

## Operational updates

### Overview of operational activity

We have continued to experience very significant demand and pressure on our urgent and emergency care pathways over the winter period, like much of the NHS.

At SFH, the urgent and emergency care demand growth continues to exceed regional and national positions, and we continue to work with our system partners to understand and mitigate for this. Our colleagues continue to work relentlessly in caring for our patients in as timely and dignified manner as possible in very challenging circumstances.

Many of the challenges have been publicised in the media as we have worked hard to convey a clear message to our local population that our services are under pressure and to attend ED appropriately, recognising several other available options.

Local system partners continue to work well together to maintain relatively low levels of patients within our hospitals who no longer require our specialist care (referred to as patients that are medically safe for transfer). This helps us to turn around our acute beds as quickly as possible, however, despite our efforts we are still seeing patients waiting 12 hours for admission within our ED.

In terms of planned care, we have continued to reduce the number of long wait patients, increased our performance against the (returning to prominence) incomplete 18-week RTT metric which is a constitutional standard to ensure patients receive non-emergency consultant-led treatment within 18-weeks of referral. We have also made significant progress improving our diagnostic waiting time (DM01) performance to now be above our operational plan position. Our cancer performance remains strong for the 28-day faster diagnostic standard with our main area of focus being on the 62-day treatment standard which we were just below the interim standard of 70% in November 2024 (latest reported position).

Our Integrated Performance Report provides more detail on areas of strong and challenged performance together with the key actions we are taking to improve the timeliness of care we offer to patients.

In December, King's Mill Hospital featured in a national ITV news report about a surge in flu patients in intensive care after NHS figures showed the number of people in hospital with flu had jumped by 41% in a week – this was four times higher than at the same point last year. Health leaders warned the situation could get "worse before it gets better" as Christmas and festive gatherings took place. ITV spoke to the partner of a previously fit and healthy 42-year-old father who had been placed on a breathing machine on our critical care unit, as a result of flu.

The Sky News team visited us at the start of January to speak with patients and colleagues about the challenges of winter pressures and also this year's flu season. They interviewed one of our patients who recently recovered from flu, sharing her personal experience, as well as Respiratory Consultant Dr Mark Roberts, who highlighted the gravity of flu, ways to stay protected, and how our hospital is managing cases this winter.

Chief Nurse Phil Bolton also discussed discharges and the relationship between health and social care. This piece was broadcast just days before East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EMAS) declared a critical incident for the first time as a result of significant patient demand, pressure within local hospitals, and flooding across the East Midlands.

Later in January we warned our local community that flu still posed a risk despite a drop in the number of patients hospitalised with the virus. Our hospitals continued to experience pressure from a range of respiratory viruses including flu, Covid-19 and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), as well as norovirus.

During December, the Trust treated 402 flu-positive patients – more than eight times the 47 people it treated in November. There were 50 patients with flu in King's Mill Hospital on 30 December, but by 15 January this figure had dropped to 14.

You can read more on our website at [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/news/2025/january/flu-warning-despite-drop-in-hospital-cases](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/news/2025/january/flu-warning-despite-drop-in-hospital-cases).

## **Partnership updates**

Leaders from health, social care, education and the third sector came together for an ICS event Lifting Our Gaze on 28<sup>th</sup> November. SFH was represented by Dr Helena Clements, Consultant Paediatrician, and Paula Longden, from the Strategy and Partnerships Team.

The event included learning from local successes in special educational needs and disability (SEND), integrated neighbourhood teams and collaborating with faith organisations. It highlighted key leadership messages about the benefits of achieving genuine coproduction, the importance of authenticity and passion, practical examples of how to build community connections and learning and sharing about what works in our local neighbourhoods.

It also provided all attendees with a vital networking, connecting and relationship-building opportunity that will support the continued development of the system during 2025 and beyond.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> January the Trust joined ATTFE, a community and educational partner, at its #InThisTogether stakeholder event to celebrate its successes from 2024 and learn more about its strategy for 2025 and beyond.

SFH Strategy and Partnership Team presented at the event, highlighting the benefits of collaborative working to both organisations which, in 2024, included promoting and celebrating volunteering within Sherwood and local community groups and providing opportunities for ATTFE learners to develop skills.

Read the latest ICS Newsletter at <https://healthandcarenotts.co.uk/ics-newsletter-january-2025>.

## **Other Trust updates**

### **DAISY award winner**

A huge well done to Demi Lee, Deputy Sister on Ward 23, who was presented with a DAISY award after being nominated by multiple colleagues.

Colleagues witnessed Demi grow from a newly-qualified nurse to her present role and consistently demonstrating the Trust's CARE values in everything she does.

Demi was described as going above and beyond to ensure patients are cared for physically and emotionally. They explained that she 'has a massive impact on the ward' and that Demi's 'kindness, compassion and leadership is exceptional' she is a 'good listener, hearing not only the words but also what lies behind the words'.

If you have received outstanding care yourself, or witnessed one of your colleagues delivering outstanding care and want to share your thanks, you can nominate a Nurse or Midwife by visiting the DAISY award page on our website at [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/work-for-us/staff-recognition/daisy-awards/](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/work-for-us/staff-recognition/daisy-awards/).

### **Sisters celebrate TULIP awards**

A huge well done to our two latest TULIP award winners, sisters Georgia and Hayley!

Both are Health Care Assistants on Ward 12 at King's Mill Hospital and were presented with TULIP awards after receiving heart-warming nominations from a colleague and patient's relative.

Hayley joined SFH in 2020 and Georgia made a career change to join the team in 2022 when Hayley recommended the Trust as a great place to work.

Georgia received a touching nomination from a patient's family member who said: "Georgia was so kind and gentle with my mum, making sure she was not in pain, asking if she was feeling comfortable and explaining what she was going to do and why."

The family member explained that the care received made the patient feel "secure and safe in a stressful environment" and that Georgia "made a huge difference and helped [the patient's] recovery."

Hayley's nomination came from a colleague who described Hayley as "an absolute ray of sunshine" who goes "above and beyond every day for our patients."

Hayley gives her all to her role, even when not in work, including going to another hospital to visit a close relative and coming away with ideas on how to make improvements on the ward demonstrating "the lengths she will go to for the benefit of our patients. She is truly remarkable."

A massive thank you to you both for your excellent care and commitment to your role, colleagues and patients. You're a real credit to the Trust.

TULIP stands for Touching Unique Lives in Practice and is used to recognise the amazing work and care that our colleagues provide in and out of the hospital daily. Anyone can submit a recognition - colleagues, patients, and members of the public – via our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/work-for-us/staff-recognition/tulip-awards](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/work-for-us/staff-recognition/tulip-awards).

### **Specialist Anaesthetist receives two awards**

Congratulations to Dr Rob Fleming, Specialist Anaesthetist at the Trust, who has been awarded with the Anniversary Medal and Kathleen Ferguson Award for Inclusivity by the Association of Anaesthetists.

The Kathleen Ferguson Award is awarded to those promoting diversity, equity and inclusion, while the Anniversary Medal is awarded to those who have held office or made significant contributions to the Association.

Dr Fleming has been acknowledged for being an advocate for Specialist, Associate Specialist and Specialty (SAS) doctors and for holding the Association Board's first dedicated SAS seat.

Specialist, Associate Specialist, and Speciality (SAS) doctors include doctors in permanent posts with at least four years' experience as a doctor, two of those in their relevant specialty.

The common route for a doctor is to continue in a formal training programme, working towards becoming a consultant or GP, which requires them to work across multiple organisations.

SAS doctors develop their career within one organisation, with many focusing more on direct patient care rather than clinical and non-clinical responsibilities required of a consultant. Others are involved in teaching, service development, research, or management and leadership.

SAS doctors work in all hospital specialties and include doctors working at every level. Specialists, like Rob, are senior and experienced doctors who work independently alongside consultants. Rob has spent many years working as a national representative for SAS doctors, an often-overlooked group which contains a high number of international medical graduates working in the NHS.

After completing an initial period of training in Anaesthesia, Dr Fleming decided to continue his career as an anaesthetist outside of the more common training route. He became a Specialty Doctor in 2012 in Nottingham, moving to Sherwood Forest Hospitals in 2022 and progressed to become a Specialist Anaesthetist in 2023.

He is currently the interim lead for obstetric anaesthesia at the trust alongside other leadership and educational roles.

### **Neonatal unit benefits from donated games console**

Thank you to the Emily Harris Foundation, who have purchased an interactive Medical Gaming Cart complete with an Xbox series S console and games. The cart is for use by the siblings and families of babies admitted to the Neonatal unit.

Clare Harris, Manager of the Emily Harris Foundation, decided to use funds from the Foundation to purchase the cart after she saw them being used on the children's ward at the hospital. It is hoped that the cart will help to give children visiting the ward a sense of normality and distraction from the hospital environment.

### **Promoting the NHS App**

Drop-in sessions have been taking place regularly at our three hospital sites to promote the NHS App and Patients Know Best to our own colleagues, patients and visitors. You can find out more about our digital services on our website at [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/for-patients-visitors/nhs-app/](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/for-patients-visitors/nhs-app/).

### **Children to benefit from Mansfield 103.2 FM's annual toy appeal**

Thank you to local businesses and individuals who supported Mansfield 103.2's annual King's Mill Toy appeal. The appeal, which is in its 13<sup>th</sup> year, resulted in a huge number of toys being donated and more than £3,000 being raised for Children's Services.

### **Sexual Safety Charter**

As signatories to the NHS Sexual Safety Charter, we are continuing to reaffirm our zero-tolerance approach to any unwanted, inappropriate, or harmful sexual behaviours in the workplace.

This commitment ensures staff feel safe, respected, and valued, creating an environment where everyone can thrive.

By prioritising safety and inclusivity, we're not only fostering a positive workplace culture but also making Sherwood Forest Hospital a great place to work.

Our current job vacancies are on our website at [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/work-for-us/our-vacancies](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/work-for-us/our-vacancies).

## **CQC Maternity Survey results 2023**

The CQC Maternity Survey 2023 results identified several areas to improve on, and colleagues on the unit have been working hard to make changes and ensure a positive experience for all who stay on the maternity unit.

Changes include:

- Mandatory training for maternity staff on listening to women and supporting choice
- Introducing a Lead Midwife for induction of labour who has led multiple improvements to the service
- Increasing the number of drug trolleys available so birthing people are not waiting for pain relief
- Making our Lime Green infant feeding team available in the mornings to provide support on the wards
- Starting a Birth Afterthoughts Clinic

The results of the 2024 CQC Maternity Survey were released at the end of 2024, and we're pleased to say they have revealed extremely positive results for our maternity services. We'll be sharing details internally and externally shortly. Well done to all colleagues involved in contributing to these scores.

## **Hospital unit helps to speed up patients' treatment this winter**

The Surgical Same Day Emergency Care (SSDEC) Unit at King's Mill Hospital, which helps to reduce waiting times and overnight hospital admissions, assessed more than 1,300 patients in its first six months.

The unit enables patients with urgent or emergency surgical conditions to be assessed, have a treatment plan in place and be discharged the same day, without the need for a hospital admission.

Common conditions assessed and treated on the unit are skin abscesses, symptomatic gallstones, wound-related problems, and most cases of acute abdominal pain.

Before the unit opened, on average around 70% of patients with surgical conditions spent more than four hours in the Emergency Department (ED), and now, this number is averaging at less than an hour.

The addition of the unit means that patients are seen in the right place as quickly as possible, and it also helps to free up space in the hospital's busy ED.

## **New MRI Hybrid Unit arrives**

Christmas came early when our new MRI Hybrid Unit was delivered to King's Mill Hospital in December.

This new machine will have a very positive effect on the service we can provide for patients by increasing MRI capacity onsite, allowing us to image selected inpatients as well as out-patients in a more timely and efficient manner, aiding quicker diagnosis and increasing the number of patients that can be accommodated treated and discharged.

### **Phoenix team celebrates third anniversary**

The Trust's Maternity Tobacco Dependency Treatment Service, the Phoenix team recently celebrated its three-year service milestone.

Since the Phoenix team was established, it has contributed to a reduction in smoking at the time of birth from 18.3% to just less than 10%.

To celebrate this fantastic achievement, a group of smoke-free babies who have benefitted from this service were invited to King's Mill Hospital's Faith Centre on Tuesday 26 November along with members of the Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership (MNVP) and the senior leadership team.

The families shared some anecdotes from their smoke-free journeys and gave some very positive feedback about the Phoenix team with one mum telling us "the team were so lovely, they motivated me to cut down and eventually quit all without any judgement."

A future action for the team will be to set up a peer support group, this has been based upon the families' suggestions for service improvement.

### **Mansfield Community Diagnostic Centre update**

More than 50 people attended an event to mark Mansfield Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) delivering 50,000 tests in its first year.

Patients, residents and NHS staff were among those who joined Mansfield Mayor Andy Abrahams to hear the latest about the project at Mansfield Community Hospital.

It also celebrated a significant milestone with a "first spade in the ground" ceremony, marking the official start of construction for Nottinghamshire's first purpose-built CDC.

### **Expect Respect, Not Abuse**

Patients and visitors were reminded that hospital staff deserve respect and not abuse, as winter pressures began to intensify at Sherwood Forest Hospitals Emergency Department.

As the Trust faced increasing demand as winter approaches, we urged patients and visitors to treat hospital staff with respect, emphasising that abuse - whether verbal or physical - will not be tolerated.

We're encouraging Trust colleagues to report any incidents of physical or verbal abuse so that appropriate action can be taken, including refusing treatment or pursuing legal steps. Staff who report incidents will also be offered the support they deserve.

## **Trust risk ratings reviewed**

The Board Assurance Framework (BAF) Principal Risk 7 – ‘A major disruptive incident’ – for which the Risk Committee is the lead committee, has been scrutinised by the Trust’s Risk Committee. Committee members discussed the risk scores and assurance ratings but decided that they should remain unchanged.

Committee members also agreed to propose changes to the BAF assurance levels titles, the details of which will be included when the full and updated Board Assurance Framework (BAF) is presented at the Public Meeting of the Trust’s Board of Directors in February.