

Latest news for our members and stakeholders

March 2024

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

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Top stories



CQC rates our maternity services 'Requires Improvement'

Last week, the Care Quality Commission published a report following a short-notice inspection of maternity services at both North Devon District (NDDH) and Royal Devon and Exeter (RD&E) hospitals and rated the services as 'Requires Improvement'.

This inspection in November 2023 was part of the CQC's national maternity inspection programme and reviewed two aspects of the service: safe and well-led. This inspection didn't rate how effective, caring, and responsive the services were.

Sam Higginson, Chief Executive Officer, said: "We are of course disappointed with the outcome, however we feel the reports provide a constructive and comprehensive sense of the areas we must target for improvement to ensure we meet the needs of women and birthing people and their babies in North and East Devon. Work is already underway to address the findings in the report.

"We are also viewing the reports alongside the positive feedback we received in the recent CQC maternity patient survey, where patients reported that our services offer compassionate, professional and personalised care."

[Read more on our website](#), including the themes of improvement and areas of good practice identified by the CQC.

Royal Devon performs well in annual NHS Staff Survey

Our staff have rated us as above average when compared to similar trusts in the 2023 national NHS Staff Survey.

All NHS organisations take part in the survey and staff are asked to anonymously share their views about their workplace and job satisfaction.

We scored above average in five areas, including staff being happy with the standard of care if a friend or relative needed treatment, colleagues being polite and treating each other with respect, and being recognised for good work.

Sam Higginson, CEO, thanked everyone who shared their feedback and said: "The staff survey is such an important measure of how we are doing, allowing us to celebrate the positives and identify the areas of learning as we strive to make sure the Royal Devon is a great place to work."

For the full story see our [website](#).

National Medical Director Professor Sir Steve Powis visits Royal Devon

In February, we welcomed Professor Sir Steve Powis, National Medical Director for NHS England, to some of our sites.

We were delighted to show Professor Sir Steve around North Devon District Hospital (NDDH) and share how we are innovating and maximising the investments available to us. His visit included learning about how Epic, our new electronic patient record, is improving the way we deliver patient care and helping our staff easily access all the information they need, wherever they are in Devon.

We also showed Professor Sir Steve around our community hospital rehabilitation wards at Tiverton Hospital, and shared examples of innovations that are helping us deliver hospital-level care in patients' own homes.



Professor Sir Steve Powis with colleagues at Royal Devon

Building works start at North Devon District Hospital to futureproof facilities for patients and staff

Building works have started on a new admin facility at North Devon District Hospital (NDDH) in what marks a first step for the Our Future Hospital programme. Our Future Hospital is the Trust's response to NDDH being included in the national New Hospital Programme as a priority for investment.

The new admin facility is an important first step in the redevelopment of NDDH as it will allow modern staff residential accommodation to be built elsewhere on site. This is much-needed to support our recruitment plans for key clinical staff roles.

Chris Tidman, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, said: "We're very excited to be taking the first steps in rebuilding NDDH. With much of the estate at North Devon now over 50 years old, our buildings are in desperate need of upgrade so that they meet modern standards and deliver a service fit for the future."

Read the full article on our website [here](#).



Members of the Our Future Hospital meet developers on site

Other news



Over 35,000 patients benefit from patient-initiated follow-up pathways

Outpatient teams at the Trust have hit impressive milestones in patient-initiated follow-up (PIFU), with over 35,000 patients now having greater control over their care. National data shows that the Royal Devon is amongst the top four trusts in the country for numbers of patients on a PIFU pathway.

PIFU is when a patient or their carer can initiate their follow-up appointments as and when required, for example if their symptoms or circumstances change, rather than at routine intervals. Patients on a PIFU pathway can take more control of their care by getting help when they think they need it most and avoiding unnecessary outpatient appointments.

Mike McGibben, orthopaedic assessment physiotherapy lead, said: “We have comments from patients about the reassurance of knowing that they have access to the same team should they need it and won't have to start their journey again at the GPs.”

Rebecca Brown, podiatry professional lead, explains how it has benefitted other patients too: “By reducing unnecessary appointments, we can provide more essential care to our higher risk patients.”

If PIFU is available and suitable for you, the healthcare professional responsible for your care will discuss this option with you. For a brief introduction to PIFU, watch the video below or [visit our website](#) for more information.



New ultrasound machines at Devon Diagnostic Centre helping patients to be seen quicker

New state-of-the-art ultrasound imaging equipment at our Devon Diagnostic Centre (DDC) is helping to reduce waiting times from six weeks to less than two weeks.

The DDC is based at the NHS Nightingale Hospital Exeter and now has four outpatient scanning suites, each installed with the latest state-of-the-art ultrasound imaging equipment.

We have been able to serve three times as many patients at the DDC this year compared to last year, helping to reduce how long patients are waiting for their diagnostic imaging.

[Read more on our website.](#)



Staff at Devon Diagnostic Centre

Video appointments are changing from 1 April

From 1 April the Trust will be using Microsoft Teams for video appointments.

This will bring benefits for both patients and staff. The new system will integrate with Epic, our electronic patient record, so the process will be more streamlined, and patients with the MY CARE patient portal will find it easier than ever to have their video appointment. We talked to patients about how we can improve the video appointment experience and their voices were pivotal in how we designed the new service and patient information.

As part of moving to Microsoft Teams, the way patients access video appointments will change from 1 April. For any appointment booked to take place on or after Monday 1 April, patients will now get their own unique joining link rather than accessing it via a general online waiting room.

Video appointments will work best if patients use MY CARE, our online portal where patients can access all their appointment information in one place. This can be downloaded onto a mobile phone or tablet, or accessed using a PC or laptop. See [here on our website](#) for how you can access MY CARE.

Patients without MY CARE will still be able to have a video appointment, as every patient will get their joining link sent to them by text and email. So, it's important to make sure that your clinical team has your up-to-date contact details.

Advice on how to have a successful video appointment can be found [here](#).



“Something exciting is happening in Eastern Devon”

The One Eastern Devon partnership – the journey so far

The One Eastern Devon partnership (OED) is a new alliance of local government, public sector organisations, the NHS, the voluntary sector, faith groups and universities/ higher education institutions that have come together to tackle some of the key health and wellbeing issues facing communities across Eastern Devon.

One Eastern Devon is part of the recently established place-based partnerships that form part of the Integrated Care System that was established in 2022. In Devon these place-based partnerships are called [Local Care Partnerships](#).

Councillor Ian Hall, Devon County Councillor for Axminster and Appointed Governor for Devon County Council at the Royal Devon, is the joint chair of One Eastern Devon and says: “When I first heard about a new partnership being set up in Eastern Devon bringing together the key players across the locality, I have to confess I was a bit sceptical... I can safely say my initial reservations were misplaced.



“This is an exciting time to be involved in this emerging partnership and one that has the potential to be game changer. Something exciting is happening in Eastern Devon.”

Read more from Ian [here](#).

In North Devon, the One Northern Devon partnership which has been in place for over 10 years, works to address health inequalities and improve health and wellbeing for the people and communities of North Devon & Torridge. It has led the way in collaborative working, provided invaluable learning, and is a model for building alliances that the Trust is using to develop the approach taken to One Eastern Devon.

You can find out more about One Northern Devon [here](#).

126,000 jabs delivered by vaccination team

With the support of volunteers, partnership agencies and charitable services, we protected thousands of you from COVID-19 and flu this winter.



Tree planting marks 10-year anniversary

To mark 10 years since the arrival of a marble deity of Lord Shiva at the RD&E (Wonford), we planted a ceremonial rowan tree outside the hospital's main entrance. Read more [here](#).



Work begins on new Changing Places facility

We have started work on a new Changing Places facility at the RD&E (Wonford), which will provide accessible toilet and changing facilities for people with disabilities. It is due to open later this year and will complement the existing facility at NDDH (pictured below).



Celebrating our brilliant women on International Women's Day (IWD) 2024

On Friday 8 March we marked International Women's Day by celebrating some of the brilliant women who work across the Trust.

Across our social media channels, colleagues from a wide range of backgrounds and departments shared their thoughts on what IWD means to them, challenges they have overcome and messages they have for other women. Take a look at what they had to say on our website [here](#).

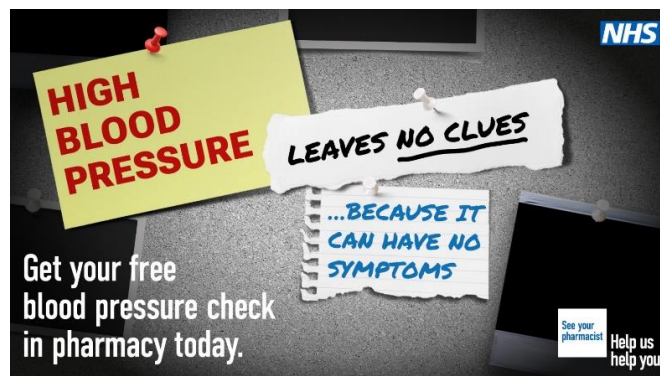


Get your blood pressure checked

An estimated 4.2 million adults in England are unaware they have high blood pressure and left untreated, it can pose significant health risks.

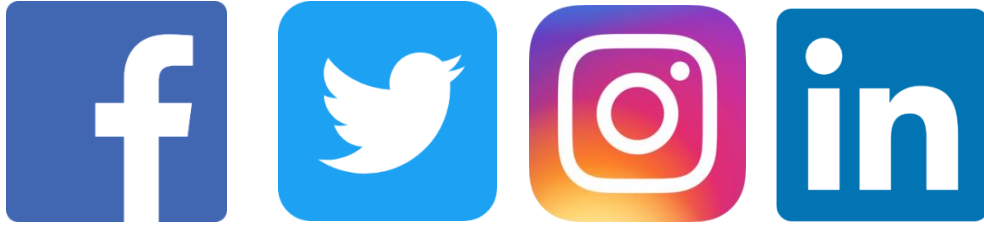
The only way to know if you have high blood pressure is to get a blood pressure test, which is a free, simple, non-invasive procedure. If you're aged 40 and over, you can get a free blood pressure check at your local participating pharmacy, without needing to book in advance.

You can find a pharmacy that offers free blood pressure checks near you by searching “pharmacy blood pressure check” or visit the NHS website [here](#).



Follow the Trust on social media

Follow our Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram and LinkedIn pages for all our latest updates as they happen!



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