

GPConnect

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Keeping GP Practices up-to-date with news from The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust

Update from Alison Jones, GP Engagement

New recruits bring opportunity for out of hours Diabetic Eye Screening service

Six new members of staff have joined the Shropshire Diabetic Eye Screening team, providing more opportunities for patients to access clinics in the evenings and at weekends. Every year more than 25,000 patients with diabetes across Shropshire, aged 12 and above, are invited to be screened to check for diabetic retinopathy, a condition that can lead to sight loss if it is not treated. There has been an increase in the number of people being diagnosed with diabetes, with the Trust seeing around 140 new patients every month. As a result, SaTH managed to secure extra funding for an additional four new screening practitioners to meet the additional demand. This recruitment is in addition to two new screening practitioners who joined the Trust at the beginning of the year.

Andy James, Shropshire Diabetic Eye Screening Programme Manager, said: **"We were successful in applying for extra funding, which means we have been able to take on new team members. It means that if there is demand, we are now in a position to start offering more frequent out-of-hours appointments at the Royal Shrewsbury and Princess Royal Hospitals as we know that not everyone can attend clinics Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm."**

"It is people of working age who are in the higher risk group for diabetic retinopathy, so it is important that we have the potential to offer them access to an out-of-hours clinic. It means that they don't have to take time out of their working day to attend."

Diabetic eye screening is a key part of diabetes care. As part of the national NHS screening programme, patients with diabetes are screened on an annual basis to detect signs of diabetic retinopathy. The eye test is a simple non-invasive procedure which involves examining and photographing the back of the eye.

The Shropshire Diabetic Eye Screening team is based at the Hummingbird Centre at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. As well as clinics at both RSH and PRH, the team also provides a community screening programme at more than 20 venues around the county. For more information about the service please call the Shropshire Diabetic Eye Screening team on (01743) 261257 or email failsafe.sdesp@nhs.net

Donation enables SaTH to buy ophthalmology equipment to benefit children

A generous donation by a Shropshire charity has enabled the Trust to purchase two new retinoscopes which will benefit youngsters across the county.

Sight Loss Shropshire (SLS) has kindly paid for the new eye equipment, which will be used by the Trust's Paediatric Ophthalmology team, and which will replace two old retinoscopes.

Anna Turner, SLS Chairman and the next Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire, joined SLS Secretary Robin Durham, to present a cheque for £1226.39 for the retinoscopes to Andrea Elkan, Paediatric Ophthalmology Consultant at SaTH (*Andrea is pictured below on the left, with Anna Turner*).

Robin said: **"We are delighted that our donation means that our local hospital's Paediatric Eye Clinic can purchase pieces of equipment that will be of such benefit to children with sight loss, and will help hundreds of children in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin over the life-span of the equipment."**

Andrea said: **"We are incredibly grateful to Sight Loss Shropshire for their very generous donation. The retinoscopes will be for use on children at both the Princess Royal Hospital and the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital."**

"Retinoscopes are used by opticians and ophthalmologists within outpatients' clinics at both hospitals to determine whether the patients have a problem with focusing on light accurately. If the child fails the test, they may need further intervention to improve their sight."

"Any improvements in sight are really beneficial for children and can make such a difference to their learning and daily tasks."

Sight Loss Shropshire is the local society for visually impaired people and helps those with sight loss of all ages across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. The charity provides information, advice and support to help improve the quality of life of visually impaired people who live locally.



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£1million MRI scanner is already benefiting cardiac patients

A new £1 million MRI scanner at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital is helping to reduce waiting and travel time for cardiac patients who previously had to be seen out of Shropshire for their scans.

This is the third new MRI scanner for the Trust, and was purchased by the League of Friends of the RSH in 2018 after they raised an incredible £1 million to fund it to mark their 50th anniversary.

As well as providing more advanced and high quality images and an enhanced patient experience, the League of Friends' scanner also has the addition of cardiac imaging, meaning that cardiac patients can now be seen at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, instead of having to travel out of the county for their scans.

Glen Whitehouse, Radiology Centre Manager at the Trust said: **"The third and final MRI scanner was added to our fleet in April last year after the huge and amazing efforts of our Royal Shrewsbury Hospital League of Friends to raise £1million for this much-needed machine. The third MRI scanner provides us with the capacity we need to support the ever increasing demand for the MRI service and is already running 12 hour days providing fantastic images for our patients."**

"The League of Friends' scanner has always been a bit special because it has the addition of cardiac imaging packages and functionality. Our dedicated MRI team are now providing regular MRI cardiac lists to our patients who would have otherwise had to travel outside of the county for their scans."

The League of Friends' scanner is housed in the MRI Suite at the Treatment Centre, and the results of an MRI scan can be used to help diagnose conditions, plan treatments and assess how effective previous treatment has been.



SaTH scoops international Green Apple Award

The Trust has scooped an international environmental award for recycling surplus hospital equipment and furniture, making savings of £80,000. SaTH has won a Green Apple Award - Gold Level - as part of the recognised International Green Apple Environment Awards for Environmental Best Practice for the Trust's work using Warp-it, a national online re-distribution network which aims to reduce waste.

Instead of going to landfill or spending unnecessarily on new items, hospital staff have been using Warp-it to seek and provide a new home for surplus items - from paper clips and filing trays to cabinets, desks and chairs. Alex Ford, Sustainable Travel Plan Co-ordinator at the Trust, (*pictured below with the award*) said: **"It is fantastic to win an award that recognises the efforts that we are making to make the Trust more sustainable, and reduce waste. Warp-it is an innovative idea that our staff have really embraced, and it is just one of the methods that we are using to reduce our environmental footprint. It also means that instead of spending money, we are saving it."**

The International Green Apple Awards for Environmental Best Practice 2018 were presented in the Houses of Parliament in London in December.



Mobile unit in place to help ease winter pressures

A mobile recovery unit is in place at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital to help alleviate the impact that winter pressures are having on the day surgery service. The unit, supplied by Vanguard Healthcare, is a fully-equipped mobile recovery unit for up to 8 day surgery patients at a time, and a walkway has been constructed from it to the entrance of the Treatment Centre.

The capacity offered by the facility will allow the Trust to ensure continuity of access to a number of surgical specialties whilst winter pressures continue.

Kath Preece, Head of Nursing for Scheduled Care, said: **"This mobile unit gives us the ability to plan for patients to receive their day surgery procedures over the winter months. It has proved a big success in the past and we hope the unit will be just as well received this time. It has been in operation for a couple of weeks now and I have been delighted to hear of positive experiences about the care being provided."**

"I would like to thank the day surgery nursing team, our theatre teams and our estates department for enabling this service to function at such short notice."

Neil Rogers, Interim Assistant Chief Operating Officer for Scheduled Care, said: **"This is the most pressurised time of the year. The past two months have already seen spikes in emergency attendances and a higher volume of patients brought in by ambulance compared to last winter. The deployment of this unit is crucial and it is likely to remain in use for the next six weeks."**

New Trust Consultant appointments

We would like to welcome the following Consultants who have recently joined the Trust:

Dr Uttam Bhandari, Consultant Anaesthetist

Mr Guy Calcott, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist

Dr Mei-See Hon, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist

Dr Charlotte Hunt, Consultant Gastroenterologist

Dr Simone Oliwiecki, Consultant Dermatologist

Dr Rebecca Race, Consultant in Emergency Medicine

Dr Suneetha Rachaneni, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist

Dr Muhammad Zia, Consultant in Emergency Medicine.