

the
Entrance

issue 12 June 2009

Grosvenor Wing

Main entrance

unveiled



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Celebrating St George's day

Babies born at the hospital, Tooting, on April 23 were presented with a special gift as part of the hospital's celebrations to mark St George's Day.

'That's not my dragon' children's books were given out by midwives on the Delivery Suite and the Carmen Suite, the hospital's midwifery-led birthing unit. A total of 20 of the 'touchy-feely' board books were kindly donated by Usbourne, the publisher, at the request of John Lewis, Kingston.

Pictured above are parents Richard Stammers and Suraya Randawa who received

a book for their son William from Matron of the Delivery Suite, Cordelia Chan-Graschitz.

Many staff marked the day by wearing red silk roses provided by the Friends of St George's charity, which raised £570, while special St George's Day cakes were sold in Peabody's coffee shop on behalf of St George's Hospital Charity. The Marks & Spencer café in the main entrance provided tea and cakes for a staff tea party

hosted by Chief Executive David Astley. The day also saw the annual conference of the St George's Nurses League, an organisation for past and present nurses, and followed by a service in the hospital's chapel.

Ann Whiting of the Friends of St George's who sold red roses to raise funds.

Chief Executive David Astley said: "We hope these parents will enjoy sharing these very attractive dragon books with their children as they grow. We are grateful to all the companies whose goodwill and generosity made all the different St George's Day activities possible."

Lois Thomas, Senior Staff Nurse in A&E, Isabelle Sherren, Staff Nurse on McEntee Ward, and Georgina Wilcock, Staff Nurse on PICU, enjoy a St George's Day tea with Chief Executive David Astley.



*St George's Grove development



The first phase of the St George's Grove Accommodation project has now been completed and residents have started to move in.

The project to redevelop the Grove, in partnership with Thames Valley Housing Association and construction company Inspace Partnerships, will provide 557 flats to rent and 78 shared ownership flats for St George's staff and other key-workers.

Just over a year after a formal ceremony to unveil a plaque marking the laying of the foundations, the project to create modern and affordable accommodation is well underway. The second phase will see current Grove residents transferring across from old accommodation blocks to new in the middle of June.

The final phase will be completed by early August 2009; the remaining nine blocks of the old Grove will be demolished and the new blocks built with a completion for the whole site early 2011.

A series of roadshows was held at St George's Hospital in March and April to inform staff about the new facilities at the Grove. Information is also available via the Trust's Careers and Vacancies section of its website.

Staff can apply for the new accommodation through the Accommodation Office based on the St George's Hospital site in Ingleby House.

Here staff will be given the appropriate forms to be completed together with a form that must also be completed by their senior line manager.

The Facilities team together with Human Resources and Recruitment will then follow an allocations procedure to allocate staff accommodation based on a weighted set of criteria which is not just based on salary but includes staff scarcity, turnover rate, and healthcare role and travelling distance.



 If you are interested, then please contact the Accommodation Team on ext 2297.

A word from David



“The range of content in this bumper issue of *the gazette* is a reflection of the fantastic work that is going on across the Trust.

The dedication of St George's staff never fails to amaze me and is key to our success. We certainly have plenty to celebrate this month including the opening of the new Grosvenor Wing entrance, international recognition for our Infection Control Team and the Nurses' Day awards.

Our staff are also committed to helping those overseas and *the gazette* throws the spotlight on work that has gone on in Iraq and Nepal.

Although there is a great deal of good news to report, I am also keen to highlight one important area where we need to improve. The annual staff survey by the Healthcare Commission published at the end of March revealed a rise in the number of St George's respondents reporting bullying and harassment, particularly staff-on-staff bullying. The increase put St George's as one of the worst Trusts in England for reporting of this kind of behaviour. The Trust and its trade unions are committed to working together to tackle all forms of bullying and I would urge those who experience or witness bullying behaviour to report it or seek support from line managers, HR or union managers.

Main entrance unveiled



Beryl Ellis' *St George and the Dragon* sculpture sits within the doors of the main entrance.

After a year of construction and diversions, the newly refurbished Grosvenor Wing main entrance reopened its doors in March 2009.

This was the first refurbishment of the entrance since St George's was relocated to the Tooting site in 1973 from Hyde Park Corner.

In March 2006 a survey was conducted by the hospital to establish what patients, staff and visitors thought of the main entrance. There was an overwhelming agreement that the entrance needed to be identified more strongly with St George's and that it had to create a strong presence and be a focal point for the hospital.

The resulting £2.5m project, generously funded by St George's Hospital Charity, has led to a total redesign of the gardens and interior providing services for patients, visitors and staff. Improvements include a new Patient Transport Lounge and a bigger and more comfortable seating area for visitors. The central location of the reception desk is designed to help patients and visitors to more easily find their way around the hospital. The Grosvenor Wing entrance is also the site of an *M&S Simply Food* store and *Café*, the first of its kind in a UK hospital. A complete overhaul of the external landscaping has created an area that provides new pathways and

clear sight lines to direct people naturally and safely to the entrance from and there is also a large seating area and improved facilities for patient and visitor drop off.



Visitors to the hospital walk past Rebecca Salter's artwork *Calligraphy of Light*.

The entrance was officially opened by local MP, Sadiq Khan, in an event held in April. Mr Khan was impressed with the refurbishment. He said, "I was born in St George's, as were my daughters. When the main entrance was last refurbished I was three years old! It is an excellent hospital but the main entrance needed an overhaul. The investment from St George's Hospital Charity means we have a main entrance fit for the patients, visitors and staff of our hospital."

St George's Chair, Naaz Coker, said: "The new main entrance is a clear sign

that St George's means business and reflects our commitment to improving the experience for all our users including patients, visitors and staff. The research carried out in 2006 showed that patients and staff wanted improved access to the hospital and better retail facilities in the main entrance. The new entrance delivers on both areas."

The entrance was officially opened by local MP, Sadiq Khan, in an event held on 24 April. Mr Khan was impressed with the refurbishment. He said, "I was born in St George's, as were my daughters. When the main entrance was last refurbished I was three years old! It is an excellent hospital but the main entrance needed an overhaul. The investment from St George's Hospital Charity means we have a main entrance fit for the patients, visitors and staff of our hospital."

The opening event was attended by both staff and guests including Mayor of Wandsworth, Councillor John Farebrother. The event was hosted by Naaz Coker, St George's Healthcare NHS Trust Chairman, and Gill Noble, Chairman, St George's Hospital Charity.

St George's reports financial surplus

For the second year in succession St George's has achieved an operating surplus. The Trust achieved a surplus of £1.7m for the 2008/09 financial year, 0.3 per cent of the hospital's annual turnover.

The financial stability of the Trust is crucial in maintaining St George's dual position as a local healthcare provider and also that of a leading teaching hospital providing education to healthcare professionals of the future.

Director of Finance, Richard Eley, said: "This achievement is the result of hard work by all the staff at the Trust, ensuring value in everything they do and identifying cost savings while at the same time maintaining the highest standards of patient care.

"Tough financial challenges still lie ahead in the next financial year when we must prove we can maintain financial stability, to support our application for Foundation Trust status in 2010.

"With a committed team and a very robust financial framework the future looks good for St George's."

In 2007 St George's received loans from the Department of Health totalling £34m to finance the deficits it had accumulated in the previous four years. The loans are repayable in full by March 2012. Since the Trust has stabilised its financial position it has been able to repay £10m of these loans over the last two financial years. Further repayments of £8m per year are due next year and the following two years to finally eliminate this debt.

“This achievement is the result of hard work by all the staff at the Trust, ensuring value in everything they do and identifying cost savings...”



Chair of St George's Hospital Charity, Gill Noble, chats to MP for Tooting, Sadiq Khan, and Chair of St George's, Naaz Coker, at the official opening.



Chief Executive, David Astley, shows Mayor of Wandsworth, Councillor John Farebrother, the entrance at its official opening.



The new main entrance from outside the hospital.



Guests at the official opening of the main entrance last month chat in front of Edward Bawden's painting of St George's Hospital, Hyde Park.

▲ landmark event

500,000th pacemaker implantation makes national news



Pacing Service Manager Sue Jones with patient Kalwant Sidhu.

A landmark event in the history of treatment of heart arrhythmias took place in St George's in April as the 500,000th pacemaker was implanted within the Trust's state-of-the-art catheter laboratories.

The operation was featured on the BBC One O'Clock News and on the News section of the BBC website.

Patient Kalwant Sidhu, 52, from Camberley in Surrey, had been referred to St George's from Frimley Park Hospital after experiencing blackouts because his heart was not beating strongly enough to keep blood circulating. He had a biventricular ICD fitted,



BBC Health correspondent Jane Hughes reports the 500,000th pacemaker implantation from the catheter labs at St George's.

one of the latest generation of pacemakers. This is now synchronising his heart beat and is capable of delivering a shock to bring his heart back into rhythm in the event of a dangerous arrhythmia occurring.

During the surgical procedure, which was done under a local anaesthetic, Cardiologist and Electro-physiologist Dr Mark Gallagher implanted three wires into Mr Sidhu's heart and fitted a device weighing around 68 grams under the skin of his chest. By contrast the first pacemaker patient was implanted at St George's in 1958 with a device the size of a pram wheel. As well as being much smaller, today's pacemakers are software-controlled to allow the devices to be programmed from a small external computer, and can even allow doctors to monitor the device remotely via the internet, reducing the number of follow-up hospital visits needed by a patient.

Dr David Ward, Senior Consultant Cardiologist and Electro-physiologist, said: "Implanting pacemakers has become almost routine in UK, but there is nothing routine about it for the patients. Mr Sidhu represents one of the tens of thousands of people in

Britain who have had their lives improved thanks to a pacemaker and this milestone should be celebrated."

It is possible to be exact about the total number of procedures performed in the UK thanks to the Central Cardiac Audit

Database, which was instigated in 1977 as the National Pacing Database. Launched by the Department of Health and Heart Rhythm UK (formerly British Pacing Group) – a group dedicated to professional and scientific support for everyone involved in implantation and follow-up of cardiac pacemakers – the database collates data on cardiac surgery and outcomes.

Sue Jones, Pacing and ICD Service Manager at St George's and spokesperson for Heart Rhythm UK said; "The 500,000th pacemaker implant demonstrates an enormous advance in implantable device technology compared to what was available 50 years ago. Advances in communication with the implanted devices now allow us to monitor the patient via a telephone link, improving patient convenience and safety by offering the possibility of fewer hospital visits but with greater surveillance of device performance."

Also celebrating the landmark was the Arrhythmia Alliance, the coalition body dedicated to raising public and professional awareness of cardiac arrhythmias.

Professor John Camm, Professor of the Division of Cardiac and Vascular Sciences at St George's University of London, and President of the Arrhythmia Alliance said: "This is a landmark for the way we care for people with heart rhythm irregularities. We need to get better at diagnosing and treating patients earlier but I strongly believe we'll get to one million implants in less than half the time it took to get to 500,000."

New DVD highlights major incident plan

A major incident can be anything from an act of terrorism, a train or plane crash, a biological problem or even a motorway pile up where many people are injured and need emergency treatment.

In the event of a disaster which would send large numbers of casualties to St George's, the hospital has a major incident plan which it would follow. A short film has been made to introduce staff to this plan, and to outline the Trust's response.

The film was devised by the Trust's Major Incident Steering Group in conjunction with a professional film company, Campaign Productions, with patients are played by some of St George's regular volunteers.

The DVD has been part of staff induction since March. Special screenings of the DVD will also be held for all current staff.

A&E Consultant, Daniel Wallis, said: "It is essential that all staff know what to do in the event of a major incident. Our smooth handling of any such event depends on individuals following the plans which have been prepared. This DVD gives a basic introduction to key topics and we hope it will encourage people to go the full plan to find out more."

If you would like to show a copy of the DVD at a Care Group meeting or similar staff meeting, please email Emergency Planning Liaison Officer Hazel Glead at hazel.glead@stgeorges.nhs.uk

Tues 9 June • Lecture Theatre B
1.15pm, 1.30pm, 1.45pm

Wed 10 June • Lecture Theatre B
12.45pm, 1.00pm, 1.15pm

Tues 16 June • Lecture Theatre C
1.45pm, 2.00pm, 2.15pm

Wed 17 June • Lecture Theatre A
1.45pm, 2.00pm, 2.15pm

Thurs 18 June • Lecture Theatre C
1.15pm, 1.30pm, 1.45pm

Wed 24 June • Lecture Theatre B
1.00pm, 1.15pm, 1.30pm

Thurs 25 June • Lecture Theatre C
1.45pm, 2.00pm, 2.15pm



The title page of the major incident DVD.

Mitie changes planned for catering and cleaning



Plans to refurbish the Lanesborough Wing restaurant and the St James' Wing coffee shop, and improve standards in cleaning, are underway following the Trust's appointment of a new catering and domestic services provider.

Mitie began a seven-year contract in April to supply retail catering, patient catering, hospitality, and function services across the whole of the Trust, and the cleaning services for all areas except Atkinson Morley Wing.

Under the new contract there will be significant changes, not least of which is the re-design of the Lanesborough Wing restaurant and kitchens. The current dining area will be returned to Trust as clinical space and the old kitchens transformed into a new seating area, including separate dining areas for staff and visitors, a kids' zone and internet access points plus the art gallery will be retained. Six different counters will provide an enticing choice of hot and cold food and beverages, each attracting customers with its own style and range of products.

Jenni Doman, General Manager in Estates and Facilities, explained: "Our current kitchens are over large as they were designed to provide a food service for the whole hospital. We now only prepare meals for staff and visitors on site and this means we can make better use of the space.

"This redevelopment, which will start late summer and finish by early 2010, will maximise use of the space and modernise the facilities offered. We are confident this will meet the demands of existing customers and attract those who currently don't use the restaurant.



An artist's impression of the seating area planned for Lanesborough Wing (top) and new food retail area (below).

The St James' Wing coffee shop will also undergo a transformation with plans to bring in a branded coffee shop, new seating for the café, outpatients waiting area and pharmacy area and a new desk for the volunteers providing an information service.

There are also plans to upgrade the Atkinson Morley Wing restaurant, provide a trolley service to the perimeter areas and a branded coffee cart to the Lanesborough Wing Outpatients area.

The new cleaning contract will enable the Trust to meet the National Standards for Cleanliness 2007. Improvements include a new helpdesk which will provide an online system for logging and tracking requests, increased management and supervision seven days a week, better auditing of performance, increased checks on public toilets, a dedicated group of relief staff and investment into new equipment.

Catering and Domestic duties will be clearly segregated to ensure that both food hygiene and infection control procedures are followed and that patients have the added reassurance that the cleaning staff are not also serving food.

Jenni adds: "We will have a Mitie contract director on site for the duration of the contract overseeing everything, which should facilitate increased communication and understanding. Mitie is an established name for provision of catering and cleaning

to all sectors of business, and has a very good reputation for training and retaining staff."

These developments will contribute to achieving goals under the *Transforming St George's* programme.

Director for Mitie Health and Hygiene, David Booth, said: "We are delighted to have been awarded the contract to provide domestic and catering services at St George's and are looking forward to working closely with the Trust over coming years.

"Our ambition is to deliver the very highest standard of service to everyone that uses the hospital through a great highly trained and motivated team. We are also investing along with the Trust in developing exciting new catering facilities that will provide a wide range of food choices throughout the day and become the social hub of the hospital."

Counting down to EWTD

The European Working Time Directive (EWTD) comes into force on August 1 and the Trust must be 100 per cent compliant with the new legislation when it is enforced.

The EWTD is a European law seeking to protect the health and safety of workers. The new rule limits the number of hours that doctors are allowed to work over an average week, ensuring adequate rest, particularly after 'on call' shifts. This aims to improve the patient experience and safety, and create a better working environment for staff.

The work being done by the Trust to ensure compliance includes new rota re-design and recruiting to additional posts, ensuring that the hospital is staffed adequately, and that doctors are not required to work beyond a 48-hour week.

Extra training for Advanced Nurse Practitioners is being supported, enhancing their roles in areas like prescribing, so they can take on more clinical responsibility. The Hospital at Night Team is also being reviewed to ensure adequate staffing during the busy out-of-hours periods.

"Staff can support the hospital in this area," said Patrick Mitchell, Chief Operating Officer, "It is crucial that we make sure as much diagnostic and treatment work is completed in the daytime to reduce the burden of work on night staff when there are fewer support and senior staff around to support the clinical teams on site".

For more information on EWTD contact Matthew Barker, EWTD Project Lead, on ext 4701.

Meet Sarah Henderson, Macmillan Nurse Specialist in urological cancers



“I work with two other cancer nurses to provide a service for urological cancers. This is mostly for men’s cancers but also women with kidney and bladder cancers.

A varied role

When I came into this post in 1998 I was the only urology oncology nurse in the Trust and covered prostate, bladder, kidney, testicular and penile cancers. There are now three of us so our roles are divided by tumour type. I am team leader and my main responsibilities lie with kidney and penile tumours, although as a team we support all patients with a diagnosis of a urological cancer.

“I’m part of a team running a service for penile cancer which is for patients from a large area of south east England, from Dorset all the way along the south coast to Kent. It is a very rare cancer affecting only about 450 men each year. As a result men and their families can feel very isolated and I have funding from Macmillan and another charity, the Orchid Appeal, to hold a day for these patients to provide them with information and to find a way to create an on-going support group. This is a project I’m planning at the moment.

“I do sometimes wonder how I ended up working in this area. I worked on a urology ward as a student nurse and really enjoyed it. The camaraderie between the staff was great and you got to know the patients well. I really enjoy the variety of my job.

Macmillan Award

My patients can be quite young, men in their 20s with testicular cancer, or anyone up to the very elderly. Some have to have very complex surgery; for others, treatment is simpler. I might be on the wards speaking to patients who have had surgery for penile or kidney cancer. I can be in outpatient clinics running my own follow up clinic or seeing patients who



have been newly diagnosed with cancer. I work in day surgery twice a month carrying out surveillance for bladder cancer. I also liaise with patients and their families by telephone.

“My role as a Nurse Specialist also involves educating others - nurses and patients - about urological cancers. I speak at conferences and events and sometimes to the media about men’s cancers. I am involved with the Prostate Cancer Charity and was the chair of the oncology group of the British Association of Urological Nurses.

“My work with penile cancer patients was recently recognised by Macmillan. I was nominated for an Action for London

Award 2009 by colleagues at St George’s. I was unable to pick up the award, which was for Excellence in Clinical Practice, in person but June Allen, who is the Lead Cancer Nurse, collected it on my behalf. It was one of the awards presented at Meet Macmillan which was a regional event on May 21 for Macmillan supporters and professionals from London and the south east. It is a real honour to get this.

“I’ve also been under the spotlight as I am one of the staff with a profile on the Trust’s website. I hope it will encourage junior nurses and those thinking of training to see where a career in nursing can go.”



To see Sarah’s profile on the website and other staff profiles, visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/workingprofiles.asp

Patrick Mitchell, Chief Operating Officer

What is the role of the Chief Operating Officer?

→The role is to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the hospital. The job ranges from daily problem-solving through to forward-planning what services St George's should have and how they should be run. I have three Divisional Directors of Operations who work with senior managers – people like Clinical Directors, General Managers and Matrons – running services on a day-to-day basis which is a great and crucial support to my role. My job is to have the right people in the right place to deliver good patient care in a safe environment. Creating good management teams is very important to ensure everyone is rowing in the same direction and I've really appreciated being supported by some very experienced and capable people. Once you have good teams in place then things like budgets and targets tend to take care of themselves. My role is to look ahead, to keep scanning the horizon for trouble, but also to watch what is happening now and step in when things when they look like they may need help and support.

What are your key achievements since being in post?

→Getting to know St George's was the first step, getting a sense of the organisation and its direction. I love new places and new people and I've really enjoyed discovering all the different corners of the hospital and the work that goes on. There is a lot of positive change already happening and my role is to push forward things which are a priority, such as improving the process for ensuring beds on wards for A&E patients, and that we have sufficient outpatient and diagnostic capacity.

Another job has been reviewing our clinical spaces and developing a three-year capital programme to prioritise work including co-locating services, expanding capacity where required such as in acute medicine and children's services. These things are important for future developments such as becoming a major trauma centre, hyper-acute stroke unit, or developing plans for a women's and children's hospital.

What do you see as your priorities for the next twelve months?

→Creating the role of Divisional Chairs – senior clinicians who will play a major role in shaping the divisional services with their



Patrick Mitchell joined St George's in October 2008 as Interim Chief Operating Officer, a position which became permanent in early February this year. After seven months in post, he is impressed by the teamwork at St George's and confident in its ability to transform.

respective management teams - has been important. I want to see more development of clinical leaders, doctors who lead on improving and developing services. These decisions need to be taken as close to patients as possible. This is something I feel very passionately about and have always worked this way in other Trusts.

Rolling out the iCLIP programme, the new IT infrastructure for St George's, in a way which avoids any complications experienced by other Trusts will also be important. iCLIP will replace some of our major IT systems - PAS, EPR and systems in A&E - as well as bringing in new electronic ways of doing things we do on paper now. I want to ensure any roll out is taken step by step and as far as possible, allows the system to be tailored to meet our needs. I also want to make sure for our patients and everyone working here that we do not mess up on implementation and that we move forward very carefully, testing everything as much as possible before we flick any switches to move to the new system.

Recruitment is a key issue for St George's and I am now chair of steering group on this, looking where resources are needed, what kind of staff are short in supply, and how to attract people to work here. This is a key issue for the operation of the hospital. We cannot keep asking people to work another shift to cover for staff we are lacking.

I am keen to continue to build a stronger working relationship with unions and their

representatives as this is essential for a healthy working environment. I have also been supportive of staff representation in my previous roles in other London Trusts and hope to continue to foster such as working culture here. Staff need to know that their interests are being properly represented throughout the organisations decision making processes.

What is going to help the Trust achieve success?

→Good teamwork; both within the Trust and with our neighbouring hospitals to ensure our patients are diagnosed, treated and rehabilitated in the right place. St George's is already good at networking with other organisation which is great. I've found St George's a very friendly place and people generally recognise the strengths that exist when people work together cooperatively.

Also, we need to focus on improving patient care and patient experience. This is everyone's job and I am impressed with what I have seen so far but believe we can do more. Showing that we care about what we do for those we serve does not cost anything but provides so much for both those being treated and those providing the service - and in achieving this we will achieve a great many other benefits. For example, the work done by the Transformation team to change the way we book appointments will improve the patient's experience at the beginning of their journey but it will also reduce numbers of missed and cancelled appointments, and therefore get better use of our resources.

What, in your opinion, are the main challenges for the Trust?

→Finance is a challenge but not an insurmountable one. We need to bring in more income to help us balance the 2009/10 budget. We are already increasing the amount of work we do so that is a good sign we can earn our way of our financial challenges. We have work to do on reducing our length of stay where that is safe and appropriate for patients.

What do you do to relax?

→I'm a keen traveller and I have an interest in photography. My office wall has pictures of some of my trips abroad. I've travelled widely with more recent trips to South America, Australia and New Zealand, Japan, Cambodia and Vietnam. I'd love to go on a major safari to Tanzania and Botswana. I also run fairly regularly.



Infection Control team wins international award

St George's Infection Control Team has won second prize in the international Oxoid Infection Control Team of the Year Awards, designed to recognise and reward those who are making a real difference to improve standards of infection control within hospitals worldwide.

The team has effectively reduced hospital infections through changes of working practices, broader team work with colleagues from other departments, and scrupulous attention to detail. The sustained effort of the St George's team over a number of years, combined with new initiatives, was cited by the judges as worthy of recognition.

Changes to systems, processes and accountability also helped to reduce infections this year. Updating of clinical management guidelines, regular deep clean initiatives, and the introduction of new activities and initiatives such as the 'C. diff ward round' – involving Infection Control team members, Matrons, Antibiotic Pharmacists and Estates Managers – were significant factors in the reduction of C. diff infections.

The judges were also impressed by the Trust's continued reduction in MRSA bacteraemia – St George's ended 2008/09 with just 13 confirmed cases, 43 per cent lower than last year.

The Awards are supported by the Hospital

The Infection Control team.

Infection Society, the Infection Prevention Society, the Association of Medical Microbiologists, and the International Federation of Infection Control. The judging panel is made up of representatives from each of these associations together with other experts in infection control.

The top prize went to Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust and third place was awarded to Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust.

Dr Geraldine Walters, Director of Nursing and Infection Control, said:

"This award is fantastic recognition for the team here at St George's. Thanks to the dedication of staff across the Trust, our MRSA rate is now the third lowest of any teaching hospital in England and we reduced our *Clostridium difficile* rate by over 77 per cent this year, which ranks the Trust in the top six acute hospital's in London.

"Our patients can be confident that we do everything we can to protect them from infection, and will continue to devise and introduce new activities and initiatives to further improve infection control measures at St George's."

The team will receive the award and a cheque for £1,000 at an awards presentation and celebration dinner on June 2.

In Iraq...

Graham Smith, Consultant Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon has recently returned from Baghdad where he trained more than fifty Iraqi surgeons as part of a training programme run by British charity International Medical Corps.

Graham spent just over a week in the Iraqi capital passing on his expertise to surgeons in specialist head, neck and facial surgery.

In the last two decades, at least 20,000 of Iraq's 35,000 registered doctors have left the country. As a result of this massive brain drain and the lack of knowledge of international standards, Iraqis today lack a health system that adequately addresses their needs, from primary healthcare to hospital treatment.

To reverse the problem, International Medical Corps is currently implementing a country-wide Continuing Medical Education/Continuing Professional Development (CME/CPD) programme for physicians and administrators. This involves about 45 physicians from the US and the UK with different specialties, who travel to Iraq to train their Iraqi counterparts.

...and Nepal

Zahid Mukhtar, consultant paediatric surgeon and Joanna Stanwell, specialist registrar in paediatric surgery at St George's Hospital have recently returned from a two week charity surgical camp in Nepal.

The camp is part of Health Partnership Nepal Medical and Surgical Camps 2009; which is a partnership between St George's University and Nepal Medical College, Kathmandu.

An outbuilding of Trishuli District Hospital in Nepal which was previously used only for



Mr Zahid Mukhtar teaches Ritesh, a Nepali registrar, how to perform a paediatric inguinal herniotomy in Trishuli District Hospital.



Graham Smith is pictured, centre, with two trainee doctors.

Along with three other surgeons funded by the Norman Rowe International Educational Foundation, Graham was proud to pass on urgently needed knowledge and skills. He says, "It was a great privilege to visit Baghdad and be able to teach new skills and up to date management to the Iraqi doctors involved. Everyone that we worked with was very friendly and receptive to the programme."

Director of International Medical Corps UK Peter Medway was delighted with the outcome of the project, commenting, "We've had some tremendously positive feedback from the Iraqi doctors who participated. Graham is a credit to St George's Hospital and we're extremely grateful for the significant contribution he has made to the Iraqi healthcare workers we partner."

minor procedures was transformed into a theatre complex with two theatres, one for adults and one for paediatric services. The team was made up of UK and Nepali healthcare professionals from Kathmandu and Trishuli, who worked closely together to get as many cases done safely as possible.

The patients that visited the camp were from very poor surrounding areas, who have no access to basic surgical care. A radio broadcast advertising the paediatric surgical camp was made advising all residents within the district of the free service on offer. Children with surgical conditions identified during medical camps in outlying areas were also advised to attend a preoperative clinic held on the first day. All walk-in patients and medical camp referrals were seen by Zahid Mukhtar or Jo Stanwell during the two weeks.

Zahid Mukhtar said, "This camp was a learning experience for us all, as we had to work with such limited resources. Such an experience can only help us to improve our NHS practice. It also demonstrated to us that provision of a paediatric surgical service in a developing world rural hospital is safe and achievable."

Goodbye to Marie

At the end of March, staff from St George's said a fond goodbye to Marie Grant who has retired from the Trust, although still working for the NHS.

Marie, who trained as a nurse and midwife, has more than 35 years' service within the NHS. During her seven years at St George's, she was Director of Nursing, Director of Operations and twice Acting Chief Executive.

For the last six months, she has been on secondment to the strategic health authority NHS London leading on the implementation of action plans for maternity services following the Healthcare Commission's review of maternity services but has retained a presence in the Trust one day a week. Marie will continue to work for NHS London part-time.

Staff from across the Trust, and from elsewhere in the NHS, came to send Marie off in style with a party. Peter Homa, former Chief Executive Officer at St George's, now Chief Executive Officer for Nottingham NHS Trust came down from Nottingham for the event and representatives from the Whittington Hospital, where Marie also used to work, also attended.

Gifts presented to Marie included a wooden bench for her garden, a Nintendo Wii Fit, John Lewis vouchers and flowers. A book of photographs and entries by colleagues wishing Marie well in her retirement was also given to her.

Quote from David Astley, Chief Executive

“ Marie has been an important person in the recent history of St George's, taking on its leadership as acting CEO and overseeing all aspects of its efficient running and management as Director of Operations. Her experience and her warm personality were an asset during some difficult times for the hospital. My time working with her was all too short. I wish her all the best for her "retirement" although I'm sure she will as busy as ever with her work at NHS London and her family commitments. ”



A book full of photographs and best wishes was among the gifts for Marie.



Chief Executive David Astley, Chair, Naaz Coker, and former Chief Executive, Peter Homa, at Marie's retirement party.



International Nurses' Day

On May 12, St George's celebrated Florence Nightingale's birthday and International Nurses' Day.

Cakes donated by Mitie, Peabody's and M&S Simply Food were enjoyed by nursing staff on wards and in clinics across the Trust.

At a special event in the afternoon, six staff were recognised as being the finest in their field having been chosen for a St George's International Nurses' Day award after being nominated by colleagues. All nominees for the awards had been invited and their names and exerts from their citations were on view before the event was opened by Director of Nursing, Geraldine Walters.

Nurse of the Year 2009 was presented by David Astley, Chief Executive, to Jee Ho, Colorectal Nurse Specialist in General Surgery, for her work in running a rapid access clinic for patients with suspected cancers, while Mark Soomaroo, Charge Nurse on Allingham Ward, was named up runner up in this category for his leadership in encouraging learning and professional development within his team.

Rixa von dem Bussche, lead midwife of the Carmen Suite, was presented with Midwife of Year 2009 for her "invaluable efforts" in spearheading the Trust's midwifery-led birth unit through its conception, implementation and first year of operation. Marion Louki, a midwife on Carmen Suite, was selected as runner up for her positive attitude and for being both a support and excellent role model for junior midwives.

Healthcare Assistant of the Year 2009 was Iwona Klinek who works on the Neuro Intensive Care Unit. She was nominated for coping effectively under pressure when staff absences meant she was the only HCA in the unit and for developing guidelines on cleaning and re-stocking bed spaces to help bank staff. Ethel Gordon, HCA on the Delivery Suite and runner up in this category, was described as "a delight to work with" by one of her nominees. Her hard work, conscientious attitude and friendliness were all highlighted as well as her constructive contribution to the team.

An invited audience of award nominees and other guests enjoyed the afternoon event for International Nurses' Day.



Stephanie Davies from Laughology involves David Astley, Chief Executive, in her presentation.



Clinical Teaching Sister, Catherine Bridge, receives the Aunty Lucy Award from David Astley for Geriatric Medicine nurses.

No Smoking Day

St George's marked No Smoking Day in March by hosting an information stand about smoking cessation for staff, patients and visitors.



Indumati Patel, Hospital Volunteer; Wandsworth PCT Smoking Cessation, Consultant Meeta Hans, Gurjeet Gill, Hospital Volunteer, and Diane Johnson, Hospital Volunteer, at the No Smoking Day event.

NHS Wandsworth stop smoking advisors supported by St George's Hospital volunteers were on hand to explain what stop smoking services are available locally and to stub out a giant cigarette.

Dr. Sam Thayalan, Occupational Health Consultant, St George's Healthcare Trust, said: "We have about 7000 staff at the hospital and the university at St. George's, so we're a large community. We are committed to providing a healthier work place for staff, and promotion of wellness is our key focus. The Confidential Stop Smoking Service for staff who want to quit is one of the many measures we support".

Velena Gilfillian, NHS Wandsworth Deputy Director of Public Health, said: "We are very grateful to everyone at St. Georges for their active support and participation in the No Smoking Day events. Working together, we are confident that St George's Hospital and NHS Wandsworth will be able to reduce the levels of smoking-related diseases that affect Wandsworth residents."

 For more information on the help and advice available from Wandsworth's Stop Smoking Service, go to www.smokefreewandsworth.nhs.uk or call them on freephone 0800 389 7921.



Winners and runners up: Jee Ho, Mark Soomaroo, Ethel Gordon, Marion Louki and Rixa von dem Bussche. HCA of the Year, Iwona Klinek, is missing from this group as she could not collect her award on the day.

Winners of the awards were given £100 in M&S gift cards and a commemorative badge, and runners up received £50 in M&S gift cards.

Two educational awards for research or study to improve clinical practice and patient care were also given at the event. The Auntie Lucy award, named for Lucy Kpobie, a former long-serving nurse at St George's, was given to Catherine Bridge, Clinical Teaching Sister in Geriatric Medicine, to organise a bespoke study day for the nurses in Geriatrics, run by King's College London. The Dame Muriel Powell Award, presented by the St George's Nurses' League in memory of St George's long-standing and renowned former matron and chief nursing officer, was given to the nursing team at the Wolfson Neuro-rehabilitation Centre. The event also featured two entertaining and motivational speakers, Stephanie Davies from Laughology and Alf Dunbar from You are the Difference.

The event was followed by a tea in the Philip Constable boardroom where a display of posters giving details of research project led by nurses was on view. The celebrations, planned by the Nursing Morale Group, were also supported by the St George's Hospital Charity.

Director of Nursing Geraldine Walters said: "It is fantastic to be able to reward nurses for the hard work they do and to celebrate the achievements and successes of nursing colleagues. It was a great day so thank you to the sponsors and the planning team who made it all possible."



Iwona Klinek, Healthcare Assistant of the Year, with NICU Matron Sarah Shah.



Nurse of the Year, Jee Ho, and Midwife of the Year, Rixa von dem Bussche, with their commemorative badges.



Motivating and entertaining: Alf Dunbar of You are the Difference.

Appointment reminders by text

Have you ever received a text message reminding you of your hairdresser or dental appointment?

St George's is now making the most of the growing use of text messages in daily life as well. During May the Trust has been rolling out a new automated appointment reminder system which sends text messages to patients reminding them of the date and time of their appointment at St George's.

This comes as part of the first phase of the outpatient transformation project which has focused on the way in which new patient appointments are booked. All patients attending new appointments who have provided the Central Booking Service with their mobile phone number will receive an appointment reminder via text message five days prior to their appointment.

The messages come from an NHS mail account and do not cost the Trust anything to send. Not only is this an additional service provided to patients to improve the appointment booking experience, it is anticipated that the messages will reduce the number of 'did not attend's (DNAs) or missed appointments which cost the NHS as a whole in excess of £600million a year. This in turn will free up capacity for other patients needing appointments. Similar systems have proved popular at other NHS hospitals across the country, reducing DNAs by 25 per cent in some areas.

Following a patient survey which was carried out earlier in the year, St George's patients have also indicated that this would be their preferred method of receiving an appointment reminder. The success of this new service will be closely monitored and then piloted for follow up appointments. The system may in the future be used for cancellations, rebookings and general service announcements. For more information about this new system please contact Ellie Devine, Transformation Project Manager, on 0208 725 5772.

All staff working with patients and who have access to the Trust PAS system are reminded to check patient contact details are up to date whenever possible and to collect mobile phone numbers in order that patients can receive text reminders from St George's.



George is getting fit

Staff were invited to take part in an on-the-spot health check recently as part of an on-going initiative by the Occupational Health Department to promote wellbeing and fitness.

The project, which is operating under the banner of 'George is Getting Fit' is being supported by Go London funding aimed at improving fitness among the capital's residents and workforce before the 2012 Olympics.

Health promotion company, Lovely & Healthy, held road-shows on two days in the main entrance of St George's Hospital and staff were invited to drop in. Health advisors saw 173 staff who were asked about their diet, fitness and emotional wellbeing as well



Medical secretary, Susan Westacott, gets a healthcheck at the health promotion stand commissioned by St George's Occupational Health team.

as having their blood pressure checked and their body fat percentage measured.

The road shows revealed potential for better fitness among most staff who visited the stand. Most participants admitted their main form of exercise was walking, either at work or during their working day, but expressed an interest in taking up dancing, yoga, Pilates, gentle aerobics or workouts targeted at "legs, bums and tums".

Occupational Health Consultant Dr Sam Thayalan said: "We will be following up these road-shows with other opportunities for staff to learn about healthy lifestyles and to actively participate in increasing physical activity, losing weight and reducing stress."

Junior Doctors' Forum

A new junior doctors' forum held its first meeting on May with an invited panel of Directors to answer questions on a range of topics.

The forum was organised by Junior Doctors' Mess President Hooi-Ling Harrison and junior doctors' representative Christopher Donaldson and guest panellist were David Astley, Chief Executive, Cleave Gass, Director of Medical Education, Mike Bailey, one of the Trust's two Medical Directors, Patrick Mitchell, Chief Operating Officer, and Helen Gordon, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

The Trust is moving its junior doctors' rotas towards compliance with the European

Working Time Directive and questions were asked about how this is being balanced against the importance of maintaining training. The effectiveness of the diary card exercises which are used to monitor rotas' compliance was also discussed. Information was shared about the Trust's plans for the development of services including major trauma, stroke, neonatal and children's services.

Around 40 junior doctors attended. Ling said: "We feel there is a need for better communication with junior doctors as morale is affected when people feel uninvolved in decision making. We were pleased with this first event and would like them to continue."

*Tackling Bullying

The annual staff survey by the Healthcare Commission (now the Quality Care Commission) published at the end of March revealed a rise in the number of St George's respondents reporting bullying and harassment, particularly staff-on-staff bullying. The increase put St George's as one of the worst Trusts in England for reporting of this kind of behaviour.

In April, a letter from Chief Executive, David Astley, and Staff Side Chair, Justin Nowell, was sent out with payslips reiterating the Trust's and trade unions' commitment to tackling all forms of bullying and urging those who experience or witness bullying behaviour to report it or seek support from line managers, HR or union representatives.

An action plan addressing the issues raised by the survey will be agreed by management, informed by comments received from the trade unions.

In October 2008, around 790 staff at St George's were randomly selected to take part and just under half (49 per cent) responded by the December deadline. This year all scores related to four staff pledges (see box) and two additional themes which were staff satisfaction, and equality and diversity.

The responses highlighted several areas where St George's did not perform as well as other NHS Trusts, as well as demonstrating positive improvements.

- The Trust improved on its 2007 score for design of jobs, getting a better rating from staff on clear goals, feedback on performance and an opportunity to participate in decision making. The improvement put St George's in the best 20 per cent of Trusts in England on this finding.

- 40 per cent of staff said they worked in a team which had clear objectives, which worked together to achieve those, and which met regularly to discuss effectiveness and improvements. This score was above average.
- More staff said they had had appraisals and personal development plans. The improvement moved the Trust from being worse than average to better than average for both findings. A new question in the survey about opportunities for developing potential at work also got a better than average response.
- 74 per cent of respondents said they worked for longer than the hours for which they are contracted. The percentage of respondents using flexible working options had also dropped. Both findings put St George's in the worst 20 per cent in England and probably contributed to another finding being below average – staff perception of the Trust's commitment to work-life balance.
- Staff reported a decrease in receiving Health & Safety training in the past 12 months. They also reported seeing more potential harmful errors and near misses in the proceeding month. The ratings put St George's in the worst 20 per cent of Trusts.
- The percentage of respondents (30 per cent) reporting harassment, bullying or abuse from other staff in the previous 12 months had increased as had those experiencing physical violence from other staff (five per cent). Both findings put the Trust in the worst 20 per cent of Trusts in England.

Helen Gordon, Director of HR and Organisational Development, said: "The staff survey is an important indicator of our staff's well-being and job satisfaction. The areas of improvement are welcome but overall the survey shows we have a lot to do to meet our aspiration to be an employer of choice. Some of the most problematic areas, including health and

safety training, are now being addressed through the Mandatory and Statutory Training (MAST) programme; a further important area to tackle is the reported level of bullying and physical violence between staff.

I want to restate our commitment to tackling these, which is unacceptable behaviour and is never justifiable. As a Trust, our values are to encourage respect and tolerance between colleagues."

Jane Pilgrim, Staff Side Secretary, said: "The Staff Side Committee will work in partnership with management to build a culture of improved respect and dignity between all levels of staff."

The four staff pledges in the NHS Constitution

- 1 To provide all staff with clear roles and responsibilities and rewarding jobs for teams and individuals that make a difference to patients, their families and carers and communities.**
- 2 To provide all staff with personal development, access to appropriate training for their jobs and line management support to succeed.**
- 3 To provide support and opportunities for staff to maintain their health, well-being and safety.**
- 4 To engage staff in decisions that affect them and the services they provide, individually, through representative organisations and through local partnership working arrangements. All staff will be empowered to put forward ways to deliver better and safer services for patients and their families.**

Winners all round

Four St George's staff completed the London Marathon and raised money for St George's Hospital Charity on Sunday 26 April.

Three of them were introduced to you in the last edition of *the gazette*.

Amit Ubni, Finance Officer, **Tina Hoyle**, Geriatric Nurse Specialist, and **Marie Synnott-Wells**, Epilepsy Nurse Specialist, were joined later on by **Wallace Tan**, who - like Tina - works in Geriatric Medicine.

In alphabetical order, here's how they got on:

* Amit completed the 26.2 mile course in six hours. He got underway with a promising start, completing the first 12 miles in two hours, but a combination of the heat and persistent cramp slowed him down. But perseverance is everything and Amit has much to be proud of in that he went the distance. At the time of going to press, Amit had raised just shy of £800.

* Marie, who is an experienced Marathon runner, achieved an impressive three hours and 11 minutes. Her fundraising total stands at just under £700 and rising. Marie says "I had hoped for a slightly faster finish, but so many of us were affected by the heat and the sheer volume of runners. It was a fantastic experience, nevertheless and all about dedication."

* Tina says "I'm a bit of a plodder and was on target up until 17 miles when my legs started burning. The crowd was amazingly supportive - I really didn't need my i-Pod with me! I missed my target time by ten minutes but, of course, I'm still happy with the five hours and two minutes finishing time. I am currently nursing a bruised Achilles but the day was so worth it. Thanks to all who came to watch, those who sponsored me and the well wishers in corridors who had seen my picture in *the gazette*." Tina has raised £980 so far.



Amit still smiling at 12 miles through the course.

* Wallace has been threatening to do the London Marathon for years. This year he fulfilled his promise! He completed the course in under five hours, averaging around five miles per hour throughout. Wallace's fundraising has reached over £900 and counting.

Congratulations to these four and everyone else who ran and raised money for St George's Hospital Charity. Overall, there were 14 people running for the charity and a team of runners at ING in the City, who are splitting their sponsorship money between four charities, including St George's Hospital Charity.

You can still donate at:

- www.justgiving.com/amitslondonmarathon
- www.justgiving.com/marieflmneuroep
- www.justgiving.com/tinahoyle
- www.justgiving.com/wallacetan



Marie takes it in her stride.

Walk for Neonatal Unit

A group of nurses, friends and parents of Neonatal Unit 'graduates' walked the Great Glen walk from Fort William to Inverness from Saturday 23 May to Tuesday 26 May - a distance of 72.5 miles.

The group included Rachel and Dan Pidcock, Alison and Mike Smith, Bethany and Chris Spray, Jo Pidcock, Hazel and Richard Warrington, Dave Arnold, Anthony Sewell, John Sims, Veronica Sim, Mary Goggin, Angela Hudson, Theresa Alexander, Lorna Barracks and Doris Jackman.

The aim is to raise £5,000 for the Neonatal Unit. The money will be used for the welfare of parents and families, to purchase equipment for the unit and specialist staff training. Organisers say the walk was also beneficial to some participants who are aiming to lose a few pounds on the way!



For more information on this fundraising event by the Friends of the Neonatal at St George's, or to donate to the group, visit <http://www.justgiving.com/nnu>

Also in the running...



Gillian with her marathon medal.

Also putting her best foot forward was Gillian Atkins who was running as a Friend of St George's Neonatal Unit.

Gillian chose to raise funds for equipment for the NNU as a niece of a close friend was in the Unit when she

was born as she had spina bifida.

She said: "This was the first time I'd ever run a marathon and I'm pretty sure it was the hardest thing I've ever done! I finished in five hours eight minutes, almost all of which was in scorching sunshine! It was such a great day though, with huge numbers of supporters to cheer us on. I've raised £1,133 for the Friends of the Neonatal Unit which I was really pleased with."

To sponsor Gillian go to www.justgiving.com/jillmarathon