



It is a year since the Trust opened our virtual ward to patients. It was initially set up to support with avoiding hospital admissions for those who could be treated effectively in their own home. In the past 12 months, our virtual ward team have supported around 1,300 patients to receive hospital-standard acute care at home, which would equate to more than 8,400 hospital bed days.

The virtual ward aims to keep patients at home or in their usual place of residence, supporting patients with the acute care, treatment and remote monitoring they need, and includes comprehensive medical assessments and access to community services.

Virtual wards provide an alternative to hospital admission, or a patient staying in hospital longer than they need to. This benefits patient experience and health services by reducing pressure on hospital beds, which in turn enables those attending the Urgent and Emergency Care Centre to be seen quicker.

Helen Dobson, Chief Nurse at The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust, said: "We know that patients can recover quicker in their own home, where they can try and keep as much of their normal routine as possible.

"We have some exceptional colleagues working in our community services with a wide range of skills that enable us to run a service like the virtual ward."

Patients can be referred for up to 14 days at a time, and for the treatment and management of a variety of conditions, including heart failure, delirium, acute kidney injuries and acute respiratory conditions.



A year of success for the virtual ward

Helen Dobson added: "The team have made the virtual ward a success and there have been huge benefits to patient experience and care. From their starting point of admission avoidance, they have developed to also support with early discharge for patients from the hospital.

"The ward can have up to 60 patients at a time, which frees up hospital beds for those who are most in need of treatment and monitoring in a hospital environment."

Paula Berridge, Nurse Consultant for the Virtual Ward, added: "Our virtual ward patients have shared that being cared for by the virtual ward and community services is really good for them. They really value the time it gives them in comfortable, familiar surroundings, and it feels easier on their families and carers."

The virtual ward currently looks after patients on frailty and respiratory pathways.



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Welcome to our new Chair



The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust has welcomed in the New Year with a new Chair. Dr Mike Richmond has joined the Board of Directors direct from his previous role as Chief Executive and President of Bermuda Hospitals Board. Mike is an experienced physician and leader.

An anaesthetist by background, he has held many senior roles in healthcare organisations both nationally and internationally, including Medical Director at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and senior roles both in the Middle East and Bermuda.

Dr Richmond said: "I am looking forward to learning more about the Trust's services across Rotherham and the impact we have on the local community.

"It has been great to hear about the many improvements and developments the Trust has made over recent years, and I am excited by the potential we have to further improve and ensure the people of Rotherham have access to exceptional healthcare."

"With the current winter pressures, ongoing recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and industrial action, there remains some uncertainty about what the next 12 months mean for the NHS. However, despite the challenges we will continue to achieve an awful lot and I hope you will enjoy reading about it in our quarterly supplement."

A message from our Chief Executive

The start of a new year presents us all with an opportunity to reflect on the last 12 months. While 2023 had its challenges for the NHS, we have had some fantastic achievements.

In March, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) lifted all conditions on our licence, and for the first time in eight years we have no conditions. This is testament to the hard work of all our colleagues and sets us in good stead for our onward journey to improving our CQC rating. We have also continued to make changes to improve patient experience, and we will be continuing this throughout 2024.

2024 has started with a challenging couple of weeks. The start of January is always one

of the busiest period for NHS services, and this year has been no different. On top of this, we have had the longest period of industrial action taken by junior doctors. Despite this, we have ensured services remain safe. We'd like to thank the Rotherham community for using health services wisely.

Finally, we have had the opportunity to showcase the brilliant skills and care given by our team in the Urgent and Emergency Care Centre. We are featured in the A&E After Dark docu-series on 5Star which is now airing at 9pm each Thursday. If you've missed the first few episodes, you can catch up on My5.

Dr Richard Jenkins
Chief Executive



Rainbow Badge Bronze Award

We're proud to be a part of the NHS' Rainbow Badge initiative, and even prouder to have achieved the Bronze Award for our commitment to LGBT+ inclusion!



The NHS Rainbow Badge was originally created as a way for colleagues to demonstrate their awareness of the issues that LGBT+ people can face when trying to access healthcare. NHS England since commissioned a collaboration, consisting of LGBT Foundation, Stonewall, the LGBT Consortium, Switchboard and GLADD, to develop and deliver the NHS Rainbow Badges Assessment. There are four awards available, initial stage, bronze, silver, and gold. These are awarded following assessment of policies, workforce inclusion, clinical service provision, leadership, staff and patient surveys.

Achieving the bronze award means we have evidenced an existing commitment to LGBT+ inclusion across the workforce and have taken effective steps to tackle some of the healthcare barriers for LGBT+ patients. We are now engaging in meaningful next steps to expand on this work and further build on our LGBT+ inclusion.



You can view our vacancies
and apply online by visiting
www.jobs.nhs.uk

Putting smiles on patients' faces



We have a VIP (very important paws) visitor coming to the wards to help brighten our patients' days!

Chester the Therapy Dog visits Rotherham Hospital twice a week, along with his human, Kay. He is a 3 year old golden retriever who absolutely loves his job. And our patients love him just as much. As Kay said: "I didn't realise until actually being with other people that you don't know how important it is [to spend time with therapy dogs]. That expression on their face, you can't make that up!"

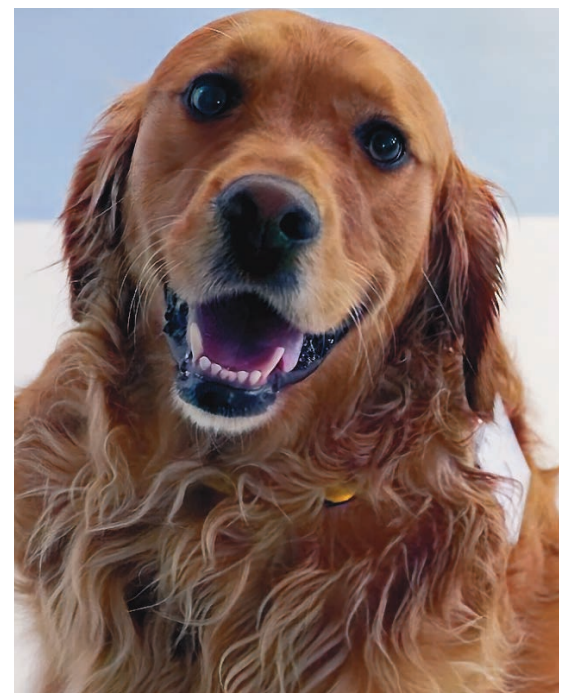
Chester's favourite past times are playing, belly rubs, playing with other dogs and saying hello to everybody he bumps into at the hospital!

Continuing our focus on patient-centred care, we have also introduced Sharron Naylor from Miles A Head hairdressing to the Trust.

Many patients miss their regular trips to the salon when they have an extended stay on one of our wards so we're delighted that they can now book in with Sharron for a spot of pampering. Our 'you look your best when you're up and dressed' campaign shines a spotlight on the benefits of patients looking and feeling more like themselves, and the positive impact that can have on their recovery.

One of our patients, Minnie, was Sharron's first client at Rotherham Hospital, enjoying a cut, blow-dry and style. When Sharron held up the mirror to show Minnie her finished 'do, Minnie said "Wow! That's fantastic!" – and we're inclined to agree.

Sharron visits the hospital every Tuesday afternoon, and inpatients are welcome to book in via ward colleagues.





Award success for Rachel

Rachel Radford, Clinical Specialist Speech and Language Therapist at The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust, is officially award winning thanks to her recent success at the Chief Allied Health Professions Officer (CAHPO) Awards 2023!



Rachel came away victorious in the AHP Digital Practice Award thanks to her incredible work developing video consultations for patients using Rotherham's speech and language service.

Rachel's project began in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic thrust virtual appointments into the limelight. Thankfully, Rachel's work to pilot her idea meant that the team were well placed to advise the Trust, as well as other speech and language departments across the country, on how to successfully implement video consultations.

Having an alternative option for appointments can be very helpful for patients, particularly those who cannot travel. Rachel and her team used Microsoft Teams to deliver Video Voice Therapy, which allowed patients to choose how they would access their treatment, be it at home, at work, or in an outpatient clinic.

They could also access resources for therapy sessions, contact therapists via Microsoft Teams for guidance or feedback, and use the video consultations as smaller 'check in' appointments between face-to-face consultations.

The work Rachel had done to successfully implement video consultations into every day practice was noticed far and wide, and she asked to contribute to national guidance and even praised in an article in the BMJ British Medical Journal (BMJ).

The videos that the team produced as resources for patients are now used all over the world. Something Rachel herself was surprised by, saying:

"I didn't appreciate the impact it had on other Trusts and allowing them to get quicker access to digital platforms."

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has given us all a little bit of 'Zoom fatigue', Rachel believes there is still a place for technology to help tackle health inequalities. "Video consultations have dropped off a bit but I hope in the future we figure out how to use them more widely. There's work to do."

Rachel was over the moon to have made the shortlist, although she didn't expect to win, saying: "I looked up the shortlist and felt that they'd had a greater impact [than me]. The nomination reminded me that I'd done a lot of research!"

The awards were held virtually and the team made a night of it, heading to Rachel's house to watch the live stream. And it's not just from her team that Rachel has felt the support, saying of The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust: "[They] are great at letting you have a go at innovation and are keen to be early adopters."

This award has motivated Rachel to get her research published. She's proud that the participants were the people of Rotherham and she's keen to speak to even more people to understand where technology can help patients, and what barriers there are to embracing technology.

Well done, Rachel.

Faye Braisby (right) with Manager, Holly Scotson



Your route into an NHS career

Embarking on a fulfilling career with the NHS doesn't always require a traditional degree path – there are several ways to elevate your professional journey.

For individuals aged 16 and above, apprenticeships offer an opportunity to earn money and a nationally recognised qualification. Whether you're at the onset of your career, eager to enhance existing skills, contemplating a career switch, or not currently in full-time education, apprenticeships might be the right step forward for you.

An apprenticeship can last from one to four years, during which you are not just a learner but an employee working alongside seasoned colleagues. Devoting a minimum of six hours per week to self-study, apprentices receive structured training with full support.

Faye Braisby, an Assistant Practitioner at The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust, completed a Mammography Associate (Level 4) apprenticeship at Rotherham Hospital's breast screening suite. On completion she earned a distinction and the experience to thrive in her role within the NHS.



New specialist orthopaedic surgery centre opens up at hospital in Mexborough

People living within South Yorkshire requiring elective orthopaedic (such as knee and hip replacement) surgery can now choose to be treated at a state-of-the-art facility based within Montagu Hospital in Mexborough.

The new centre, named the Mexborough Elective Orthopaedic Centre of Excellence (or MEOC for short), is a £14.9 million investment and part of a national initiative to reduce surgical waiting lists.

The MEOC exclusively provides elective surgical procedures for areas including the

hand and wrist, foot and ankle, arm and shoulder, and carpals, and offers knee and hip replacement.

One of two orthopaedic surgical hubs sponsored by the South Yorkshire Integrated Care System (ICS), the MEOC is a collaboration between three hospital trusts, Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH), Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (BH), and The Rotherham Foundation Trust (TRFT).

The service operates 50 weeks a year, currently as a five-day-a-week service, but will increase to six days by mid-2024. People

from Barnsley, Bassetlaw, Doncaster and Rotherham areas waiting for orthopaedic surgery will be offered the opportunity to receive care at the MEOC, and the consultants within the facility will be the same as those who would treat you in your local hospital.

As a centre of excellence, patients receiving treatment are more likely to go home the same day as their surgery. The MEOC is conveniently placed, in a central location within the area it serves. It only treats patients having planned orthopaedic surgery, and therefore the risk of an operation being cancelled is much lower than in a busy general hospital that may be

impacted by the busy winter months.

Those wishing to find out more about the MEOC, including a walkthrough video of the department, can head over to the dedicated section on the DBTH website here: www.dbth.nhs.uk/meoc or scan the QR code.



Faye's Manager, Holly Scotson, is no stranger to the transformative potential of apprenticeships:

"Offering someone a chance to earn and learn makes an apprenticeship a really good route into a job. On-the-job training is an excellent way to develop their skills."

For those aged 16-19, T levels were first launched in 2020. Equivalent to three A levels, T levels unfold over two years, combining technical education with real-world industry experience.

Martin, our first T level student who was welcomed to the NHS in December 2023, studies digital infrastructure at the Sheffield College while gaining practical insights through an industry placed with the IT Second Line Team within Health Informatics.

"I chose a T level because it gives me on-the-job experience as well as learning. I think this kind of experience is one of the most important things to get when starting out."

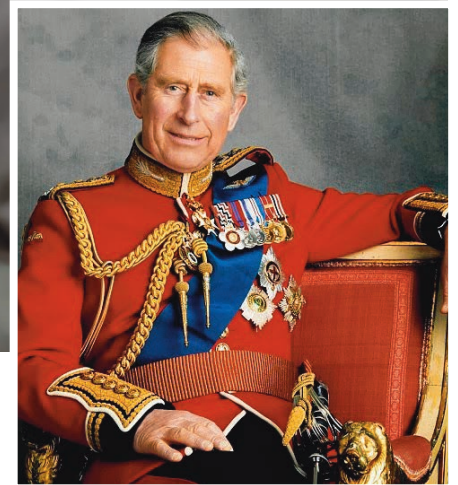


I'm glad I applied for this placement – it's been an amazing experience so far. Once I have completed my T level, I hope to stay in the NHS working in IT."

Apprenticeships and T levels provide inspiration for individuals to not just learn but to immerse themselves in their work and gain lots of hands-on experience within the healthcare sector along the way.

For more information about apprenticeships and T levels please contact The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust's Apprenticeship team via email rg-h-tr.apprenticeships@nhs.net or by calling 01709 428 628.

Left: Martin, our first T level student.



Swapna's royal visit

Swapna Narayananmaniyatan, Sister in Charge of AMU, had the honour of meeting King Charles at a reception at Buckingham Palace in November. A reception was held to celebrate the contribution of International Nurses and Midwives working in the UK's Health and Social Care sector. The reception was held to celebrate the contribution of International Nurses and Midwives working in the UK's Health and Social Care Sector.

It was a double celebration for the King as he also celebrated his 75th birthday.

Each region could invite 20 people to attend, and Chief Nurse, Helen Dobson, was asked by NHS England to nominate a member of staff thanks to our Trust's impressive work around international recruitment and retention.

Helen nominated Swapna because of her impact since joining TRFT as an international recruit. "[Since joining], Swapna has progressed into a leadership role. She provides ongoing support in the recruitment and onboarding of other international nurses. She has also successfully achieved the Professional Nurse Advocate (PNA) qualification and uses that to support all her nursing colleagues, not just international recruits."

Swapna was delighted when she received news that she was heading to the palace, although it took a while to sink in: "I was asleep when I got the call. I just thought, 'this is a rare experience'.

"I'd heard it was quite scary [going to the palace] but it all went very smoothly and wasn't scary at all. Everybody was so polite."

It was an experience not to be forgotten for Swapna: "I felt like a billionaire – from head to toe I was posh. But only for one day!"

Swapna, originally from Kerala, India, has been with the Trust for three years and has fond memories of her own journey as an internationally educated nurse. "When I first arrived, there was a really good team looking after us. We were like a family, the team kept us positive, I didn't ever feel left out and they were very helpful. I never felt homesick."

So what was it like to meet the King? Well, Swapna was full of praise. "He was very down to earth, making jokes and taking the time to speak to each of us. We even sang happy birthday to him.

"Some of my patients had asked me to say happy birthday on their behalf so I made sure to do that."

It's back to reality for Swapna now who has high hopes for what comes next: "I'm still looking ahead and would like to specialise in diabetes in the future."



A salute to the NHS

The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust and Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust were honoured recently at the Barnsley and Rotherham Business Awards.

Michael Wright and Matthew Stephens in the main entrance of Rotherham Hospital, holding the 'President's salute to business' certificate.

Although the event, hosted by the Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce, primarily acknowledges the diverse efforts of the business community, there was a special salute for the NHS to recognise 75 years of service.

Matthew Stephens Chamber President: "I was pleased we could make a heartfelt salute to the NHS, celebrating 75 years of service. Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust, your dedication to the well-being of our region is invaluable."

While honoured on the evening, the 'President's Salute to Business' certificate was presented to Deputy Chief Executive of The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust last week, at a business breakfast event held at Rotherham Hospital and hosted by Rotherham Hospital and Community Charity.

The event brings together local businesses for networking and identifying opportunities for them to support their local NHS charity.

Michael said: "It's an honour to have accepted this certificate on behalf of The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust. We are incredibly proud to be a part of this milestone year for the NHS, which also marks 45 years of Rotherham Hospital.

"Thank you to Matthew and all at the Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce for recognising the contribution of the NHS to the local community."



Winter is here!

For the past few months, we have been busy making plans for the increased demand expected during winter.

These include assessing capacity and reconfiguring beds, implementing additional support for our discharge teams and working with partners in Rotherham on social care schemes.

Looking after yourself Keep warm

Staying warm helps prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems like strokes, heart attacks and pneumonia.

Heat your home to a temperature comfortable to you, at least 18 degrees Celsius. GOV.UK offer advice about benefits and financial support for heating your home.

Get vaccinated

It's important to get your seasonal flu and COVID-19 vaccinations if you're at higher risk of getting seriously ill.

Get help from the right place at the right time

If you're feeling unwell, the sooner you get advice, the sooner you're likely to get better.

You can get help and advice from:

A pharmacy – pharmacy can give treatment advice for lots of minor illnesses or let you know if you need to see a doctor.

Your GP – lots of GPs offer telephone or online appointments, as well as face to face.

NHS 111 – use 111.nhs.uk or call 111 if you have an urgent problem and you're not sure what to do.

In an emergency, go to A&E or call 999.

Don't forget to check on vulnerable neighbours and relatives during winter too!

As the weather gets colder, icy pavements and roads can stop people from going out.

Make sure they're stocked up with enough food supplies for a few days, just in case.

If they do need to go out in the cold, encourage them to wear shoes with a good grip and a scarf around the mouth to protect them from cold air, and to reduce their risk of chest infections.

NHS charity's bucket list challenges for 2024!

If your new year's resolution is to do something remarkable, the Rotherham Hospital and Community Charity has a bumper events calendar to inspire your bucket list goals! Would you like to experience the exhilaration of jumping out of a plane, crossing a marathon finish line, getting muddy with your work mates at Total Warrior or competing in a dragon boat race?



The charity has an enticing events calendar for fundraisers hoping to test their mettle while giving something back to the NHS.

Rachael Dawes, Head of Fundraising, said: "Hot on the back of an amazing 2023, we have grand ambitions for the year ahead – now all we need is you! We're looking for skydivers, hikers, runners, Warriors, Polar Plungers and golfers to take part in the incredible activities we've planned for 2024. We've something for everyone, whether you have a personal challenge you'd like to tick off your bucket list or would like to conquer a team event with your family, friends or work mates.

"We are continuing to fundraise for our Tiny Toes appeal so 2024 is the perfect year to make a difference to the premature and poorly babies we care for and their families."



Calendar of charity events

- 7 April 2024**
Sheffield Half Marathon
- 19 May 2024**
Rotherham 10K
- 28 April and 15 September 2024**
Skydives at Skydive Hibaldstow
- 22 June 2024**
Total Warrior, Bramham Park, Leeds (get in touch with us for a unique discount code)
- 11 May 2024**
Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge
- 7 September 2024**
Manvers Charity Shield Dragon Boat Race, Manvers Lake events
- 8 September 2024**
Great North Run (exclusive prices and benefits are available – get in touch)
- 20 September 2024**
Charity Golf Day, Rotherham Golf Club
- 29 September 2024**
Sheffield 10K
- 23 November 2024**
Rotherham Polar Plunge, Manvers Lake.

Get in touch with the charity team on 01709 426821, email trft.rhcc@nhs.net or visit www.therotherhamft.nhs.uk/charity/events



If you would like to support our charity, please get in touch for more information.

Email: trft.rhcc@nhs.net
Tel: 01709 426821



Rotherham Hospital & Community Charity



Please support our **TINY TOES APPEAL**
Help raise **£150 000**
to enhance our Neonatal Unit



Donate via www.justgiving.com/campaign/tinytoesappeal
Text TOES to 70450 to donate £10
Text TOES to 70580 to donate £5
Text TOES to 70460 to donate £3



Reg charity number : Ref No 1054407