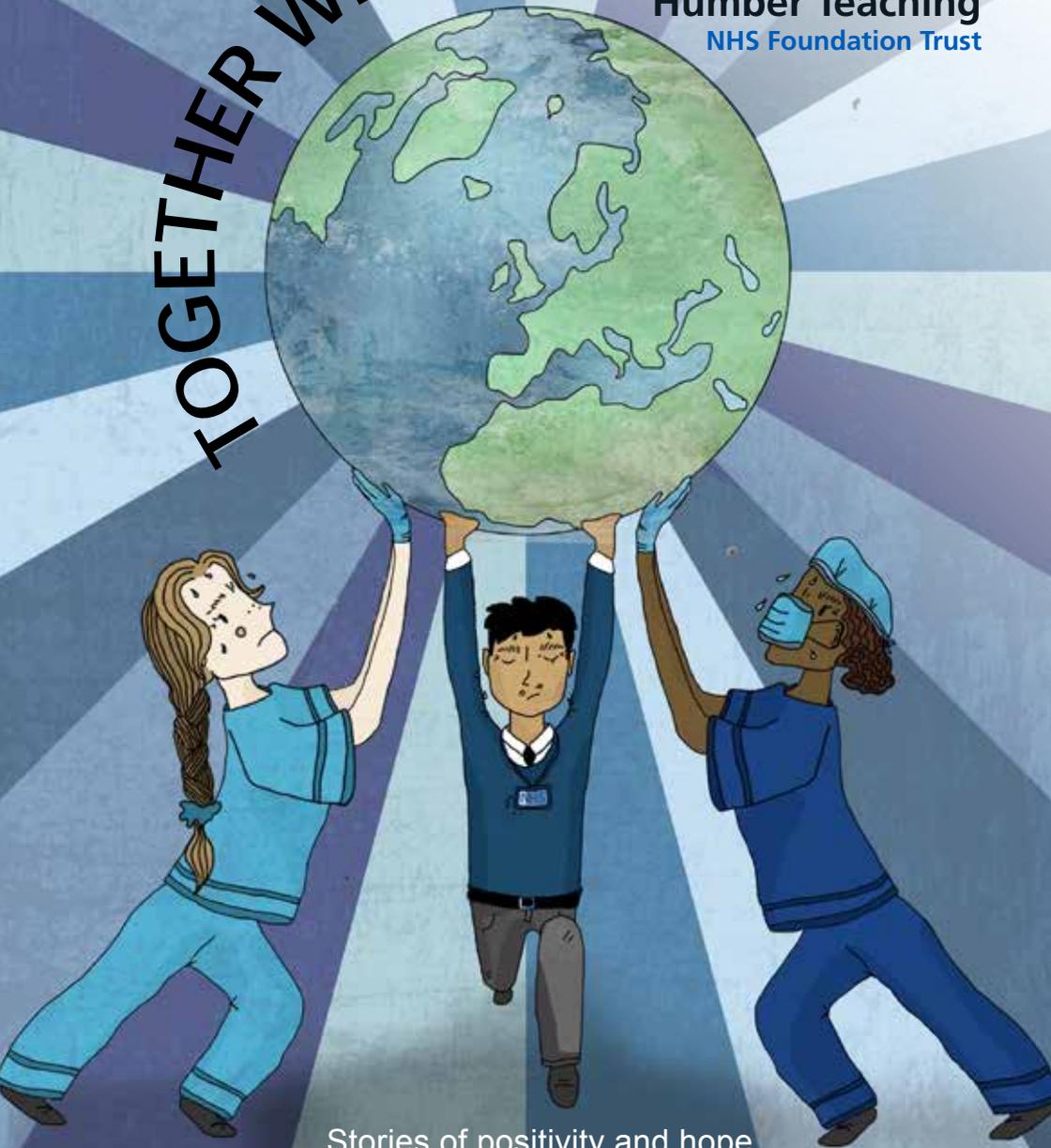


TOGETHER WE CAN

**NHS**

Humber Teaching  
NHS Foundation Trust



Stories of positivity and hope  
told during COVID-19.

***Caring, Learning, Growing***



*Michele Moran*

*Sharon Mays*

## A note from Michele Moran, Chief Executive and Sharon Mays, Chair

Over the last several months, we have witnessed unprecedented change during what will likely be one of the most testing times in our careers.

Although there are undoubtedly challenges still to come, we couldn't be prouder of you all and how you have come together to support one another and our patients, service users, carers and their families. You have shown us your skills, adaptability and your bravery. You have sacrificed your own needs to take care of others and to

maintain our high quality of care at a crucial moment in history.

We thank everyone for their contribution to making this book possible. Though its pages contain real stories, they illustrate only a fraction of the adaptability and courage you have shown. We hope this book acts as a positive memento, a token of our gratitude and a true reflection of the incredible work done by all.

Thank you for all that you have done and all that you continue to do.

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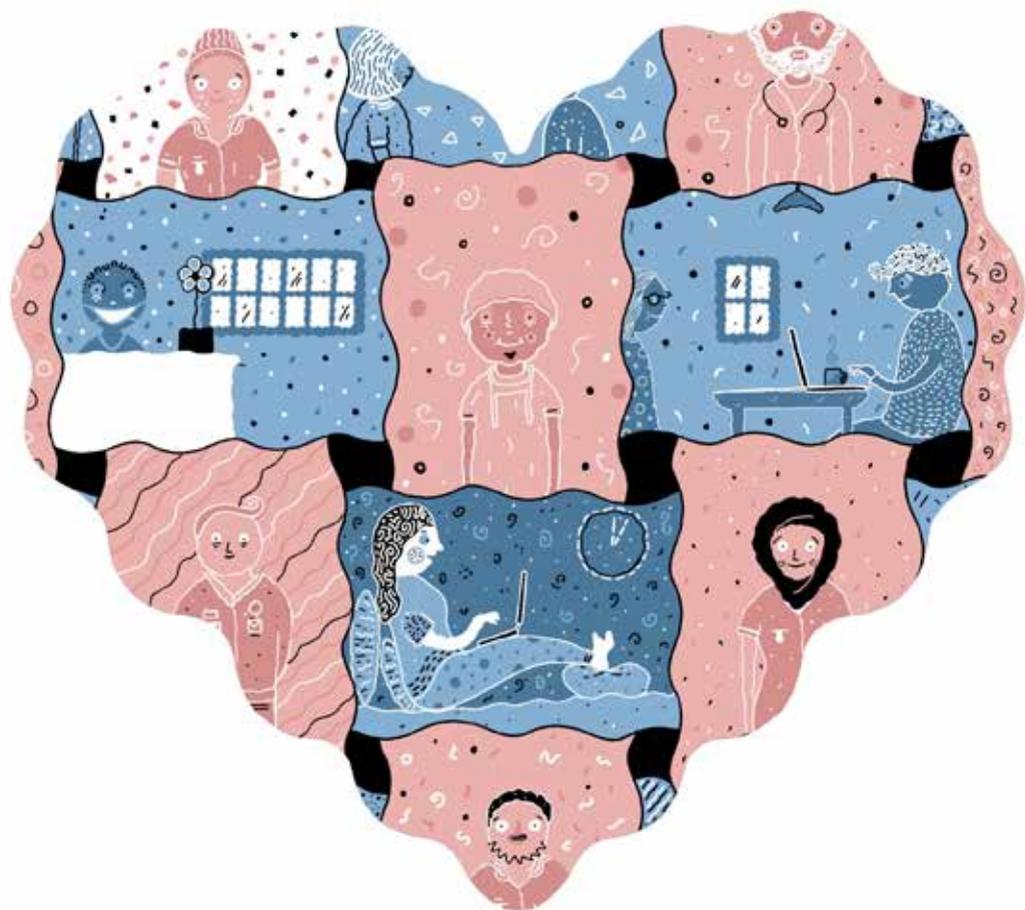
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The Positive Publication creative work



Art by Louis Honca



## WORKING ON THE FRONTLINE

*Our clinical staff do the kind of work that most of us couldn't do. They put themselves on the line in an effort to save others. And for that, we are grateful.*

## Working on the frontline at Whitby Hospital

The Coronavirus outbreak was a challenging time for all, and while we're aware that everyone's day-to-day routines changed in light of the crisis, the impact of this on those on the frontline was unprecedented.

When speaking with Kathy Davies, Nursing Inpatient Ward Manager at Whitby Hospital, we learned so much about how our staff have been affected, how they have coped through this period and what has kept them going.

My team have handled all of this brilliantly. It's tough, especially when a lot of our staff members needed to self-isolate at home, which added extra pressure to the team, but everyone demonstrated absolute flexibility and stepped up remarkably well.

Plans changed very quickly and our day to day routines were affected markedly. We're now wearing full PPE – that includes masks, visors and aprons – which is especially challenging as it's hard to breathe and feel comfortable. It's also extremely time consuming, you have to remove and put them on in a specific way and wash your hands many times in between. It can be really tiring, but have been extremely grateful to have a good supply and that we're able to protect ourselves.

It's pretty much been all hands on deck with clinical care. As always, we prioritise patient care and needs above our own, and we have always done our

best to make people smile as much as we can. It has been extremely difficult to communicate when wearing all of this protective clothing – patients cannot see the emotions on our face and we have to limit therapeutic touch – it must be quite unsettling, but we've done our utmost to get creative and keep our patients comfortable.

Of course, we have also been social distancing as much as we can, which means that quite often it has been challenging not to hug and reassure colleagues during difficult times. Ultimately, we have been getting through this time with regular check-ins and offloading sessions, which are in place to support staff mental health and wellbeing.

One thing that quickly became apparent was that there was a need to shed light on the positive things happening as well. In the beginning especially, there was a sense that no

*My advice is to take it one day at a time. Focus on today and get through it as best as you can.*

one was surviving this crisis, but that is not how I experienced it. We have had a number of elderly and vulnerable patients who recovered extremely well from this. I also knew a lot of people who tested positive but were not unwell at all. It's more important than ever to look at all of the data and pay attention to the positives during difficult times.

We have been constantly learning, every day. I have to say, my staff are so resilient and, despite their anxieties or worries, I'm so proud of how we've all stuck together and supported one another. Everyone has families at home to worry about, but they still show up every day and deliver excellent patient care, even in times of high stress.

It has made me realise that, as a team leaders, it's more important than ever to be thoughtful and reassuring. There's no hiding that this has been a scary situation and it's important to acknowledge that and do everything we can to support one another.

Also, it might sound strange, but many of us have felt lucky during this time.

We have kept our jobs and been able to go to work 'as normal' without having to stay home. Self-isolation is an equally difficult prospect for many people and we have focused on being grateful to be able to work and have face-to-face conversations with others. Focusing on these small moments of joy has helped us along the way.

We also get by with a good sense of humour. I think it's vital in a clinical care environment to be able to break from intensity with a laugh or smile, not only to reassure your staff and patients, but also to make light in dark situations. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the amazing local communities, organisations and our Trust charity, Health Stars, for all of the wonderful donations we have received over the past few months. It makes us feel so appreciated and we're very grateful.

# Prioritising mental health support during the Coronavirus outbreak

When speaking with Debbie Barratt, Service Manager at Townend Court, we learned more about how our Community Mental Health Teams and Psychosis Service for People in Hull and East Riding (PSYPHER) teams have been coping with the increase in mental health presentations throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

Prioritising your mental wellbeing is now more essential than ever. It has been an extremely challenging time for everyone, and speaking to our mental health professionals has only reaffirmed the notion that it's vital people explore what kind of mental health support works for them.

Our services have changed significantly as a result of the Coronavirus outbreak. We've followed Trust and Governmental guidance at all times, which meant a substantial decrease in face to face practice. We also began taking on the challenge of doing everything digitally, however, there will always be some urgent interventions and medication reviews which must go ahead as normal.

We have maintained regular contact with our service users, so I'm proud to say that connection has been maintained well. Also, we have been creatively developing some telephone therapies and extended appointments to be able to meet the needs of our patients for the long term.

Before COVID, we were a part of the national pilot regarding transforming Community Mental Health Teams,

and as part of this initiative, one of our main goals was to reduce our wait lists significantly. We are so proud to say that we achieved this goal, and now it's about putting in the work to maintain it, despite the change in circumstances. We're also pleased to say our patients have responded to these new ways of working very well.

We have been extremely impressed by and grateful for the positive response. The vast majority of our service users are responding well to the new forms of support and, although there has been an increase in demand, we're continuously learning how to spot the different ways in which people are presenting with mental health problems, as a result of things such as social distancing and isolation. In turn, this has allowed us to provide improved services during a particularly challenging time.

During this time, I have learned how flexible people are; not only have our patients been so understanding, but our staff have creatively come up with new solutions to accommodate new and increasing patient needs around the clock.

Our staff are incredible. They're always willing to learn, adapt and work longer hours where needed to get things going. They have all been wonderful.

Also, due to social distancing, we had to try out systems we never thought we would need to use. It's now safe to say that we learned, despite any initial teething problems, that they actually work really well and improve our ways of working. We're constantly reviewing these new things and deciding what we would like to take forward with us in our business continuity plans.

I think it's worth noting that, despite the increase and complexity of demand, we don't want anyone to be too afraid to seek help. Your local mental health support teams might be busy, but they are certainly not too busy for you if you need help.



To those who have already sought help, keep going with the skills you have learned so far. It's important that everyone finds what works for them and that when you do, you stick with it. This will help you feel better. Take each day as it comes; we understand that the circumstances placed upon us this year have been and continue to be exceptionally challenging, but please know help is available if you need it.

Well done to everyone who took part in our inter-unit poetry competition. The poem below comes from Avondale and it really showcases the importance of thinking positively during challenging times.

## 'HOPE'

*Hope is getting through your dark days,  
Hoping for lighter days to arrive.  
Hope is allowing people to help you,  
And accepting the help you need.*

*Hope is knowing you've got the strength,  
To change what you're going through right now.  
Hope is knowing once you're allowed home,  
You've got family & friends to be there.*

*Hope is knowing that what you're going through,  
Will not last forever.  
All these bad days will make you stronger,  
Hope is making it through, together!*



Art by Mike Cooke

## Chapter 3

# How our Procurement team has supported the Trust during the COVID-19 outbreak

Our Procurement department may be working 'behind the scenes', like many of our vital corporate groups at the Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust, but we are aware of their importance in keeping our colleagues informed and able to do their jobs safely.

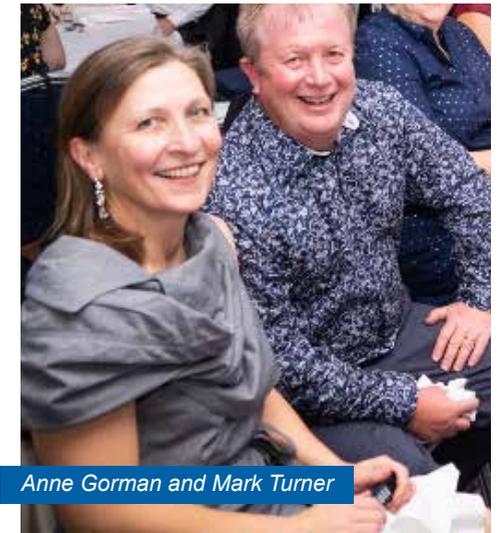
When speaking to Mark Turner and Anne Gorman, we learned about how the Procurement team adapted to home working and how they're dealing with the challenge that is ensuring adequate PPE is delivered to our colleagues on the frontline. A task that is now more vital than ever.

We are working closer than we have ever done before and we are managing to maintain the same standard of service we would have done while working in the office. We did have some initial teething problems adjusting to working from home, but the IT team worked wonders getting our equipment sorted.

We would say we have adapted very well to new ways of working, including communicating electronically and via teleconferencing; holding daily team calls on Skype and keeping in touch regularly throughout the course of each day.

It has been a very hectic period for us, especially in the beginning, but we have been 100 per cent focused on

the adequate supply of PPE. It quickly became our highest priority to ensure our staff have the vital supplies they need – and enough of them, at the right time.



Anne Gorman and Mark Turner

(photo taken in 2019)



Andrea Sawden

I [Anne] like to start earlier in the day so I can take a longer lunch break to be available to support home schooling and endless food breaks! I'm happy to have been kept busy during this time, but must admit it has been quite difficult to balance work and home. Within the team, we are very supportive of one another, when one of us has needed that extra time to adjust, the rest of us have not only supported this but encouraged it.

As a team, we have all increased our hours of work to support the increased demand, but this has been manageable thanks to the resilience of the team and we take pride in making a difference and keeping on top of service needs.

Working remotely and independently was a huge change for us, and one we had to adapt to quickly. We, like many others, found ourselves at home with family and pets, so we also found our working hours had to become more flexible.

*I am grateful to be working with a small but perfectly formed team – I couldn't ask for better colleagues!*



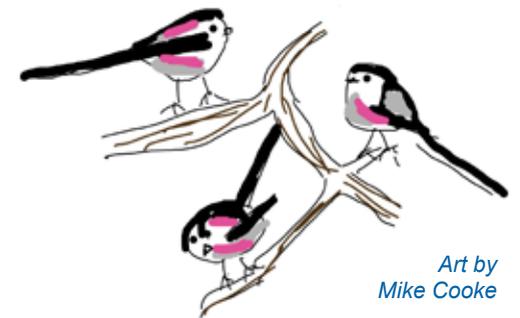
Kate Bramhill

*I'm personally grateful for how we are working with teams across the Trust. Despite all the challenges, we are seeing the very best in so many of our colleagues and suppliers.*

In many ways, whilst we have not seen each other for some time, this experience has brought us closer together as a team. We have found a new appreciation for the importance of good communication and clarity of who is doing what and when.

We have learned that we can work from home effectively and maintain our high standards of practice, but we do miss the structure of going into work. The current regime requires more self-discipline to concentrate and find that balance between home and work. However, we are reassured that if we were to continue working from home, we can make it work, and it is much more bearable than we feared in the beginning.

We've also realised we need a good sense of humour to get through the more demanding days...but overall, we are so very proud of the commitment and effort the team has displayed to support the vital work our Trust colleagues are undertaking. We now know that, even during the busiest moments, we work fantastically well as a team.



Art by Mike Cooke

# Frontline workers at Malton Community Hospital give thanks for generous community donations

Key workers at the Trust received a huge variety of wonderful gifts and donations in the initial weeks of the Coronavirus outbreak.

Speaking to Fiona Scott and Dr George Castle, we learned more about how staff at Malton Community Hospital have been coping during this challenging time, and how generous gifts and donations have brightened their days.

Our team as a whole have been handling this situation very well. Morale has remained high and the whole team work together to help align services and ensure everything continues to run smoothly.

There have been many changes, but people acclimatised really well. In the beginning, we saw third year HYMS medical students stay on to help, on a voluntary basis, and healthcare nurses began to come in from the community to work as discharge nurses, helping to improve outflow. We are really grateful to our staff for being so adaptable and dedicated.

The Infection Prevention and Control team have been very proactive in keeping us updated and medical presence has increased substantially during the week. And, of course, our facilities team have been great - providing staff with meals and the food brought in from the community.

Our team have been affected by the crisis substantially. Junior doctors who are usually placed between locations began working full time at the Hospital. We are always seeking ways to take the best care of our patients, but this has been especially prevalent during this time.

In the beginning, the situation changed constantly. New guidance was announced daily and we worked hard to keep on track. Our role in the outbreak changed not only as a standalone team but also as we discovered how we could best help the acute hospitals nearby.

PPE was a huge adjustment initially and posed a challenge as all of our staff needed to be fit tested and have updated training. The wonderful thing is that we continue to have all the PPE we need and we get frequent updates from the Trust about stock levels and how best to use the PPE provided.



As doctors, it has changed the way we work and the treatment our patients get as we have to take in to account additional risks. We have had to try to reduce our own exposure and exposure of other staff where appropriate.

Overall, we have learned how adaptable our NHS staff really are. There's been an incredible amount of support for one another – it's natural that there is a fair amount of anxiety, but our teams have been extremely understanding and resilient.

Furthermore, we're humbled by the amount of support from the local Malton communities and also from national organisations.

We would like to take this opportunity to extend a huge thank you for all of the items donated to our Hospital during this time. We have received so many wonderful gifts, it's hard to keep

track! Your generosity has blown all of us here away and we simply feel so appreciated. It has really helped us cope during this time.



We also want to say thank you for all of the amazing pictures we have been sent from children as well. They really brighten our day, and look how wonderfully colourful our Fitzwilliam ward looks now! Thank you all.

## Comfort Pebbles

Inspired by Love on the Rocks UK, Keech Hospice Care and the Hospice UK teams, Comfort Pebbles is an initiative that provides predominantly COVID-19 patients in hospitals and hospices, with a hand-decorated pebble containing a personal message from their family member or friend.

The beauty of this project is that the pebble can be kept with them and held during challenging times of being separated from their loved ones.

Mandy Dawley, Head of Patient and Carer Experience and Engagement, said:

*“Due to the government guidance regarding visitation in hospitals, we are aware that, while these are challenging times for all, it can be particularly difficult for those with relatives in care at the moment. We understand that you would prefer to be there, holding their hands, but we hope this gives you an opportunity to be there in an alternative and creative way.”*



### Comfort Pebbles send messages of hope and support to loved ones in Malton and Whitby Hospitals.

We partnered with local pebble artists, Hull Rocks, in this initiative. The great team at Hull Rocks helped us to decorate a number of uniquely painted pebbles. Each pebble includes a beautiful image on the front, and your personalised message painted on the back. They were well received by all and something we are proud to continue doing moving forwards.

Samantha Grey, Voluntary Services Manager, said:

*“We seek to bring communities together through kindness and compassion. We want to provide patients with the support and hope they need during these difficult times, and give them something to hold when hand holding isn't an option. We hope they brighten both the patient and relatives' day.”*

Comfort Pebble Artist, Jayne.



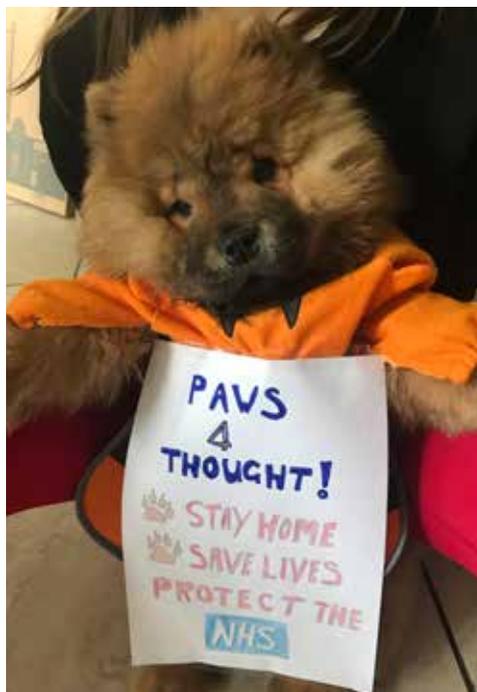


WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!



NHS staff are no strangers to working in crisis; rising to unique challenges in fast paced environments and ever changing landscapes is simply what they do. However, never before in the history of our NHS have we had to rise to an emergency quite like this.

Like so many NHS Trusts, our staff have demonstrated incredible adaptability, responsiveness and leadership in their response to this global pandemic as a multi-speciality service provider.



*Even our dogs have been involved!*

Patient safety is always at the heart of what we do, so it was important that we make immediate plans as to how we would keep our mental health and learning disability patients safe during the COVID-19 outbreak. This included how we would ensure that they would continue to receive the physical and mental health care they need should they develop suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

Part of our emergency response to the COVID-19 outbreak was the formation of a Rapid Response COVID Team (RRCT). This comprised of Registered Nurses, Emergency Care Practitioners, Paramedics and Advanced Nurse Practitioners, who needed to develop new ways to work with their mental health and learning disability colleagues. This ensured our patients continued to receive the very best care, in an appropriate health care setting that met both the physical and mental health needs of the individual.

When learning about the rapid response team, we spoke with Sadie Millington, Quality Standards Practice Development Nurse and RRCT leader, who told us all about the team, how they responded to the crisis and what it's like to work on the frontline.

The core function of the team was to provide support to our colleagues across the mental health and learning disability inpatient units and residential care facilities. This could be direct support from the team, or remote support through our triage and information service. The team were based at one location, which enabled us to support the cohort wards - 24 designated inpatient beds for patients who had suspected or confirmed cases of COVID.

The team were well-equipped with a breadth of skills and experience, which further enabled us to work together to provide a unique service, delivering active treatment such as oxygen therapy, intravenous fluid/medication to end of life care and symptom management.

Whilst the team is made up of registered professionals who work in a variety of professional roles within the organisation, prior to joining the RRCT, many of us were not working in clinical settings. It was immensely rewarding to be involved on the frontline in the initial stages of the crisis; doing the jobs we're trained to do and being able to feel like we made a real difference to the lives of our patients.

Although specialists in their own right, other colleagues within our mental health and learning disability units are unable to deliver some of the specialist care which patients with COVID-19

require. It was increasingly important that the RRCT clinical team were able to work alongside other teams to ensure care for this unfamiliar disease was delivered safely.

The RRCT played a supportive and coaching role, which helped many of our staff across the units to develop and grow in confidence when caring for patients who required additional monitoring, or physical health interventions. Staff appropriately managed and escalated deteriorating patients and were able to assess risk, in line with the clinical pathways in relation to COVID-19.

As such, every member of staff needed to adapt their ways of working – it was a huge learning curve for us and one we're so proud to be a part of. As clinical staff, we were constantly developing our skills every day and learning from one another about some of the unique challenges in caring for people with complex mental health and behavioural problems.

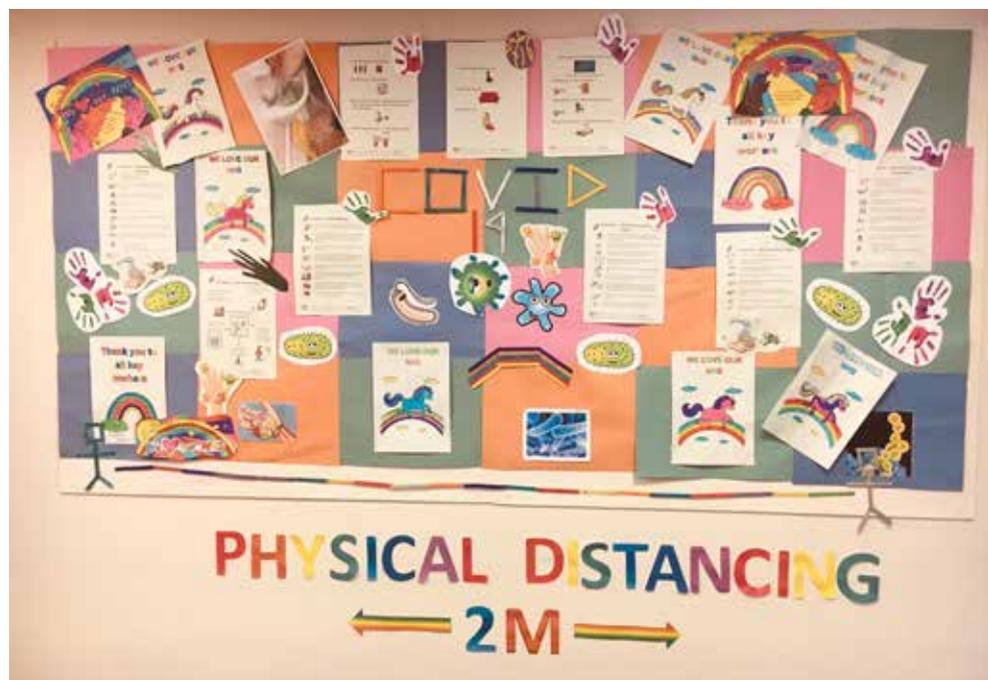
Learning and growing from each other's knowledge and skills was a particularly important aspect of this experience for me. Every day we were teaching each other new things; we are all from different backgrounds, each bringing something unique and valuable to the table.

I am so proud of the RRCT team. Nothing was ever too much for anyone. Everyone simply wanted to help and they all worked above and beyond, and continue to do so today. As individuals, they're not only generous with their time, but with their energy and compassion too. Even when my colleagues are off duty, I can turn to them for advice and support at any time and vice versa. At times, we would cry or have an emotional wobble, but the camaraderie got us back on track.

People coming together and supporting one another at this time has been

absolutely imperative to the team's success. On a broader level, I think coming out of this, what we will take away is how important it is to work with and alongside our colleagues.

Working in this way not only broadens our skillsets but it also allows us to truly understand the challenges faced by those working in clinical environments and how we can work together, in terms of practice development and learning. I am sure this experience, despite being very challenging and at times very sad, will have a positive impact for a long time to come.



## Helping you to send messages of support and hope to your loved ones

Care Mail is a service which delivers personalised postcards to patients and staff in our inpatient and community hospital locations for free via our Trust website. This initiative is a collaboration between the communications, patient experience and volunteering teams to help friends and family stay connected to patients and staff whilst lockdown restrictions are in place.

Michele Moran, Chief Executive said:

*"We know that contact with loved ones is important for recovery and whilst it is great that we can facilitate this digitally, there is something special about a personal note that you can hold on to. We know that it is a worrying time for those who have a relative or friend working or staying in hospital, so we hope this campaign will help ease those concerns and bring joy and light on difficult days."*



Alongside these postcards to patients, the Trust has also expanded the scheme to add the option for family and former patients and send messages of support, thanks and encouragement to staff.

Sam Grey, Voluntary Services Manager, said:

*"Government guidelines mean that we have had to temporarily suspend visiting in our services and although our staff are doing an incredible job supporting patients and service users to stay in touch digitally, sometimes a personal message can make a real difference and brighten someone's day."*

Messages are delivered by our fantastic volunteer team who have offered vital services and support throughout the outbreak.

## How our GP Practices responded to the COVID-19 outbreak

When speaking to our GP practice staff, we discovered how they responded to the COVID-19 outbreak and what they've learned from the experience. Working on the frontline of the COVID-19 response isn't limited to hospitals, and it's importance we take a look at other areas which were majorly affected by this crisis.

Lianne Jerome, Senior Practice Manager at Field House Surgery in Bridlington, and Susan Smith, Senior Practice Manager at our Market Weighton Surgery, shared their experiences with us.

Our staff adjusted amazingly. Of course it was unsettling in the initial weeks but they now feel like they're simply working smarter. One example of this is that we quickly introduced video consultations, which was quite a scary move in the beginning, but it has had great feedback from staff and patients and eventually made our lives easier.

At the Market Weighton Surgery, we bring our clinicians together at 7:45 every morning to brief them and allow staff to raise any queries or concerns. In the beginning especially, this was vital as national guidance was changing multiple times a day. However, we continued the practice as it gives us a welcomed opportunity to check in with our staff and ensure they have everything they need for the day ahead.

As a team, we've all become much closer. We have a strong team spirit and although

there have been many challenges along the way; it has been wonderful to develop that support system.

In the beginning, the fact that many of our services were provided online meant that surgeries were much quieter than usual, however, our clinicians' diaries remained full. It was all about adapting to new ways of working. Instead of seeing patients face to face, we started online video consultations and phone calls. Urgent referrals and appointments continued to go ahead, but otherwise we limited in-person contact as much as possible.

Market Weighton Surgery had been a top performing practice for using the Engage Consult online service for a while before the crisis. This platform allows patients to consult a Dr by completing a short questionnaire. Thanks to new initiatives, we're also now providing two way communication on the platform too.

Although it's a strange time for all, it's allowed us to learn new, effective ways of working and improve our services. We plan to take a lot of these changes forward with us as we've had such great feedback.

The new digital platforms we have introduced allow us to provide more choice and we will continue to trial innovative methods to see which ones work best for both staff and patients.

We now know better than ever how much we can rely on our colleagues. Not only to do their jobs, but to be there to lift each other up and support one another. Everyone has been willing to get stuck in and it's been amazing to see.

It's been a long road to get to this point but we have learnt so much from the experience. The support from managers has been amazing and we can't thank them enough for ensuring we always had everything we needed, from PPE to guidance and procedures.

Personally, when Coronavirus broke out, I [Susan] was new to the team, so I quickly learned how strong my colleagues are and how well we work together as a team. We have a great mix of skills and the sharing of knowledge and support has only made us stronger. We have certainly all learned something from this experience and I would like to send a personal thank you to everyone in the practice – they all made me feel welcome and never complained

about needing to explain things. Nothing has been too much for anyone, thank you for being wonderful.



Also, a lot of things supported us along the way. The donations were brilliant. We had Easter Eggs, pamper packs, food hampers...all sorts. It really blew us away and made us feel so appreciated. Also, the Clap for Carers' on Thursday made us very emotional. It was an exceptionally unique thing we experienced and continue to do so. It was lovely to know people were thinking about us, especially in those difficult first few months.

The fact our staff all came into work and simply got on with it, is something we can't quite describe. Their dedication allowed us to work well together and keep our routine going, despite the worries and anxieties we have. Knowing that we are in it together as a team helps us to stay positive and focused, and above all, allows us to keep ourselves and others safe. Thank you to everyone for your continuous hard work at this time.

# MESSAGES OF APPRECIATION

For more messages visit:  
[comms.humber.nhs.uk/appreciation-wall](https://comms.humber.nhs.uk/appreciation-wall)



## Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust

This space brings together messages of gratitude, recognition and thanks to staff, organisations and individuals who have supported us in our response to COVID-19.

The fantastic work Psychology Assistant, Rebecca Dunning and the @HumberOPMh team are doing at Maister Lodge has had lots of positive feedback from families. "Thank you for everything you are doing"



Our team at Whitby are on the frontline of our Trust response – delivering care to COVID positive patients. They've impressed us all with their dedication and commitment to our patients and to one another.



The fantastic delivery driver was so cheerful and made our team smile in these unusual times." Our fantastic volunteer drivers are delivering weekly supplies to support staff across the Trust.

The Organisation Development team have worked with Kite Nest to 'take home and revive' bags to help staff relax and restore. These small gestures make a big difference to staff.



We have received so many wonderful gifts, it's hard to keep track! Your generosity has blown all of us here away and we simply feel so appreciated. It really helps.





Happy #InternationalNursesDay from our Primary Care Centre, Humber Centre for Forensic Psychiatry



We asked our teams to share with us how they were sharing support for their colleagues and other key workers. #NHSThankYou

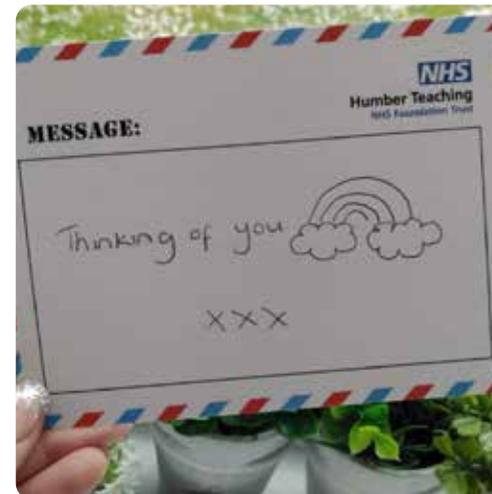
Thank you to all of the generous and creative people who have donated things that not only make NHS staff smile, but improve their working day.



Staff at Townend Court were delighted to see this inspirational message provided by Jointline and Tarmac Ltd.



The team at Malton shared their thanks for the support they've had from the community, from one another, and the wider Trust. Their work on the frontline has been fantastic. Thank you!



Our Care Mail initiative is our way of bringing joy and light on difficult days for patients and staff in our inpatient, community wards & GP surgeries. It's just one of the ways we can show thanks to our teams.

*Human needs change in times like these. It's important we pull on our creative and innovative ideas to continue to provide the highest standard of care, no matter the weather.*



# TRANSFORMING THE WAY WE WORK



Art by Eleanor Blakeston

## Connecting older adults in care with their families during the COVID-19 outbreak

When speaking to our Maister Lodge team, it came to our attention that they were making huge strides in innovation and creativity when it came to keeping older patients and their families in touch during the Coronavirus lockdown period.

We spoke to Rebecca Dunning, Psychology Assistant at Maister Lodge, about her work and why she goes the extra mile for our older patients.

Working with older adults is a privilege. Our patients have generally lived long and full lives prior to meeting us; we get the honour of hearing their stories and being a part of their lives for a small period. Dementia is often a very confusing experience, whereby people become increasingly disorientated about both themselves and their environment. Therefore a hospital admission, which would seem scary even at the best of times, suddenly has the potential of being a terrifying experience.

Our patients are rarely on this journey alone, with many being supported by their families along the way. The road to a hospital admission is often a long one – whereby families have often experienced lots of trauma and changes in their most basic roles. Many have transitioned from their role as husband or wife, son or daughter, to acting as a carer and have managed independently through difficult circumstances.

Therefore, an inpatient admission can be difficult for some families; leaving them with feelings of guilt or sadness.

The opinion at Maister Lodge has always been that families are the experts and should be treated as such. We also strongly believe, as a team, that supporting families is an essential part of our work as they will remain in our patients lives long after discharge.



COVID-19 certainly impacted our usual ways of working. Usually, we offer a combination of face to face sessions, telephone support and impromptu support following visits to the ward. Family visits are an important part of our care plans as they are essential for both our patients and their families – sometimes even the most distressed patient responds well to the familiarity and security associated with a loved one.

In the current crisis, our patients fall amongst the most vulnerable in our society due to their age, physical health history and cognitive problems. Many family members also fall into this vulnerable group. This meant that an already difficult period in someone's life could quickly be surrounded by additional anxiety and uncertainty.

At Maister Lodge, it has been our goal to provide some level of consistency, even in times without the usual visitation. This required some level of creativity to overcome various challenges – such as setting up Skype on the ward iPad, e-mailing photographs to families and posting things where technology is not accessible.

Regular updates over the telephone also allowed families to still feel included in the care of their relative and allowed us to continue to offer them some level of support. For some of our families, telephone calls from us were their only form of social contact. Further, introducing Skype calls meant that patients who struggle with the telephone could still connect with their families; offering reassurance to everyone involved that their loved ones are okay.

For those families who don't have access to this level of technology; posting out photographs, letters and cards maintained a connection between people. This works as a two way stream too – families have been e-mailing photos and videos to share with our patients and we have sent things back in return.

*After we played a recording down the phone today, he became a little emotional and said 'he wasn't sure if he was more taken aback that his wife was doing so well, or that staff are thinking of him and taking the time to include him in these moments'.*



Our ongoing engagement with families helps them feel involved in the treatment and care of their loved one. It also allows us to support them and prepare them for the future – this can include processing events that have occurred, acknowledging the difficulties they have faced, discussing options for the future and also helping people begin the grieving process.

The measures we have put in place, and the adaptations we have made during this time, are allowing us to continue with this work. In addition to this, continuing to engage families is helping provide some level of consistency in an otherwise uncertain time. For some, it has helped decrease levels of anxiety and loneliness amongst both the patients and their families.

The morale at Maister Lodge has been great, our team have continued to work hard to support one another – with everything from a cup of tea and someone to talk to when things have become overwhelming, to singing and dancing together during the high points. Everyone has shown a remarkable level of resilience and comradery in an otherwise difficult time.

Thank you to you all.



Mental Health Awareness Day at Westlands

## How our volunteers adapted their services to bring joy to staff and patients during challenging times

With the collaborative support from teams across the Trust, including our Trust charity Health Stars, our Voluntary Services team helped deliver packages of joy throughout the Coronavirus outbreak. From Easter eggs and food parcels for our staff, to Comfort Pebbles and Care Mail to our patients. We are forever grateful for the effort made to bring a smile to people's faces during this time.

The team's initial worry at the start of the COVID crisis was for the 90 older people who usually attend the team's community groups. Socially isolated and struggling with long term mental health conditions and dementia, we felt that they were amongst our most vulnerable groups.

We have various volunteers with a range of vulnerabilities, so one of our first actions was to notify all volunteers to stand down until further instructions, and to follow government advice at all times.

Early on, the supermarkets were frightening and chaotic, so we identified the people with no support network, providing them with an emergency food parcel donated by Tesco St Stephens who are one of our supporters. Of course, these parcels were distributed by our amazing volunteers.

We then came up with a plan to start

a telephone befriending service run by the volunteers. Many of our regular volunteers began befriending, so that they still feel like they are helping from home. The service has been just as beneficial for the volunteers as for our service users, who have thoroughly enjoyed the experience. A member of our team even brought their Dad on board as a new befriender, much to the delight of her Mum who says that Dad is much happier since making the calls. Even some of our Trust Governors volunteered!

Around 70 people began receiving calls twice a week. The befrienders also supported the registration for additional support when our community response services were launched. They encourage service users to use these services and also sent us a mini report at the end of each day, to let us know how our users were doing. This service has been so well received and has brought joy and comfort to many people.

*On his befriending days he is much lighter; feeling animated, bubbly and full of life. He feels like he is making a real difference.*

At first, communication was difficult for the team as we're usually very interactive, sharing problems and ideas throughout the day. However, we quickly found the benefits of these new ways of working. Of course, we were also frightened and anxious, but we knew that we had to remain strong and professional for the people relying on us.

The team continue to support the Trust in many ways, mainly through the volunteer driver service. Volunteers have a rota for sorting and delivering PPE and equipment over the weekend. They're also instrumental in getting a weekly staff food hamper out to almost 50 sites each week, which has been a huge job.

Also, we have been sending out newsletters to both volunteers and group members with useful community information, such as local shops who are delivering groceries or meals on wheels, as well as adding some fun and wellbeing focussed content for those who are staying indoors.

I'm extremely proud of the team. They stepped up and went that extra mile every day for our communities. We have had some sad news along the way, but everyone has kept going and continues to put our service users first during these challenging times.

# Providing support to children, young people and families during the COVID-19 outbreak



As a Trust, we're proud to say that the vast majority of our services continues to go ahead during the crisis, albeit in different ways. One team which continued to deliver was the ISPHNs team, which stands for Integrated Specialist Public Health Nursing service.

The service is delivered by six teams across the East Riding. These teams are made up of specialist community public health nurses, family nurse practitioners, breast feeding specialists, public health nurses, nursery nurses, health care assistants and administrators.

When speaking to the ISPHN team, we discovered why it was so important they continue to provide their services and support during this challenging time.

Our specialist community public health nurses work closely with other services, including community midwives, GPs, children's centres, early years' settings, schools and higher education settings. We also work closely with other agencies for children with complex health needs or special educational needs and disabilities to ensure they get the services and care they need.

We also provide a public health service called the Healthy Child Programme which delivers care to children, young people and families from pregnancy right through to 19 years or 25 if a young person has a complex need or disability. The Healthy Child Programme includes children's clinics for monitoring growth and development, antenatal groups, regular face to face contacts with a health professional to review child development or other health issues, breastfeeding and parenting

support, a specialist teenage parenting programme and teen drop-ins in secondary schools.

Our services can help children or young people to avoid becoming ill or requiring medical treatments further down the line. We work holistically and in partnership with parents or young people to promote all aspects of health including physical, emotional and social wellbeing. We either provide an intervention ourselves or we signpost to a more specialist service at the earliest opportunity.

Our main goal is to support children and young people to achieve the best start in life and to be healthy and safe and achieve wellbeing, which means that we work hard to ensure our services are always available when they're needed.

As our services are mainly about preventative care, we focus a lot on health promotion activity and the early identification of health need. We mostly see children and young people in universal settings, either home and school, and support them to stay healthy by choosing healthy behaviours or through health education. This is one area in which our services changed dramatically, as children were no longer going to school and we needed to adapt to these new ways of working.

ISPHNs work out in communities, in homes, in schools and in community venues and we wanted to ensure that we continued regular engagement with the population of the East Riding throughout the Coronavirus crisis. The insight we gain from working with individuals, families and communities at this time has helped to shape services moving forwards.

In line with government advice at this time, we immediately introduced social distancing techniques into our services. This meant most of our staff had to work from home and make phone calls to service users to replace routine face-to-face contacts.

For instance, School Nurses in our local schools placed a higher focus on our ChatHealth service, which is a

secure and confidential text messaging service for young people. It allows patients to easily and anonymously get in touch with a healthcare professional for advice and support, even during out of school hours. This has been especially beneficial during the crisis as it has allowed us to maintain a method of support, despite not being there face to face.

The implementation of new technology in our services has been very exciting. We're also glad that we launched our new website in January of this year, as it has given us a place to direct service users for the latest information. We also use our social media channels more than ever, as we have found it to be a creative avenue to stay in touch with people during uncertain times.

As we offer a universal service, we do not stigmatise in any way and we offer services which are visible, accessible and confidential. We want to ensure that any parent or young person in the East Riding knows we are here to support them through the crisis and beyond. We are accessible by a simple phone call or text and it remains our mission to ensure that every child, young person and parent gets the support they need to stay healthy and achieve wellbeing.

## Meet our new Positive Assets team: a group which has flourished during the Coronavirus lockdown



Les Motherby

We deliver our support out in the community mainly, so the biggest change has been the loss of face-to-face contact with clients and a switch to telephone or digital contact.

Our service has always 'reached-in' to our Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT), but we are now in the process of becoming an Individual Placement & Support (IPS) service, following the well-researched and evidenced IPS methodology, which means we will have staff based within the CMHTs.

In the beginning stages of the crisis, we recruited three Employment Specialists, who are now in the process of embedding their roles within the Teams. This process has had its hurdles and may have progressed slower than we would've liked, but we are continuously learning and adapting to the circumstances, ensuring progress is made despite the challenges this outbreak poses to us.

As a team, we place great importance in supporting people with severe and enduring mental health issues to find work that is right for them, rather than taking any job, so that the work they find is sustainable and supports their

All of our teams across the Trust have been affected in one way or another by the outbreak of the Coronavirus.

We spoke to Les Motherby, Senior Employment Specialist, to see how our Positive Assets team have been getting on and the new ways in which they have been working during this time.

The remit of Positive Assets is to support people who have accessed secondary mental health services to move into paid work, as employment is known to support recovery and the long term management of enduring mental health problems.



Amy Sheen



Emma Winter

*For those maintaining an active job search, our job has been largely focused on helping them to understand the changes in the local labour market and how to adapt accordingly.*

recovery; by offering structure, routine, increased socialisation and financial independence. That ethos has not changed, but in such an extraordinary situation such as this one, if people can consider jobs that might not totally match their ideal vocation, but would still utilise their skills, strengths and qualities, that would be encouraged.

Our service users have all experiencing this time differently. Many have continued to actively seek work, and though we have seen some industries go into a hibernation period during lockdown, others continued to thrive and actively recruit. This was reassuring for our service users.



Jackie Newton

Because interviews have largely switched from face-to-face to by telephone or digital methods such as Skype or Zoom, the team has been supporting people to prepare for interviews that way. Some have found they can take advantage by positioning notes and prompts behind the camera, allowing them to respond to interview questions more confidently.

On the other hand, there are some service users who have elected to suspend their job search; especially in cases where childcare was an issue when the schools closed. In those cases, it's been about maintaining contact, giving emotional support, and encouraging them to learn new skills that will be useful when they do resume their job search. We also encourage



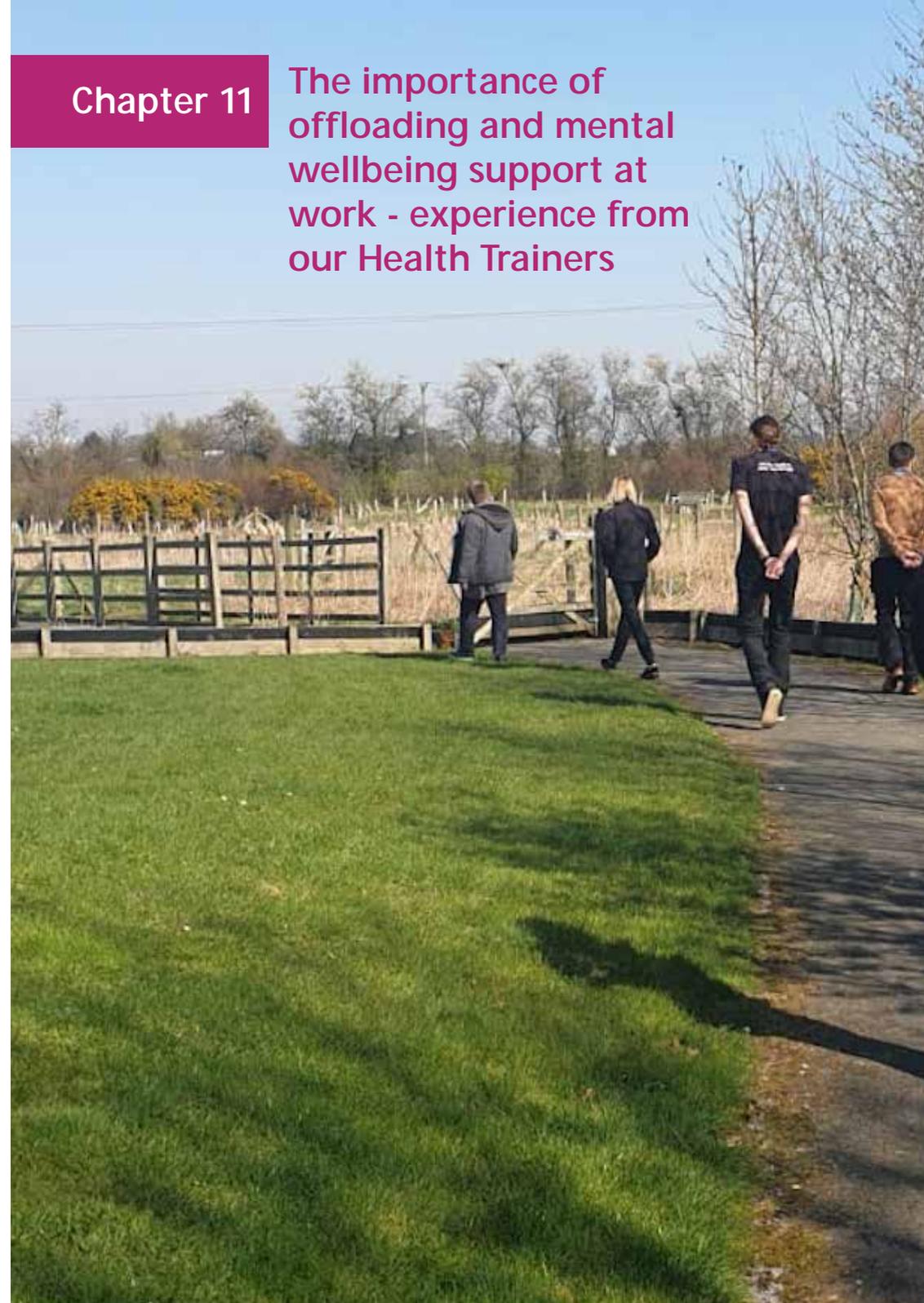
Rachel Forsey

them to use this time to review their CV or their online jobsite profiles. In a similar vein, we had mixed experiences when it came to social distancing. Some of the service users we support were quite comfortable with self-isolation and found that lockdown wasn't such a shock to them. The challenge for these clients will be in restarting the work we'd done to build people's confidence to engage with the community. We have been working hard to prepare the best ways to support them when that time comes.

Moving forward, our goal is to get our new members of staff embedded into the Community Mental Health Teams, so they can work with the multi-disciplinary teams to support service users to find work, and in turn purpose and financial independence.

## Chapter 11

# The importance of offloading and mental wellbeing support at work - experience from our Health Trainers



We understand that COVID-19 caused a great deal of anxiety and worry for our staff members, particularly those working on the frontline and those who had to self-isolate. Because of this, we quickly prioritised enhancing staff support initiatives and our mental health and wellbeing provisions. This included building a Health and Wellbeing Hub on the staff intranet, which brings together all of the latest advice and guidance.

Another prevalent methodology we have turned to during this time, is the importance of offloading and having a safe space to share your concerns. We spoke to Kayleigh Barrington from our Health Trainers team, who told us all about what offloading is, why it's central to supporting staff wellbeing and how the team have enhanced their ways of working during this time.

Offloading is a way to ensure all of your queries and concerns are tackled before leaving work; to make sure you are not carrying your worries home with you and thinking about work all of the time. It's important to ensure that some element of work/life balanced is maintained, even during understandably busy times.

The Health Trainers team have really utilised technology at this time, particularly the use of Skype. This not only enables us to stay in touch with those isolating or working remotely, but it also has helped us set up some vital offloading activities into our daily routines.

We have a daily Skype session which allows us to discuss any updates, new guidance or strategies and also gives our staff an opportunity to bring up any questions or concerns they have that day.

Our smaller community teams, who might not see many of the team in clinical settings, have also been setting aside 15 minutes per day to have a cup of tea and a Skype to catch up and check in with each other.



*Team workout session on Skype!*

What has been a really fun addition to the team is the introduction of daily staff workouts. They're not too intense, but they're designed to keep our bodies moving during a time we may be doing a lot of sitting at desks.

We introduced video call workouts on Skype and encourage our teams to take daily walks during our lunch breaks – where the only rule is that you cannot talk about work. Oh, and to social distance when walking with your colleagues, of course!

In addition to this, our managers reinforced the notion that it's more important than ever to take your lunch break, and have made it a 'rule' of sorts that this is something you need to do every day. It's important that our staff have a break throughout the day to switch off, get some fresh air, and get away from their computer or mobile phone.

As a team, we acknowledge that the work we are doing is intense. We take call after call, speaking with many of our service users, who are quite often in heavy and emotionally draining circumstances. We know that this can take a toll.

It's crucial our staff take their breaks, to refresh, recharge and breathe. We want to ensure they have some positive conversations throughout their day, and know that they have a team of supportive colleagues around them should they need to offload. To support this even further, we implemented fortnightly supervisions for staff wellbeing. This is a catch up with everyone in the team

on a one to one basis, to discuss their workload and pressures, to check in with how they are doing and most importantly, to ensure they are also coping well outside of work.

At the end of the day, there are only so many measures you can put in place during this extremely busy time. The most important thing is to make sure your team know that you are open to talk. We remind our team daily that their managers welcome a chat, and we aim to be honest in our updates. We believe this shows our staff that we are acknowledging their anxieties, taking on board their concerns and being understanding and empathetic during these uncertain circumstances.

We are exceptionally proud of how resilient and adaptable our team have been throughout this time and we have learned a lot! We will be carrying a lot of these learnings forward into our practice, even after the Coronavirus outbreak is over.

We would like to take this opportunity to also send a huge thank you to our staff, all across the Trust, for their hard work, dedication and commitment to the NHS during these challenging times.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, it was immediately apparent that the Trust needed to completely transform our IT services and digital provision to ensure that our colleagues could continue to operate safely both at work and from home.

As part of this, the IT department supports over 3,500 people who need access to clinical systems, corporate systems and files from the drive, from any location. When the Coronavirus outbreak occurred, the ability to access such information remotely needed to happen in just a few days, when in actuality this had been planned to take a number of years to achieve.

When thinking about our IT Service Desk response, we were lucky in some respects, as we were already working in a remote way. Our team, although usually based at the Willerby Hill site in person, always access staff computers and laptops remotely to solve any problems in the first instance. This means that when the Coronavirus outbreak happened, the technology that we use could smoothly be adapted to work from any location.

Alongside the majority of the team working from home, we also maintained a small team working on site, which meant that anyone with larger problems could book appointments to have their equipment checked in person.

This allowed the team to continue business as usual and maintain the high quality of service that we strive for every day, although following new social distancing guidelines.

We're proud to say that, although some things may have felt like a big adjustment for our IT Service Desk team members, it could be argued that our wider staff members haven't noticed any change. This is the biggest sign of achievement to us, as it means we have not had to reduce the quality of our support in any way.

Something that has been invaluable is the provision of Skype, Microsoft Teams and video conferencing at this time. This has allowed our staff to maintain contact with one another, boosting morale across the Trust, and helping to support continued productivity across teams.

It was important that we provided clear guidance and additional support for these platforms at this time, to ensure our staff felt confident using them and could get the most out of them for their specific needs. Some of our teams have been simply using them for team

catch ups, others for innovative service offerings such as online baby massage classes. It's been quite impressive to see how these resources are being used to support different areas of the Trust.

We have also seen significant changes to the workings of our Clinical Systems Team. This included making sure that training for the use of Clinical Systems still went ahead. One option would've been to cancel these trainings altogether, but the team worked hard to ensure this wasn't the case and swiftly adapted the training to be provided online. Since then, the team have delivered all regular training, with the addition of extra sessions to address current needs, multiple times a day.

As a result, clinical teams continue to feel confident when using digital technologies at work and home. It also means that, by rolling out existing technologies to a wider pool of staff within a short space of time, our teams have been able to make quick and informed decisions with big positive impact.

When looking at the Business Intelligence team, it is clear that the priority would be how we could best support all staff during this challenging time. We understood that, while speedy decision making was vital, this period was going to be a marathon, not a sprint. This meant that the team began preparing for long term changes to be

rolled out in the months to come. The team focused on a wide variety of things from supporting healthy remote working, such as providing office equipment in staff members' homes, to the quality of our staff members' internet connectivity and how this could possibly be improved. As you can imagine, in Business Intelligence and Clinical Systems, a lot of the applications are data-hungry and use a lot of broadband, so it's all about how we can best support our staff for the long term in this way too.

IT services and support have stepped up incredibly to this challenge; there's been a lot of flexibility and willingness to support right from the very beginning. In terms of feedback from our staff working from home, overall this has been very positive and things are working well. As we know, remote working is not plain sailing for everyone, but we're proud to be part of a team which can help to make it as smooth a process as possible for our staff.

It's just so important that we continue to review how best we can support our staff and maintain that human-to-human contact with one another and also with our service users. This is significant to both our physical and mental health during challenging times and it's our top priority to maintain that high level of support going into the next phase of the process.



*People always say to have goals to live your dream but I already am. I would do this job for free if I needed to. It's hands down the most rewarding thing I have ever done.*



Humber Allied Health Professionals

## REFLECTING ON THE SECOND WAVE



## Ensuring the continuation of our Adult Autism Services during COVID-19

The outbreak of Coronavirus brought with it changes to care for many children and adults across the country. Many of our teams worked creatively to make sure we were able to provide continued access to services throughout the pandemic, using new and innovative solutions.

We spoke to Michelle Field, Operational Lead for Adult Autism Diagnostic Services, to learn about how their service adapted and changed over the course of the last year, and why they're proud to have completed more assessments than they thought possible.

The Adult Autism Service diagnoses autism in adults. Referrals usually come from GPs or mental health teams, and during the pandemic we have seen a slight increase in the amount of these referrals.

Once referred, the individual would attend one or two face-to-face diagnostic assessment sessions, followed by a feedback session.

As the country went into the first lockdown, we worked proactively in engaging with other teams across Yorkshire to discuss what we could do and how best we could manage referrals in new ways. Working together in this way was really helpful as we

had a good level of governance and understanding about the quality of diagnostics across the local area.

We had a lot going on at the time – some team members were on secondment for improving accessibility to Autism services for example – and I think we easily could've panicked and pulled people away from important projects to support this change, but we didn't. If anything, we made ourselves more available to other services for additional support as required.

We worked with a charity called Matthew's Hub, who helped us develop a process through which we could continue to connect with patients on our waiting list, ensuring they received support before diagnosis. This joint working has helped service user mental health and wellbeing during this difficult time.

The pandemic has been challenging for everyone, however, some autistic

people really struggled during the pandemic because of increased social isolation and added anxiety about the future or their safety. We work really hard to ensure any individuals who came for assessment had reputable information about the virus and how to keep themselves safe and well, both physically and mentally, during the pandemic. We also wrote letters of support to enable people to exceed the guidance on exercise allowance to support their mental health and maintain home placements.

The next step we took was to work proactively to determine how best we could continue the provision of services online using Upstream. Our IT department were very helpful in the onboarding process and also in taking on our feedback when we felt certain features could be improved for our use specifically.

Once we felt we had a good understanding of how best we could use the software with our service users, we developed a Standard Operating Procedure for video assessments which helped support staff further and even inspire other teams to do the same. Over time, we used this knowledge to further adapt our ways of working. One thing we noticed was that technical options posed a challenge for complex diagnosis, so we began to figure out ways to provide face-to-face sessions

safely. This sometimes meant that one clinician would meet the service user in person, and dial in any other professionals who were required to support, helping us to limit the amount of people attending appointments. Patients adapted to this change of service really well. We always asked them if they were happy to proceed with their assessment digitally, and we found that some people needed reassurances that the quality of care would be the same and that a diagnosis would still be possible where relevant, so we made sure that we gave them all of the information we had and explained the process in full. This tended to put most people's concerns at ease and meant we were able to continue our assessments virtually.

The technology element is something we will definitely continue into the future. On the whole, we have learned that our patients prefer it. Dealing with anxiety around new environments and the pressure of attending appointments or adapting their routine are some common struggles for Autistic people. Having our appointments virtually has been a relief for many, as they have been able to dial in from the comfort of their own home.

As the second wave began, the team found that working from home became a challenge; the limited opportunity for informal supervision was particularly missed. Also, innovative projects such as service development work usually would benefit from us working together in person, and it was something we missed.

However, there were also times that we were grateful for the ongoing opportunity to work from home. A large portion of our job includes writing lengthy reports after assessment, which requires a great deal of focus. We all found that working from home allowed us to do this more productively, and I think that the biggest thing I have learned during this time is the importance of hybrid working.

We have acknowledged that both working from the office and working from home have their advantages and that we can work flexibly in a way which benefits the team as a whole. We know how important it is to understand a member of staff's individual needs and how they work best at certain points in time.



*Flexible working has been brilliant for us. I think it's a learning curve we all had to get used to in the beginning, but one which has been essential in delivering our services so well at this time.*

It's also so important to personalise your service in similar ways. If one service user has more complex needs than another, it's about navigating their needs and ensuring that you are delivering the service in a way that best suits that individual. Having a one rule fits all approach doesn't benefit staff or our service users, and that's a lesson I'm grateful to be taking with us into the future.

The thing I'm most proud of is the team's positive attitude and their determination in continuing to provide our service.

We took proactive steps to ensure our prioritisation criteria would continue to meet the needs of our service users, in line with an expected increase in referrals, and we adopted a strategy which would ensure we could carry on supporting our service users during uncertain times. I think this was pivotal in what I believe is a great and ongoing positive achievement for our team, and I can't thank everyone enough because without their hard work and dedication, it wouldn't have been possible.

The whole team have been incredible but I would like to give a special mention to Sushie Dobbinson, whose work has been paramount in ensuring the support has been there for both our service users and staff.



Overall, it was a pleasure to see how the team adapted so quickly and how they have maintained a good pace throughout. Since the first lockdown, we have delivered around 200 digital assessments. This is extremely impressive given that we're a fairly small team and that we had to take the time to adapt our service in a way that not only meant we could stay open, but that we could continue to deliver our service to the highest standard. I think we can all be really proud of ourselves.

## Lessons learned during COVID-19 with Malton Community Hospital

We spoke to the team at the Fitzwilliam Ward in Malton during the first wave to hear about the challenges they faced during the first UK lockdown last March. Almost a whole year has passed since then, and as we continue to grapple with the effects of Coronavirus on a global scale. We caught up with Fiona Scott, Ward Clerk, to hear about what's happened since then and what COVID-19 has taught them, that they are taking into the future.

When the second wave approached I think we felt very similarly to how I imagine most people felt – a sense of dread, but at the same time, it is what it is. We knew what a rise in cases means for the country and for our work and it was about just getting on with it and continuing to do our jobs.

We have gradually adapted to new ways of working since the first wave so there wasn't the same fear of the unknown the second time around. We knew what we needed to do to keep our patients safe and that's exactly what we were going to do.

I think one of the benefits of working during the second wave is the vaccine. We were very lucky and had the vaccine quite early on. It gives you a sense of hope whilst also making you feel even more confident about being safe and protecting the people around you.

*"I think the NHS have done themselves proud in getting the vaccine to us so quickly and in such an organised way. I feel very positive about the entire experience and I couldn't be prouder to work for the NHS."*

I'm also very proud of the way in which our team have adapted. It was all so quick and urgent at the beginning, but over time we finessed our routine and all of the changes we made have continued and I think a lot of them will continue into the future as well.

Only time will tell how long we will be working in these ways, but for us at the moment, this is our 'new normal'. We are accustomed to the new ways of working and there have been some benefits.

We are all more tech savvy and have embraced digital ways for working. Microsoft Teams was something that there was uncertainty about in

beginning, but now we couldn't feel better about it. It helps us connect with people easily and brings teams together. It has also supported things like recruitment during times of no face to face appointments.

*"We've really shown ourselves how adaptable we can be and how well we can work under pressure. Every time we have been met with a challenge we have adapted and continued to do everything we can to keep our patients safe."*

Supporting each other has been vital at this time. I am so thankful for the people I have around me at work. We're a close-knit team and always want to lift one another up when we might be having a bad day. Our Ward Manager, Janet Howe, is brilliant and has supported us all endlessly throughout this experience.

We have also felt very supported by other teams during this time. Our Infection Prevention and Control have been exceptionally supportive and we know they are always there at the end of the phone if we need anything. Patient feedback has been great at this time as well.

During the second lockdown, it was apparent that most of our patients had a better understanding of what was

happening and why certain restrictions were in place, such as us wearing masks and no visitation from family and friends.

Restricting visiting was always a tough one, but we found new ways to cope. We have cordless telephones and have done everything we can to make sure that connection is maintained in new ways.

When thinking about what I have learned from this whole experience, I would say I have learned to take each day as it comes. No one knows when or if this will all be over, so it's better to think about the here and now.

I also want to say how grateful I am to have been able to come into work during this time; I don't think I would've coped half as well if I didn't have my daily routine to keep me busy. I'm proud of my team and how each of them have continued to come into work, even when things were quite frightening and uncertain, and how we have continued to maintain a high quality of care throughout all of the ups and downs along the way.

I feel part of a really strong team, and I am appreciative of them and their efforts every day.

# How the Crisis Pad continue to provide support to those who need it most during lockdown

The Crisis Pad is a safe place for people aged 18 and above in Hull and the East Riding, who are experiencing emotional crisis or distress and who require a safe, calm environment to aid their recovery.

Working in partnership with Humbercare, we support adults in providing a sanctuary for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.

We spoke to **Cassy Lawson**, Service Manager at the Crisis Pad, who told us all about the service and how the team managed to continue the provision of service during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Working in the Crisis Pad involves providing out of hours mental health support from 6pm until 2am daily. Individual are referred to us by the Mental Health Response Service and we provide low level interventions to prevent the need for further intervention and hospitalisation.

When the pandemic began, we looked at our service and worked collaboratively to discuss how we could stay open whilst also keeping ourselves and our service users safe. We saw similar services across the country starting to close, but we knew there must be a way we could continue to work with our service users, albeit perhaps in a different way.

We were dedicated to exploring new avenues alongside our commissioners

and discussing the different possibilities. At times it felt like change was going to be impossible, but when we began to develop a strategy we knew we would work it out together as a team.

We're very proud of those steps we took at the very beginning in order to stay open and to continue to provide support to those who need it.

When we look at the number of people we've seen during the pandemic, things haven't changed too much to what we experienced prior. However, in terms of service delivery, many things changed and at a rapid pace. In a lot of ways, it felt like we had created a brand new service overnight.

We used to do a lot of shared activities with service users, including things



like crafts and board games, but unfortunately these were no longer possible due to infection prevention and control reasons. We worked really hard to find new ways of keeping service users engaged, without compromising staff and patient safety.

Operationally we also had to make a vast number of changes in the very beginning, as the building itself can only hold a certain amount of people to maintain social distancing. This meant that we had to adapt our service and create two different time slots throughout the evening, in which service users can come and receive support. While this change was challenging at first, staff have since fed back that this is a huge improvement, and one that they did not expect. The two groups per evening approach has allowed for

improved one-to-one interventions, as staff have found themselves with more time to pay their undivided attention to each individual, rather than working with one larger group throughout the entire evening.

We're pleased to have seen so many positive changes come as a result of these circumstances; it has been rewarding to hear from both staff and service users how much they recognise the value of our service, and we will take many learnings along with us into the future.





COVID-19 vaccination centre team

*This whole experience has been tough for everybody, but humans can do tough things.*

As I look back on the second wave, I realise how far we've come and that really is credit to the fantastic team at the Crisis Pad. Without their ideas and commitment to the service, we may have had to close like so many others across the country.

We've established a routine that we now consider our 'new normal'. Many of the changes made at the beginning have continued as they're working so well, and we will likely continue a lot of these elements into the future, even when the effects of Coronavirus are no longer as prominent.

I think I speak on behalf of the team when I say we're all just really grateful to our service users for being

understanding and working with us on this to make sure we're doing things as well as we possibly can. We work really transparently with them and their feedback throughout the last year has been, and will continue to be, very important.

If I could give one piece of advice to other teams who are facing the ongoing challenges of COVID-19, it would be to work in collaboration with your service users. We always explain the why and the how, we don't expect them to always understand right away but we never just say 'this is how it is and that is that'. We believe we work so well as a team and as a service because of this ongoing collaboration, and we know from service user feedback that it is

equally appreciated on both sides. We're also just really thankful to have been able to continue coming into work at this time. None of us could imagine having to work from home and we are glad we managed to still see our colleagues at work and feel at least one sense of normalcy at this time.

If I have learned anything over the past year it's that nothing has to be set in stone. We completely changed our service delivery and it turned out really well. That's something we just never expected to be possible, and we certainly didn't expect it to be such a positive experience. It just goes to show that you don't know what you're capable of until you have little choice.

This experience has also reaffirmed the importance of our service and how much mental health services in the area are needed and valued. Thank you to every member of the team, the Trust and the commissioning group who made it all possible for us, and to Mental Health Response Service and Infection Prevention and Control teams for their ongoing support, we couldn't have done any of this without the collaboration and effort dedicated by each and every one of you.

## How our Dietetics teams have adapted during COVID-19

Our Paediatric Dietetic Service supports the specialised in nutritional needs for children aged 0-18 years with disease-related nutritional concerns, such as allergies, nutrition support, enteral feeding, faltering growth and nutrition deficiencies across the East Riding of Yorkshire.

We spoke to Vanessa Smith, Professional Lead for Dietetics, and Nazrana Quareshy, Specialist Dietician, to find out more about the team, how their working lives have changed during pandemic and what keeps them going when things get tough.

The first impact that we saw from the pandemic was that quite a few of our allergy patients were finding it hard to get products they needed due to stockpiling. We quickly responded by arranging prescriptions and worked with the nutritional representatives in the government, who helped with emergency stocks of things like baby formula.

The biggest change initially was the move to telephone appointments. Whilst it was necessary initially, we quickly realised that it wasn't right for everyone, so we started to think outside of the box in terms of what we could deliver in a COVID safe way. We began using video consultations and working with Health Visitors, whilst also inviting certain individuals to meet face to face when necessary.

We just adapted as time went on and reviewed things regularly so we could continuously improve our approach.

Although these challenges were difficult at first, there were some positive outcomes such as improved contact with other teams and increased opportunities to connect with others and attend meetings in other pathways which has remained useful for our service.

Multi-agency working has been an amazing change for us. We now work with different people from hospitals across the patch, and while we did have those connections before the pandemic, it now feels much more seamless and like we have all really pulled together to get things done.



We're now communicating better than ever before. For example, we have built stronger working relationships with Health Visitors and the Nursing team to support one another and provide information where needed.

The introduction of Microsoft Teams has enabled us to bring together these teams easily, without a need to travel and book meetings. We can now discuss best ways of moving forwards together, breaking down barriers and allowing us to get things done at pace. Working more electronically is definitely something that we will continue. It's been great to move more online with our work, and supporting the environment too!

One thing we were unsure about in the beginning was how we would be able to continue to support the students that we have on placement during this time. We were concerned about the added pressure and being able to deliver the same experience as we would in 'normal circumstances'.

We decided to take it slowly by meeting with them online and we provided them with the information and a plan of how it could work if they were happy to proceed. We left the call feeling relieved. Students were still enthusiastic about learning and were happy to see we had come prepared with a roadmap to manage expectations.

Since then, we have been so pleased that we didn't let anything get in the way of them joining us. Students have let us know how much they're learning and are enjoying the unexpected variety in what they're doing.



*Voluntary Services Easter Competition Winner*

As these circumstances have continued for longer than I think any of us imagined, it's important to look forwards and ensure our future workforce are equipped with a broad range of skills and are up to date with the current ways of working in their field.

Now we've found a new routine, we are feeling pretty good, and proud of how quickly we adapted. The team is very supportive of one another when working remotely and that's been vital to our wellbeing at this time.

Like all NHS staff we also have personal lives that have been affected in different ways by this pandemic, so having that support from your team has been wonderful.

We've also had lots of positive feedback from service users. It turns out that patients simply appreciate the fact that our service has remained open and that we're helping them find alternative ways of managing their health during these uncertain times.

Most of our patients didn't want to continue face to face appointments due to fear of transmission, so they were very excited by the video consultations and telephone appointments available. This shift has been more positive than we could've hoped.

It's also been nice to see patients take ownership and be more on board and involved with their care. Not being able to come in for face-to-face appointments and rely on us for different things has changed how they view things. They're realising that they can do things at home and take more responsibility in ensuring their condition is monitored and reported to us over time.

The main thing we have learned during the second wave is how resilient NHS staff really are, and also, how small teams can achieve so much, even when they have a lot going on outside of work. We are all committed to providing the highest standards of care to our patients and that is what has pulled us through.



## What the Swale Ward team have learned throughout the second wave of Coronavirus

Our Swale Ward team is based at the Humber Centre and is made up of Nurses, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Healthcare Assistants, Social Workers, Occupational Therapists, Art Therapists, a Ward Clerk, and the Primary Care team, including GPs and Speech and Language Therapy.

The team is the regional gatekeeper for personality disorder patients requiring consideration of secure hospital admission or transfer to community care. They undertake assessments for Humber and Yorkshire patients that are placed in hospitals and prisons around the country, make recommendations and can offer hospital admission to our specialist unit. On the unit, we have both an acute assessment ward and treatment rehabilitation ward where we offer a patient-centred holistic approach with a number of therapy modalities.

The team's focus is to help patients with their symptoms, which tend to be highly complex. To develop pathways on a patient's journey, the team liaise early with families, other hospitals, prisons and community teams.

We spoke to Dr Mohammad Qadri, Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist and Medical Psychotherapist, specialising in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, about what life has been like on Swale Ward during the pandemic.

In the very beginning, we had to respond very quickly and adapt to change almost overnight. Certain aspects of our service had to change, and our patients were no longer able

to leave the ward for rehabilitation activities or enjoy visits with family and loved ones.

We quickly noticed that this could be a challenge, as the mainstay of treatment is based on relational factors and engaging in therapy. A loss of purposeful activity and access to therapies and positive relationships could result in potential relapse and thereby delays in progressing in their care.

It was important that we explained the reasons for this change to our patients and gained their understanding, whilst also ensuring that a high quality of care was met in different ways.

Our nursing staff in particular were phenomenal and really showed their dedication to the work they do. They picked up where others had to step away due to limiting staff access on the ward and ensured our patients were still maintaining a routine even without these additional interactions. They found new ways for patients to enjoy the activities they usually do and established new ways of working. It was really impressive to see how they rose to the challenge so quickly.

I think it's also worth bearing in mind that, not only did we have to adapt quickly, but the situation was also moving quickly outside of the ward. As the government made quick decisions to respond to the pandemic we didn't always have answers to the questions patients had, making it very difficult for us to set expectations with our patients. We didn't always know how the ever-changing situation would impact patient pathways, and this was something we had to deal with carefully.

We were being led by government restrictions and had to work hard to manage and remove any anxieties both our patients and our staff were facing. It was all about working closely together as a team to ensure we put the right foot forward, and fortunately I think that is exactly what we did.

As we moved into the second wave, we knew we had been here before. Lockdown was no longer an unknown concept and not only did our staff know how to better manage things, but our patients were much more understanding and adaptable. They continued to work closely with us which I think is a real testament to the hard work our staff put in the first time around, and the relationships they built throughout these uncertain times.

However, there's no denying that staff were tired. The first wave was exhausting both inside of work and outside in our personal lives, and I'm sure we all felt that. In a lot of ways, you felt like you were just beginning to recover from the first wave when the second one arrived.

Our team again showed such incredible amounts of resilience, and they just got on with it. They ensured that patient care wasn't interrupted and went above and beyond to ensure our patients were cared for during another trying period.

What we found really important was having a sense of community on the ward. This was developed and adopted by the team and this is something we're very proud of and will continue in the future.



Something which we do very well on Swale is that, when people come onto the ward, the first thing we do is work out together where the patient sees their pathway developing and in which community. We want to get a good

understanding about what they want to do or talk about, and we want them to know from the beginning that they will be involved in their care, and that their voice matters.

From that point forwards, we involve them in all decision making related to their care. Transparency is key for us, we don't hide things away from them and we keep them informed as much as we possibly can. There's something to be said for this as I feel it makes them respect us that little bit more and enables them to feel comfortable that any decisions we do have to make, are in their best interests; that fundamentally we have the same goals. We introduced the early involvement of step-down community teams during this time, which is something we hope to carry on into the future as it's working really well. Delays were, and continue to be, inevitable during the pandemic. Patient pathways are therefore affected, as accommodation arrangements and hospital transfers may need to be changed. We found that ensuring everyone was involved and on the same page from the very beginning helped minimise any delays from our side at the very least.

We prepare in advance, identify what challenges may arise, inform the patient of these potential eventualities and then, in the long run, expectations are managed more effectively and the patient ultimately feels like they are at the heart of their care.

Another way in which I feel we improved our overall service at this time was

the introduction of increased reflective practice for staff, led by the Psychology team. We're acutely aware that our staff need breaks and time off of the ward, but this was a chance for us to really show them that we cared about their emotional wellbeing as well. We began offering training every other week, which was a time for staff to step away from the ward and prioritise their own thoughts and feelings. It was also an opportunity for them to talk about difficult cases, get insights from colleagues, and participate in educational teaching about things like mental resilience.

This introduction was much appreciated by the team, who were now missing out on team days we used to host, and it's something we will certainly continue post-Covid.

Consistent development and training are essential for staff, especially during the tough times as we noted in each of the lockdowns, but we hope our staff at Swale recognise that their work during this time has not only been appreciated but has been vital and surpassed all our expectations. I would like to thank them for that, they really have been inspiring in many ways.

## In Conclusion

### Note from the Trust Governors

Patients, service users and their families and carers have experienced huge change at a remarkable pace throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We have been lucky enough to talk with these groups during this challenging time. What we have learnt is how our frontline clinical teams and our staff behind the scenes have worked with service users and carers to transform our services; enabling treatment, support and care to continue to be delivered safely and effectively despite the demanding circumstances.

To our staff, thank you all so very much for being dynamic and agile in transforming services and support systems at such speed and scale. Thank you to our service users, carers and volunteers, you played a huge role in transforming care and have shown commitment above and beyond.

Finally, thank you to the organisations that have worked in partnership with the Trust, including those providing vital PPE and other generous donations. We wish you all the best moving forwards into the next chapter.

### Note from the Trust Board

It is without a doubt that these past few months have been a challenging time for us all. The resilience and bravery shown by our staff has been nothing short of incredible.

Looking to the future, we feel hopeful knowing that we are heading into the next chapter with a strong workforce who, when things get tough, rise to the challenge and show what is really special and unique about our Trust.

The COVID-19 pandemic, while being difficult and extremely sad at times, has also taught us a lot about our staff, our services and our Trust as a whole. We are confident that we will take these learnings and continue to develop and make changes that will positively impact the communities we serve.

Thank you to every single one of you for your hard work, it has not gone unnoticed and we are extremely grateful every day.

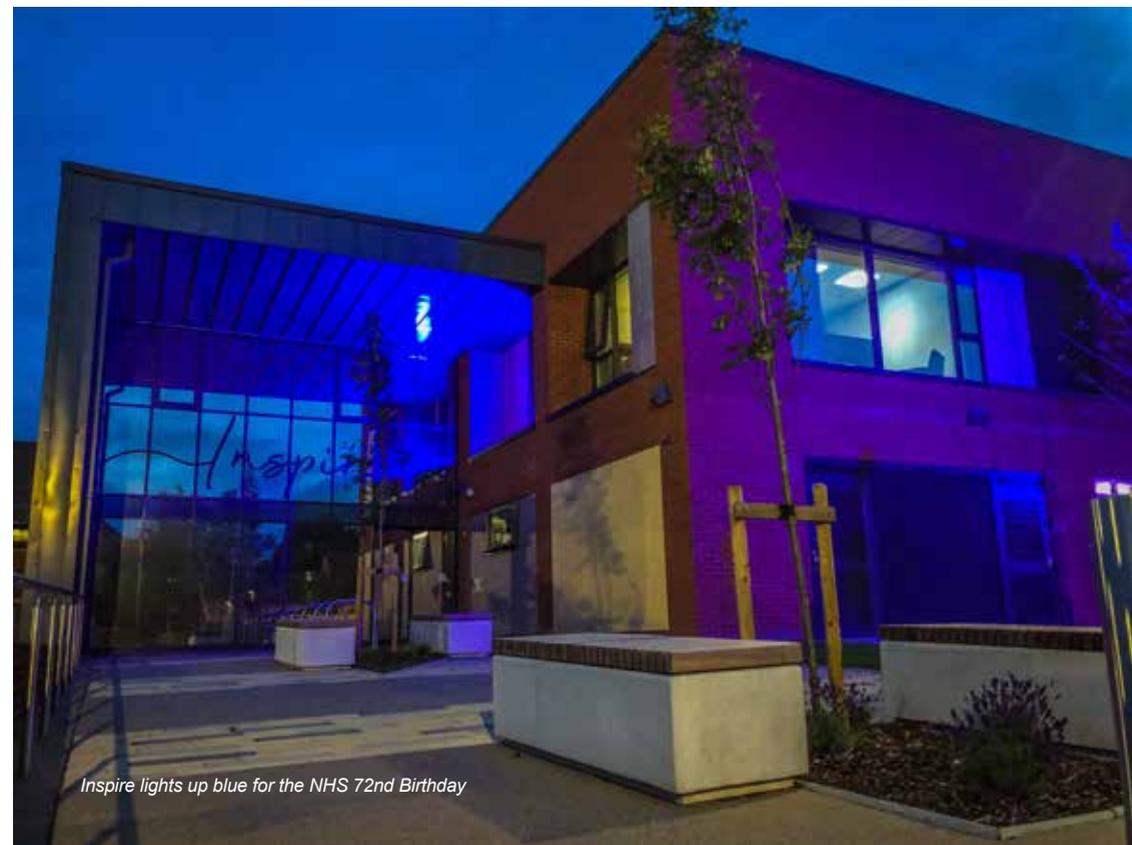
**Not Going Out** – a poem written by Bob Long.

*I don't feel 'inspired'  
to write a poem about  
not being allowed  
to go out.*

*Quite frankly I'm inclined to internally  
shout  
loudly  
how frustrating this  
Corona virus  
has interfered with  
our 'want-to-be'  
here and there*

*enjoying the company  
and happy to share  
moments in  
time;  
perverse 'pantomime'  
that lifts the spirit;  
that reminds 'I was there!'*

*Yes, let's do the things  
that make us love living,  
and cause us to share the joys in the 'giving!'  
Call out the 'can-do!' Throw out the 'no!'  
Grab hold of life!  
Demand LOVE to grow!*



*Inspire lights up blue for the NHS 72nd Birthday*

