service will be lost and parents and families will have to travel much further for life-saving treatment.

The Safe and Sustainable review commissioned by the NHS has come up with four options for the future configuration of the service across the country, based on the principle of concentrating expertise by reducing the number of centres from 11 to 6 or 7.

Keeping the Leeds centre is only in one of the four options being considered in the consultation, which lasts until the end of June.

Many local parents have already spoken up in favour of retaining the service in Leeds, and the Children’s Heart Surgery Fund have launched an online petition as part of a wide ranging campaign involving public meetings and lobbying of MPs and other key opinion formers.

Trust managers and clinical staff have vowed to fight as hard as possible to make the case for retaining and enlarging the service in Leeds.

Dr Peter Belfield, Medical Director, said: “It is very disappointing that our service here in Leeds features in only one of the four options which will be going forward for public consultation as part of the Safe and Sustainable review.

“We firmly believe that the children’s heart surgery unit at Leeds does an excellent job and deserves to stay open and be expanded. We will be concentrating all our efforts during this next stage of public consultation in making the case for keeping this highly regarded service here in Yorkshire.

“Support from our present and former patients has already been vocal in the initial stages of this process and it is extremely important that they and many others have their say during the consultation.

“We have good clinical outcomes and an extremely committed team of doctors, nurses and other health professionals who serve children and families right across Yorkshire and the Humber.”

“Our geographical location is ideal, with nearly 14 million people within a two-hour drive of the hospital. The service is located in modern purpose-built premises and is part of a Children’s Hospital which has recently been brought together on a single site at Leeds General Infirmary with significant investment in services and advantages for improved patient care.

“We know Leeds compares well with any of the other services in the country and we now need to make sure that we get our case across in the strongest possible terms and ensure people across Yorkshire are aware of the risk of losing this vital regional children’s heart surgery service.”

• The Children’s Heart Surgery Fund are organising a campaign including an online petition. Check out www.chsf.org.uk for the latest information.
In fact, these have been carefully thought out to complement each other and provide a smart corporate theme whilst ensuring different nursing jobs can be identified easily by those in the know.

Have you ever wondered about the meaning of a particular combination of colours and trims as well as who wears what? Here’s a handy Bulletin guide to how to identify a particular staff group within nursing by just a quick glance.

Many thanks to our volunteers from each staff group who agreed to be photographed for this feature.

The Trust dress policy is available on the intranet. Visit http://lthweb/policies/policy.php?id=7

To a casual observer there seems to be an almost bewildering variety of different nursing uniforms visible on a walk through the Trust.

An at-a-glance guide to nursing uniforms in the Trust

Ruth Holt, Chief Nurse
Navy with royal blue trim. Mandarin collar, or V neck for men. This uniform is also worn by the Deputy Chief Nurse, Divisional Nurse Managers and Lead Nurses.

Linda Johnson, Matron, Acute Medicine
Navy with red trim. Mandarin collar or V neck for men. Only Matrons wear these colours.

Georgina Simmons, Senior Nurse, Corporate Nursing
Navy with aqua trim. V neck. This uniform is unique to Senior Nurses.

Dawn Harvey, Senior Sister, Minor Injuries
Navy with white trim. V neck. Midwives of an equivalent level also wear this uniform.

Debbie Beirne, Nurse Consultant, Oncology
Navy with purple trim. V neck. This uniform is unique to Nurse Consultants.

Tracy Latham, Clinical Educator, Children’s Surgery
Purple with white trim. V neck. Clinical Nurse Specialists also wear this uniform.

Helen Gallagher, Junior Sister, Ophthalmic Outpatient Dept
Royal blue with white trim. V neck. Also worn by midwives at the same level as Staff Nurses.

Mike Joul, Staff Nurse, Clinical Decisions Unit
Hospital blue with white trim. V neck. Worn by midwives at the same level as Staff Nurses.

Have you ever wondered about the meaning of a particular combination of colours and trims as well as who wears what?
In fact, these have been carefully thought out to complement each other and provide a smart corporate theme whilst ensuring different nursing jobs can be identified easily by those in the know.

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Eneusa Sanha, Clinical Support Worker, Ward 28
Jade with white trim. V neck. Health Care Assistants and Maternity Support Workers wear this uniform too.

Joanna Marshall, Apprentice clinical support worker
Aqua and white stripe (men plain aqua). V neck. This uniform is also worn by Trainee Assistant Practitioners.

Robert Purse, Student Nurse, Leeds University
White tunic / grey trouser. These colours are unique to student nurses from Leeds University.

Jane Hughes, Research Nurse, Oncology
White with hospital blue trim. V neck. The white top worn by research nurses stands out from other nursing uniforms.

Dorothy Cayton, NVQ Assessor
Grey with white trim. V neck. Only NVQ assessors wear this uniform.

Katy Inman, Play Leader, Ward 55
Yellow t-shirt. One of the easiest uniforms to spot in a crowd.

Emma Marshall, Play specialist, Ward 10
Red t-shirt. Another bright uniform worn by our Play specialists.

Glenda Spence, Nursery Nurse, Neonatal Unit
Yellow with white trim. V neck. This uniform is unique to Nursery Nurses.
A major part of the new agenda is involving junior doctors in improving ward practices. Alison explains: "Our Clinical Governance programme is strongly focused on involving junior doctors in quality improvement and developing the culture that all clinical staff can be proactive in clinical governance and make a difference for every patient, every day and on every clinical encounter.

"The Clinical Governance programme involves weekly meetings attended by senior and junior medical staff, matrons, and allied healthcare professionals. Areas covered include audit, mortality review, complaint case review, review of Root Cause Analyses (falls, HCAI), discussion of other adverse events, and clinical updates."

Each ward team is expected to carry out 2 audits per year. Co-ordinating organisational audits with novel ideas from junior doctors is an important balance: "Teams that are motivated to measure an area perceived to be a relevant problem, encouraged and supported to carry out small scale change, and re-audit, will make the biggest impact," Alison added.

In the last eighteen months, five junior doctors from the department have presented their work at the International Patient Safety Forum in Amsterdam.

Laura Murphy, James Peerless and Debbie Patel presented their project on the impact of using cannulation trolleys for aseptic peripheral lines. Their motivation came from seeing valuable time wasted trying to find all the necessary equipment when covering many wards when on call. The initial audit showed equipment necessary to perform aseptic peripheral line insertion was often unavailable on Medicine for Elderly wards. Their findings led to the introduction of standard cannulation trolleys across the Trust.

Re-audit showed a significant improvement of availability of equipment on the wards.
where junior doctors took ownership of the trolleys and where there is a system for ensuring adequate equipment stocks.

Alongside other infection prevention strategies the department had an 85% reduction in MRSA bacteraemias in 12 months. However on other wards across the Trust, where junior doctors were not specifically involved in the process, the addition of a cannulation trolley did not in itself improve availability of equipment. This project was selected as one of the top 5 safety projects led by junior doctors nationally.

Laura and James presented their work in front of a “Dragons Den” panel including NHS Medical Director, Sir Bruce Keogh, at the Junior Doctors: Agents for Change Conference in London last year.

Samantha Dye and Sarah Dolling presented their work in Amsterdam on reducing unnecessary duplication of blood tests for our patients. They showed how after simple intervention - education, posters, prompt on-admission proforma - that duplication of blood tests for patients can be reduced from 56% to 24%, bringing benefits to our patients, alongside financial savings.

The department is also involved in the Royal College of Physicians “Learning to make a difference” project, which supports junior doctors in undertaking quality improvement work, using improvement methodology. Rachel Powis is working on standardising medical assessments after in-patient falls.

Alison said: “The doctors involved in successful small-scale improvements, having measured the impact are invited back after they have rotated on to show the next cycle of juniors in our department what can be achieved. Colleagues from other relevant specialties are invited to help support wider roll out. The projects are summarised in a quarterly newsletter (so lessons are shared more widely), and juniors are invited to present to relevant parties across the trust, for example at the infection control conferences.

“The next wave of projects for our department include: improving efficiency of blood sample reaching the lab, and improving coordination of admissions across the new acute medical floor.

“We hope that openly discussing lessons from mortality cases, complaints, RCAs and adverse events, along side involving junior doctors in quality improvement, will slowly bring about a cultural shift that everyone, of any grade or profession, can make a difference and will be encouraged to improve quality and safety of care for our patients.

“Challenges for the future are to share learning across divisions. Over the coming months we are trialling some combined mortality meetings with critical care and the emergency department; and across the Trust, improving feedback and communication from clinicians on the shop floor to the clinical governance team and vice-versa.”

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**Genetics service lab has star quality**

Congratulations to the LJHT-based Yorkshire Regional Genetics Service, which scooped one of the top accolades in the Leeds Health Stars Awards organised by NHS Leeds.

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**Award winners: Staff involved in the Next Generation Sequencing project.**

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The annual ceremony is designed to showcase the fantastic achievements made in local health and social care services across the city, and took place at Leeds Town Hall.

The Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) Service won the Transforming Health and Social Care Services Award for the way it has been introduced to test for genetic disorders.

The first service developed was testing for hereditary breast cancer genes, which can influence treatment choices and allow predictive testing in relatives. Leeds issued the UK’s first NGS diagnostic reports in March 2010. The project is gradually extending to develop new services and research.

Deputy Director of Molecular Genetics David Cockburn said: “Winning the award is a morale boost to staff, who are the first to have introduced a diagnostic service in the UK using the technique. The award recognises the skilled contributions of many individuals working as a highly effective team.”

Introducing a revolutionary new technology is never easy for a diagnostic lab which is under continual pressure to deliver the diagnostic workload, but Leeds has been able to do this because of the work of Professor Graham Taylor’s team in the Molecular Genetics Translational and Development Facility. The team also wishes to acknowledge support from Cancer Research UK and the Emmandjay Charitable Trust.

The fundamental protocols were established, and DNA ‘barcodes’ designed to enable patient samples to be labelled and tested in parallel, bringing costs below those using established methods.

Protocols were further improved and streamlined by Helen Lindsay and Nick Camm from the DNA lab, led by Dr Ruth Charlton. Over 400 reports have now been issued, and the reporting time has been reduced to an average of 27 working days, compared to a government target of 40. For patients where a mutation is found, this may be fast enough to enable fully informed choices at the time of the first surgical treatment.

The service has been subjected to external audit by Clinical Pathology Accreditation and a national external quality assurance scheme.

In line with the Trust’s approach for innovation, under ‘Managing for Success’, wider adoption is the aim, and the team are already extending its use and are investigating application of NGS to chromosomal disorders, and more powerful adaptations to investigate larger numbers of genes simultaneously, bringing benefits to a wider range of patients.
The Unit is now looking for healthy men aged between 18 and 40 from all ethnic groups who are prepared to make the commitment to become a sperm donor.

The procedure, in line with strict professional guidelines, necessitates more than one visit to hospital over a period of around nine to twelve months, and includes stringent screening checks.

Rules now prevent men donating sperm anonymously - the practice some years ago - so whilst the donor’s identity is not revealed to the prospective parents, any child born would have the right to trace their biological father when they reach adulthood if they so wish.

Dr Dave Morroll, Consultant Embryologist at the Leeds Centre for Reproductive Medicine, commented: “More than one in seven couples have difficulty conceiving, of whom a relatively small but still significant number need help using donated sperm. “This may be for infertility reasons or in some cases donated sperm is used to prevent the inheritance of genetic disorders. “Here in Leeds we have not had access to a local sperm bank for some time, meaning couples have to rely on donors in other areas, who can be in short supply.

“Now is the right time for us to start building up a donor bank here in Leeds which can help couples across West and North Yorkshire who use our service. There is a particular shortage of donated sperm from ethnic minorities so we are particularly keen to identify men in these groups who are prepared to help couples from a similar background to their own. “To become a sperm donor requires a certain commitment on the part of the men to be involved in the process for several months and to fully understand its implications. It is, however, a real opportunity to help transforms the lives of couples who would otherwise be unable to have a baby of their own, and can make a huge difference.”

Once all tests have cleared the donated sperm for use it is stored in liquid nitrogen for up to 10 years

Sperm donors can claim reasonable expenses for their visits to hospital and HFEA rules also allow payment to donors of up to £250 for loss of earnings.

Men with a serious interest in becoming a sperm donor should contact 0113 2063416 or email spermdonors@leedsth.nhs.uk
The event was inspired by the upcoming 2012 Olympic games and the NHS 2012 Challenge to get 2,012 members of staff physically active during the 15 months leading up to the games.

The event featured interactive activities for staff to use, including a Wii fit, and a chance to undergo a personal fitness test which involved being measured for lung capacity, muscle mass, weight, and BMI (body mass index). Information on Touch Rugby was also available and the Fundraising team were on hand with leaflets about the Leeds 10k and Slimathon.

Over 400 walking packs and pedometers were handed out and 57 body composition analyses were completed. Hydration was a common problem highlighted from the body composition, showing that only 1 out of 20 people were appropriately hydrated. 13.5% of female staff and 31.5% of males tested had a significant risk from their percentage body and visceral fat.

Carol Longbottom, Operational Manager, said: “I am delighted with the success of the event and the general “buzz” it created amongst staff. It exceeded all our expectations. Every member of the team worked exceptionally hard and without them it wouldn’t have been the success it was”.

Health & Wellbeing Manager, Helen Lambert commented: “The figures from the event speak for themselves and clearly show that staff are interested in improving their health and fitness levels. It reinforces the fact that with a little encouragement and support, staff can become more physically active, improve their health and well-being, be happier and ultimately perform better in the work place”.

The Health & Wellbeing team will be taking the “Going for Gold” roadshow to the LGI and peripheral sites in the near future. All dates and events will be posted on Talkback.
The stillbirth and neonatal death charity, Sands, has kindly donated special ‘Medecool’ cooling beds to the bereavement suites at the LGI and St James’s to enable bereaved parents to spend precious extra moments with their baby.

Sheryl McMahon, chair of Leeds Sands and a Trustee for the charity says, ‘I’m delighted that LGI and St James’s are some of the first hospitals in the UK to benefit from the Medecool unit. “My daughter, Alison, died back in 1985 after only 27 hours of life and I would have done anything to spend more precious moments with her in the cot next to me overnight, just like all the other new mums. At Leeds Sands, we have sadly met many parents who have expressed the same wish.’

She went on to say that: “Incredibly 17 babies are stillborn or die shortly after birth every day in the UK. I know these units will make such a difference to bereaved parents here in Leeds, not only at the time of their bereavement, but also later when they can reflect on the whole experience.”

Sheffield-based medical equipment manufacturer Medezine has designed and manufactured the unit to fit unobtrusively in a Moses basket. When switched on its temperature drops and is maintained at -10°C and it runs almost silently.

Sally Rawson, Lead midwife for bereavement support at the LGI, said: “We are very grateful for this kind donation. The cooling beds are already being used by bereaved parents and feedback has been extremely positive.”

Researchers in Leeds are moving a step closer to finding a way of predicting which patients with early signs of joint pain and inflammation will develop rheumatoid arthritis.

Identifying the people at most risk of developing severe rheumatoid arthritis is vital as it means that they can then be treated quickly and early in the course of their disease. Meanwhile those people whose symptoms will remain mild or even go into remission will not needlessly be put on strong drugs.

A team at the Leeds Institute for Molecular Medicine, led by Trust consultant and Professor of Rheumatology Paul Emery, has been at the forefront of research aiming to develop the concept of "personalised medicine" for the past decade.

Currently doctors have limited tools for predicting which of their patients with joint pain will go on to develop rheumatoid arthritis, and those who will not.

Now the charity Arthritis Research UK has awarded £300,000 in funding for Dr Jane Freeston, NIHR Clinical Lecturer in Rheumatology to develop this work further. Her base will be the rheumatology department at Chapel Allerton Hospital.

She plans to identify very small amounts of joint and tendon disease in a group of patients with the earliest signs of inflammatory arthritis, by combining cutting edge scanning techniques and antibody testing.

She hopes her findings can ultimately be translated into a useful diagnostic and prognostic ultrasound tool that can be widely used by clinicians to make treatment more targeted and appropriate for the patient.
A new centre offering life-saving therapies for patients from all over Yorkshire has been officially opened in Bexley Wing at St James’s.

The Therapeutic Apheresis unit managed by NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) treats patients suffering from extremely rare conditions that have not responded to other treatments. The treatments use specialist machines that filter the patient’s blood.

The highly trained and experienced NHSBT medical and nursing team provide treatments for patients of all ages, including those, newly-diagnosed with leukaemia, who often have high white cell counts. Removing these white blood cells allows the other blood cells to function properly. They can also be used to remove and replace plasma containing harmful and life threatening components.

Another vital service provided by the unit is the collection of stem cells from the blood of either patients or donors. These are used for transplantation, in the treatment of leukaemia and some other cancers.

Opening the unit, Lynda Hamlyn, Chief Executive of NHS Blood and Transplant said: “Whilst we may be better known for managing the collection and supply of blood to hospitals in England and North Wales, the work we do here demonstrates clearly how, working with our NHS partners, we offer a specialist service that is responsive to the needs of patients.”

Patients like Chris Johnson who was diagnosed with multiple myeloma in 2007. Having undergone stem cell collection and transplant twice, Mr Johnson said: “I’ve been in remission now for 15 months, I can’t thank the nurses enough for their dedication and professionalism and for the kindness they showed me during my treatment.”

Ms Hamlyn was welcomed to St James’s by the Trust’s Chairman, Mike Collier, who said: “The therapies that are provided by the NHSBT team are a vital part of treatment for patients from so many different specialties. We are pleased to be able to accommodate this unit here in the Bexley Wing of St James’s.”

He went on to thank everyone involved in setting up such a great event.
Outreach Team celebrate decade of achievement

The Trust’s Critical Care Outreach Team celebrated 10 years of providing a specialist service to critical care patients in January.

Over the last decade the service has gone from strength to strength with a multi-disciplinary team that includes specialist nurses, a physiotherapist, and an Intensive care consultant providing cross site cover for the city of Leeds seven days a week.

The nursing team all have many years of critical care experience drawn from general, cardiac and neurosurgical ICU backgrounds, and provide patient’s with a seamless transition between the wards, high dependency unit and intensive care.

The service has three essential components - to avert admissions to the Intensive Care or High Dependency units, or ensure that admission to a critical bed is done in a timely fashion; to enable discharge by supporting the continued recovery of discharged patients to the wards; and to share critical care skills to improve skills, practice and training opportunities.

Sharon Harris, Outreach Sister, said: “Our initial service only included 4 ‘F’ grade sisters and only operated from Monday to Friday 8.00-16.30 to surgical wards and surgical high dependency units only.

“Now we have close links with all adult ward areas, and have expanded in response to increased demand. The service has become embedded in ward practice, and we are called upon whenever critical care support is needed out of the Intensive care/high dependency care environment, be this for advice, education or step up in level of care of the patients.”

The education provided by the Outreach team is mainly concentrated on the continued use and implementation of the MEWS across the Trust and has included training sessions on mandatory study days alongside targeted training.

The team also undertake audits including the annual MEWS and observation recording audit which is done as a snapshot of every adult inpatient in the LGI and St James’ sites.

In 2009/2010 there were 1565 referrals made to Critical Care Outreach and 2766 patients from a critical care area were reviewed by the team after step-down to a ward. The highest number of referrals comes from general surgery followed by general medicine.

Since 2000/2001, referrals to Outreach have increased four-fold and follow ups from a critical care area have increased three-fold.

The team were involved in the safe transfers of 259 patients to a level 2 (HDU) area and 238 patients to a level 3 (ICU) area last year.

Outreach Service hours now are LGI 08.00-18.00, 7 days a week and St James’s/Bexley 08.00-20.00 Mon-Fri and 08.00-18.00 at weekends.
Surgery using a highly-specialised robot has transformed the life of a 20-month old girl from Baildon, West Yorkshire.

Ava Moxon was taken ill during a family visit to her grandparent’s home in Liverpool and was rushed to Leeds where she later underwent hours of surgery to remove a cyst on her liver. Mr Naved Alizai, a consultant children’s liver surgeon at the Trust, carried out the surgery using a high-tech surgical robot.

Jenny Moxon, Ava’s mother, explained: “Whilst we were in Liverpool visiting family, Ava, then 5 months old became violently ill and was rushed to Whiston Hospital’s A&E. Meningitis was initially suspected due to some of Ava’s symptoms, specifically sepsis. After 48 hours meningitis was ruled out, however, Ava still remained extremely poorly with still no diagnosis.

“Upon further investigation, a consultant noticed Ava displaying signs of pain and discomfort when examining her right hand side. Further tests and an ultrasound scan confirmed the presence of Choledochal Cyst. The cyst was coming out of her liver, which was obstructed and badly infected leading to her symptoms.

“She was brought over to the specialist children’s liver unit in Leeds where she underwent emergency drainage of the cyst and antibiotic treatment, which helped at first. However, Mr Alizai explained she needed an urgent operation to remove the cyst and refashion her bowel loops to make a tube to drain her liver.

“When Mr Alizai first mentioned the possibility of using a robot to help with the surgery my husband Steve and I were extremely worried and our first reaction was to say no, we would rather put our trust in a surgeon than a machine. However, Mr Alizai assured us that although the robot would be assisting with the operation, he would be the one that was controlling it. As such the benefits to our daughter would be a much quicker recovery time, reduced risk of infection, plus much less scarring than if she underwent a conventional operation.

“She was in surgery for around eight hours and that was the longest day of our lives. But fortunately for us it all went very well.

“She recovered amazingly quickly. Before the operation she had never been particularly well, so she was a lot more comfortable immediately and was home within five days, which was a big relief as it was coming up to Christmas. The incisions have hardly left any scars at all and she healed really quickly – we’re so grateful to Mr Alizai and the team who helped make our little girl well.”

Jenny and Steve, who both work at Direct Line in Leeds, inspired colleagues to fundraise for the team who had helped Ava, and recently handed over £2,600 to the Paediatric Surgical charity, which they want to continue supporting.

Mr Alizai commented: “Leeds is the only centre in the UK and one of the very few internationally which has a robot which can be used to perform procedures on children.

“The advantages of using the robot are many fold. It carries the same benefit that keyhole surgery offers with more controlled movements and better results, especially in tricky reconstructive operations like the one Ava required. Leeds acquired the robot over four years ago with the help of charity money and has performed over 250 procedures on children and is also used for adult patients.

“Ava was a very sick little girl when she came to us but like many children of her age she responded very quickly to treatment and recovered very well. She will be coming back to see us for regular check ups but it is great to see that she is now leading as normal and healthy a life as any other girl of her age.

“We are extremely grateful for the kind donation which will help improve the care and treatment we can provide to sick children from across Yorkshire in our new Leeds Children’s Hospital at Leeds General Infirmary.”

Grateful parents raise money after robot surgery

Hi-tech: Mr Naved Alizai, Consultant children’s liver surgeon, with Ava and her parents, Jenny and Steve.
In the office…

Q. What does your typical day at work involve?

The morning consists of visiting the wards in Lincoln and Bexley wing and giving myself an idea of what the bed capacity will be that day. I then have to use these beds for people who are going to theatre that day, anyone who is ready to step down from HDU, transfers from other hospitals and anyone who is unwell in clinic or at home coming directly into a bed.

There are also patients who are coming in for theatre the next day to provide beds for. However, the majority of my day is taken up trying to create capacity for A&E patients. This is the most unpredictable part of my job because you never know just how busy A&E will be that day! The surgical assessment area has helped my job and enables me to safely place the right patient in the right bed.

Q. How did you get to be an Surgical bed manager at LTHT?

I had expressed an interest in the role when I worked on a ward and was given the opportunity of a secondment as a bed manager to cover maternity leave. A surgical bed manager’s job came up whilst on the secondment and I was interviewed and successful for the permanent position.

Q. What’s the best thing about your job?

Creating new friendships within surgery. Also finding a solution to the problem when you feel that everything has gone wrong…that’s a pretty good feeling…of relief more than anything!

Q. And there must be something about your work that really frustrates you…

Having a bleep!! Especially when everyone seems to bleep you at the same time. Also having the bleep continually going off when you are attempting to have a lunch break.

Q. What’s your best advice to a new starter at the Trust?

Try and remain as positive and enthusiastic as possible. Also, always be nice to people on your way up because you meet the same people on your way down!!

Q. What are the behaviours that are most important to you?

Staff who are friendly, enthusiastic and helpful are always winners in my book. It would make all of our jobs so much easier if everyone was like that…even occasionally.

And out of hours…

Q. What do you do to wind down and relax after a hard day at work?

I get home about 20.30 so I have a cuppa and a quick natter with the other half then its tea, shower and bed. There’s not a lot of time for much else really!

Q. You’re sitting down to your favourite meal, what’s on the menu?

A plate of smoked salmon…I could quite possibly live off that. Or if we were out in a restaurant it would be anything Italian.

Q. If you won the national lottery, what would you do?

It depends how much it was. A tenner wouldn’t last me very long! If it was the big win, I would go travelling with my fiancé and buy a house that didn’t need any work doing to it!! I would still come to work probably one day a month or so even if it was just for a catch up with everyone. I wouldn’t want to think I was missing out on anything!

Q. What did you want to be when you were growing up?

A sports journalist for some reason. Then when I started my A levels I was planning on becoming an interpreter. It was only when I started a job as a dental nurse that I knew I wanted to come into nursing.

Q. What is your favourite film?

Anything from Goodfellas and Iron Man to Mary Poppins and Calamity Jane. I’ve seen the start and end of hundreds of films but usually fall asleep in the middle.

Q. Tell us something we don’t know about you…

I have an allergy to chicken…..so never feed me any!!
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