

Latest news for our members and stakeholders

November 2022

This newsletter has been written to update you, our members and stakeholders, with the latest news from across the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

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Key updates



Our Better Together strategy 2022-2027: what we've achieved so far

In the summer, we launched our Trust strategy for 2022-27, Better Together. You can see our strategy and a summary video on our [website](#). We're now over halfway through our first year and have achieved a huge amount – take a look at the roadmap below.



The progress we are making is having a real impact in the here and now. Here are some of the headlines:

- Fewer patients are waiting over 104 weeks. We've more than halved the number from 600+ in January to around 250 in November, and we continue to work hard to reduce these long waits for our patients.
- We've maintained our ringfenced beds for orthopaedic elective care and improved access to surgical admission beds.

- Through our Help People Home Without Delay programme, we're working hard in the community to reduce unnecessary admissions to hospital, and to reduce the delays we experience in discharging patients from hospital.
- We held a Recovery Week in October, which saw us help more patients get home in time for lunch, reduce long stays, and save hours in our emergency departments. We learned a huge amount throughout the process, and the best initiatives will form part of our winter plan.
- We also held Team Royal Devon week, which focused on our objective to make the Royal Devon a great place to work. During the week we raised awareness of the support and benefits available, and celebrated our diverse workforce.
- We launched a world-leading genetic testing service from our lab in Exeter, which will save countless lives – [read more about it here.](#)
- As of 31 October 2022, we had 1,930 people going through our recruitment process.

Our strategy is all about making the most of the opportunities we have so we can continue do our very best for our patients and each other, now and in the future. The progress we've made just goes to show what we can achieve - we really are better together.

There's lots more just around the corner, including launching our transformation strategy, promoting our MY CARE portal to help our patients get the best out of Epic, and launching a number of new strategies, including our clinical and digital strategies. The work we are doing involves everybody – our staff, patients, and partners, too. Thank you.

Royal Devon appoints eight new Governors following recent elections

We're delighted to welcome eight new Governors (two public and six staff) to our Council, following our election held in September and October.

Thank you to everybody who voted in the staff and Eastern constituency elections. The election for our Northern constituency was uncontested.

- **Northern constituency:** Bob Deed (two-year term)
- **Eastern constituency:** Maurice Dunster (two-year term)
- **Staff constituency:** Tom Reynolds and Jayne Westcott (three-year terms), Lydia Balsdon and Catherine Bragg (two-year terms), Nicky Stapleton and Cathleen Tomlin (one-year term)

[Read the full election report on our website.](#)

The [Council of Governors](#) is made up of elected public and staff Governors, as well as Governors appointed by local partners, including the University of Exeter and Devon County Council. Governors play a vital role, providing a direct connection between the Trust, our patients, partners, and the communities we serve. Governors act as a collective to represent the views of their local communities. They don't represent individual cases. If

you have questions or concerns about any aspect of your treatment or care, please contact our [Patient Advice and Liaison Service \(PALS\)](#).

To contact a governor, please email us at rduh.royaldevonmembers@nhs.net, stating who your message is for.

NHS encourages eligible people to get their seasonal vaccinations

COVID-19 autumn boosters are available for anyone who is:

- aged 50+
- pregnant
- a health and social care worker
- aged 5+ and high-risk due to a health condition and / or weakened immune system
- aged 16+ and living with someone who has a weakened immune system and / or is a carer, paid or unpaid

To get your autumn booster, you have a couple of options.

1. [Book an appointment](#) at a vaccination centre / pharmacy
2. Find a [walk-in vaccination site](#) – this won't require an appointment but your waiting time will depend on how busy the site is that day.

For people who live in a care home for older people, vaccinations can be arranged with the care home manager.

Two new variants of COVID-19 were discovered in September. Health experts have also warned that this is likely to be a bad flu season, due to restrictions over the past few years causing people to be less immune. With this in mind, it's more important than ever that you receive both your autumn booster and flu vaccine this year, if you're eligible, to protect yourself and your loved ones.

Use the details above to book your autumn booster, and find out how to [book your flu vaccine here](#).

Visit from DCC Chair, Cllr Ian Hall

Devon County Council Chair and Royal Devon Governor Councillor Ian Hall visited Greendale recently to meet our vaccination staff and volunteers – and to get his COVID-19 autumn booster!

He said: 'Our wholehearted thanks to all those who are delivering this vital service to the residents of Devon, some of whom are working 12+ hour shifts, keeping us healthy and enabling us to return to some normality after the restrictions of COVID-19. I urge everyone to consider taking up the vaccination offer as soon as possible.'

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



Devon County Council Chair Councillor Ian Hall gets his COVID-19 autumn booster



Royal Devon teams launch their research strategy

We're delighted to have launched the Trust's Nursing, Midwifery, Allied Health Professionals, and Health Care Scientists' research strategy – [see it in full here](#).

The strategy has been developed in line with national plans to support the professions to lead, participate in, and deliver research. Nationally, research is recognised as fundamental in providing safe, evidence-based patient care.

The strategy sets out what we want to achieve over the next six years, with innovative and exciting opportunities for staff to engage with research at all levels across the organisation.

What does this mean for our patients? Nina lives near Holsworthy and cares for her husband John and supported him to take part in a research project led by Allied Health Professional staff at the Royal Devon. We sat down with Nina to find out what she thought of being involved in research and how research can involve all kinds of things – it's not just drug trials. Watch [the video](#) below.

[Read more about the HERO research project.](#)



Have you or a loved one recently been an inpatient? We're looking for feedback on our patient entertainment system!

We're currently looking at options for our future patient entertainment system on inpatient wards at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital (Wonford) and North Devon District Hospital. To help us, we'd like to understand what patients and carers think about what's currently offered, and what's important to you when thinking about a future system.

Our current system is available via a unit at the patient's bedside, offering: free outgoing phone calls (time-limited), a period of free TV each day, and paid TV.

We'd really like to hear from you if:

- you've recently been an adult inpatient at either of the above hospitals.
- you're a carer of someone who has been an adult inpatient at either of the above hospitals.

We'd like to hear from you even if you didn't use the system, as we'd like to understand why you didn't.

You can feedback anonymously by [completing this short survey](#). The survey closes on Monday 19 December.



Exciting employment scheme rolled out across Royal Devon

An exciting scheme to help young people with disabilities into employment and independence has now launched across the Trust's Eastern services.

Project SEARCH, a collaboration between the Royal Devon, Petroc, and Seetec Plus employment agency, has been running in our Northern services for nine years and has helped 87% of its graduates into employment.

The highly successful internship program dedicates time to training and support for interns, before and after each day's work placements. Interns also receive on-the-job support from dedicated coaches and complete three ten-week placements across a number of departments and services.

[Read more on our website.](#)



Project SEARCH 2021 graduates

New colleagues to join us following successful recruitment event

We held our latest recruitment event on Saturday 19 November in Exeter for both administration and healthcare support worker roles. Candidates were invited to interview, while people who wanted to find out about other roles were able to speak to the different teams and departments before applying for our December recruitment opportunities. Our teams were kept busy for both permanent and bank interviews, and we're pleased to share that there will be lots of new colleagues joining us soon.

If you know anybody who is interesting in joining us, please share the below information with them:

Our next Eastern recruitment and careers event will happen on Saturday 10 December, 9am – 1pm at the RILD Building, Barrack Road, Exeter, EX2 5DW. We'll be recruiting for healthcare support workers (healthcare assistants, theatre assistants, rehab assistants/support workers, urgent and community response workers). Exeter Job Centre will also be on hand to provide guidance to those who might need assistance with applications or support with their English for a future application. To secure an interview for these roles, candidates need to apply in advance [via Career Gateway here](#).

Follow our careers conversation on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#).

Have you created a [Career Gateway](#) account? We'd recommend doing so for anyone with an interest in working with our Trust, so that you're ready for when an opportunity becomes available – it makes it so much easier for you to apply, and you can set up alerts to make sure you don't miss out!



From a recent career event

R Recovering for the future



Facemasks update across all services

In response to the decreasing number of COVID-19 patients across our Trust and in the community, facemasks are no longer required for staff, patients, and visitors in most of our clinical areas across Devon.

There are some exceptions:

- Facemasks will still be needed in specialty areas that care for immunosuppressed patients, like renal, haematology, and oncology wards. This is to keep our clinically vulnerable patients as safe as possible.
- Facemasks are also strongly recommended in any areas where windows don't open or there's minimal mechanical ventilation in the room.

We'll continue to provide facemasks to people who would like to use them, and update our position to keep our colleagues, patients, and visitors safe. Thank you for your ongoing support.

600th international nurse arrives in Devon

600 nurses have been attracted to work in Devon from overseas in the last 15 months, helping to fill vital frontline posts and saving the NHS around £3 million in agency and bank costs.

The Devon International Recruitment Alliance works collaboratively across the county's NHS hospital trusts to attract staff. They've developed a recognised, trusted presence online, attracting many direct applicants from other countries. As a result, Devon has been able to reduce its need to use third-party agents to help recruit from other countries, making the programme even more cost effective.

The Devon team also pride themselves in offering great pastoral support to recruits, to ensure they have plenty of opportunity to learn about life as a nurse and member of the wider community in Devon, discuss any concerns, and meet other recruits online before they travel.

[Read more on our website.](#)



Moses Mukama, nurse at South Molton community hospital



**Excellence and innovation
in patient care**



Outstanding results in national cancer survey

We're delighted that the results of the 2021 National Cancer Patient Experience Survey have shown that patients across our Trust were well-supported and informed throughout their experience, from diagnosis to treatment. The survey was completed by over 1,317

patients who received a cancer diagnosis and received care in the months of April, May, and June 2021.

Questions focused on whether patients had been given clear information about their diagnosis, if they had been sensitively told that they had cancer, and if patients were able to discuss any worries or fears with staff.

Our hospitals scored above average in a number of areas, including:

- At the Royal Devon and Exeter (RD&E) Wonford Hospital, 88% of patients were told they could go back later for more information about their diagnosis.
- At North Devon District Hospital (NDDH), 87% of patients said they were always able to discuss worries and fears with hospital staff while being treated as an outpatient or day case.

Carolyn Mills, Chief Nursing Officer, said: ‘Our multi-disciplinary teams go above and beyond to provide the best possible care and this clearly shows – it wouldn’t be possible without them or the continued work with our local charities FORCE and ELF.’

As the survey took place before our integration, there were two separate surveys across our acute hospital sites. The reports for the RD&E Wonford can be [found here](#), while reports for the NDDH can be [found here](#).

£1.25m building work starts on South Molton Eye Hub

Work began earlier this month to create a new Eye Hub facility at South Molton Community Hospital, with investment totalling £1.25m.

The Eye Hub will provide diagnostic services and treatments for people with both long-term conditions and new eye problems, such as glaucoma, with the potential to significantly increase the number of appointments in our ophthalmology service.

The new Eye Hub is part-funded by South Molton Community Hospital League of Friends, who generously donated £500,000 towards the project. Members of the League of Friends joined Royal Devon at the site as work began earlier this month.

[Read more on our website.](#)



South Molton Ophthalmology Hub team

Local updates



New end-of-life service in Seaton

A new service has launched across the Seaton area to provide end-of-life care in people's own homes.

Patients living within the service's catchment area can be referred by their consultant or GP. They, and their carers, will then have access to hands-on support from the nursing team until the time of the patient's death.

Richard Anderson, Community Health and Social Care Manager at the Royal Devon said: 'The Seaton Hospice at Home service provides a solution to a problem our patients may face at the end of their life: access for their loved ones to see them. Providing this dedicated team of palliative care nurses in the patient's own home greatly increases their end-of-life experience, as well as that of those around them. We're tremendously grateful to League of Friends for the funding they've provided to bring this service to fruition.'

For more information, you can email SeatonLOF@nhs.net or call 01297 20143.

[Read more on our website.](#)



Richard Anderson, community health and social care manager (left), and Dr Mark Welland, chairman of Seaton & District Hospital League of Friends (right). Image: Seaton & District Hospital League of Friends.

How to choose the right healthcare service for your needs this winter

Choosing the right service when you're unwell or injured helps you to get the care you need as soon as possible. It also reduces pressure on emergency services, freeing them up to help those who need it most.

Non-life-threatening emergencies: call 111

For non-life-threatening emergencies, you may be more appropriately treated somewhere other than the emergency department.

[NHS 111](#) can help if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

GPs

Your nearest GP surgery can provide medical advice, examinations, prescriptions and routine care for illnesses and injuries that aren't life-threatening.

[Click here to find your nearest GP surgery.](#)

Pharmacies

Pharmacists are also qualified healthcare professionals who can help you with minor health concerns. They can offer clinical advice and over-the-counter medicines for a range of minor illnesses, including coughs, colds, sore throats, tummy trouble, and general aches and pains.

If symptoms suggest it's something more serious, pharmacists have the right training to make sure you get the help you need.

Minor injuries units (MIUs) and walk-in centres (WIC)

You can go to a WIC if you have a medical problem that's not critical or life-threatening, including for blood pressure checks or minor cuts and wounds.

Our minor injuries units can deal with a wide range of injuries, from burns to broken bones.

Emergency department

Also known as accident and emergency or A&E, our emergency departments are here to help people who are seriously ill or injured, and their life is at risk. We're open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all year round.

To find out more about how to get the care you need please [visit our website](#).

Follow the Trust on social media

Follow our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn pages for all of our latest updates as they happen.



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NHS and CARE working with communities and local organisations to improve people's lives

