





Peppa Pig with PICU patient Louie Bull, who marked his first birthday on the unit

♥ kind

**Peppa Pig pays special visit to St George's**

Children's television favourite Peppa Pig visited young patients in the paediatric intensive care unit (PICU) at St George's Hospital on Tuesday 19th March.

Peppa paid a special visit to patient Louie Bull, who was celebrating his first birthday on the unit. Louie's mum Natalie McDougall said: "It was a lovely birthday treat for Louie - Peppa Pig is one of his favourite TV shows."

**Study shows St George's among best for responding to patient feedback** 

St George's Healthcare has been named as one of only a handful of trusts who effectively respond to patient feedback online.

The study by Patient Opinion, an independent not-for-profit feedback website enabling patients to share their experiences of NHS care, found that the trust responds to 95 per cent of all comments and 100 per cent of critical comments posted on both the Patient Opinion and NHS Choices websites.

The evaluation examined 4,000 comments posted between May and October 2012 and how often the trust had responded to instances where patients had raised concerns.

St George's was given the top rating, showing that the trust 'responds frequently and is good at these measures of quality'. St George's is one of only six trusts across the country named in this grouping.

Alison Robertson, chief nurse and director of operations, said: "Websites such as NHS Choices and Patient Opinion are becoming increasingly popular and offer an instant and convenient method for patients to share their experiences. The trust values all feedback it receives, whether in person, in written format or by digital means, as it helps us to identify areas where we can improve but also lets us know where we are doing well."

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Front cover shows cancer clinicians Barry Powell and Nicholas Hyde.

With thanks to Yusuf Ozkizil and Andy Gulland for their photography services.

*the gazette* is written and published by the communications team. The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of St George's Healthcare NHS Trust. If you have a story for *the gazette*, please email: [communications@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

**St George's Hospital's emergency department officially opened**

Dame Ruth Carnall, chief executive of NHS London, officially opened St George's Hospital's emergency department on Wednesday 23rd January.

The department has undergone a full-scale refurbishment and modernisation which has improved a number of areas. The refurbishment was largely funded by St George's Hospital Charity.

Dame Ruth Carnall said: "I am so pleased to be able to officially open the unit. As one of the busiest A&E departments in the country and a major



Dame Ruth Carnall with Dr Phil Moss, clinical director for emergency and acute medicine

trauma centre for London, the hospital cares for patients who are in need of urgent and specialist care. It is wonderful to see what's been done since the last time I visited St George's

Hospital. Staff are clearly enthusiastic about the care they provide and have worked hard to develop a smooth pathway of treatment for patients."

## A word from...

# MILES SCOTT

chief executive



This issue of *the gazette* celebrates the achievements of our staff, clinicians and teams, whilst also marking the success of our hardworking services.

Congratulations to the heart attack team at St George's Hospital on their BMJ Group 'Cardiovascular Team of the Year' award nomination. Being put forward for such a prestigious award demonstrates again the dedication and commitment of the team, part of one of London's biggest and busiest heart attack centres.

Also, as you will see from our front page, two of our cancer clinicians have been appointed Pathway Group Chairs for the London Cancer Alliance. This is brilliant news, which underlines St George's Healthcare's role as an accredited centre of excellence for cancer services in the region.

This level of distinction has also been felt by our patients. In this issue you can also read about members of the senior health department meeting the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, who invited the team to a reception after receiving a letter praising them for their exceptional care.

There are few who would disagree that putting patients first is the most fundamental duty of all those who work in the NHS. I feel that through being recognised nationally through award nominations, on a regional level with our clinicians being selected for pivotal roles, and by receiving complimentary feedback from the patients we care for, it is clear that St George's Healthcare is leading healthcare in the region.

Finally, the charity news in this issue of *the gazette* marks a sporting tradition which has taken place in the capital for over 30 years. The London Marathon takes place in late April, and there will be a number of runners for St George's Hospital Charity, including myself! I will be taking part to raise money for children's and women's services at St George's – you can read more about the charity's involvement in this year's event on the back page. Miles Scott, chief executive



Left to right: Jane Stanford, consultant anaesthetist, Claire Painter, head of nursing, Mark Hamilton, consultant anaesthetist and intensivist and clinical lead for pre-operative assessment, Ravi Govindia, leader of Wandsworth Council, Jo Bratchell, lead nurse for pre-operative assessment and David Gray, general manager

## St George's Hospital pre-operative care centre officially opened

Ravi Govindia, leader of Wandsworth Council, officially opened St George's Hospital's pre-operative care centre on Monday, 4th March.

The pre-operative care centre (POCC) is a new facility, designed to enhance quality of care and improve the experience for patients coming to hospital for surgery. At the POCC, patients are checked to make sure they are in strong enough health before their operation, which reduces the risk of cancelled surgery. Staff also ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the patient's admission to hospital, their eventual discharge home and for ongoing care afterwards.

Previously delivered from a range of locations across St George's Hospital, pre-operative

care services are now based in one specialist environment, offering a "one stop shop" where patients can have their assessment as well as investigations, including ECGs (electrocardiograms), breathing tests and blood tests, all in one place. This reduces the overall time patients have to spend in hospital as they can now avoid visiting separate departments for each test.

Jo Bratchell, lead nurse for pre-operative assessment, said: "We are so pleased that Cllr Govindia was able to officially open the unit for us. I'd like to thank everyone who has worked tirelessly to enable the establishment of the POCC. 96.5 per cent of the 1,450 patients who have attended an appointment since the centre opened in July 2012 have rated their experience as excellent or good, and this is a testament to the enthusiasm and passion of our fantastic staff."

## Staff recognised at Mayor of London's reception

Staff from the senior health team met Mayor of London Boris Johnson at an event acknowledging the outstanding work and achievements of members of the community.

The team were invited to the reception at London's City Hall after the Mayor's office received a letter praising staff in senior health for their excellent care of a patient at the hospital.

Around 300 people from Wandsworth and Merton attended the event, where Boris spoke of the value of having a commitment to high quality services for the people of London.

Stephen Wood, principal physiotherapist in senior health, said: "All senior health staff have a valuable role in the care of our older patients, and we were honoured to represent them at this event. Boris kindly spoke to us and was very keen to hear about our senior health initiatives and aspirations for the trust."



(L-R) Louise Clancy, junior sister, Catherine Bridge, matron, Lorraine Paruma, practice nurse educator, Amanda Adams, sister, Boris Johnson, Gemma Singh, senior physiotherapist, Sheneika Edwards, staff nurse and Stephen Wood, principal physiotherapist

## 2012 national NHS staff survey results - St George's Healthcare staff among most motivated in the country

The 2012 national NHS staff survey results, published in February, named St George's Healthcare staff as being among the most highly motivated and engaged staff in the country.

The survey results show that compared to most of the 142 other acute trusts in the country, staff at St George's:

- have more ability to contribute towards improvements at work;
- have higher levels of motivation at work;
- are more likely to recommend St George's as a place to work or receive treatment.

More staff believe that they are making a difference to patients than at almost every other trust in the country, and more staff are satisfied with the quality of work and patient care they are able to deliver.

Our staff are also more likely to report errors, near misses or incidents than at most other trusts. The lessons learned from these reports are a major factor in the trust's excellent record of patient safety, with the trust being named in the Dr Foster 2012 Hospital Guide as one of the

safest in the country and with some of the lowest mortality rates in the country despite the highly complex nature of the services provided.

Despite the trust's strong performance in the survey, the trust has identified areas where it feels improvements could be made to further improve the working lives of staff, as staff report high levels of harassment and tend to work longer hours than staff at other trusts.

Wendy Brewer, director of human resources, said: "The NHS national staff survey is important as it not only lets us know where we are performing well, but perhaps most importantly tells us if there are areas where our staff need some more support.

"We will work closely with our staff, the unions and our partners to identify what we can do to make the improvements that are needed."

**Congratulations to the St George's Hospital heart attack team, who have been shortlisted for the 'Cardiovascular Team of the Year Award' at the 2013 BMJ Group Improving Health Awards.**

The shortlist for this prestigious category recognises cardiovascular medicine teams, who, with constantly evolving treatments are translating knowledge into improved care for patients suffering from heart and circulatory diseases. The awards ceremony will take place in May. For more information, visit: [groupawards.bmj.com](http://groupawards.bmj.com)

## Project SEARCH students complete placements at St George's Hospital

St George's Healthcare and Hammersmith and Fulham Action on Disability (HAFAD) have teamed up to give students with learning disabilities of Cricket Green School in Mitcham the chance to gain work experience.

St George's Healthcare and Cricket Green School in Mitcham have been running the Project SEARCH scheme in collaboration with HAFAD and Merton Council since November 2012. Students and staff are based full time at St George's Hospital in Tooting.

Students have been working across different departments, including estates and facilities, cardiothoracic outpatients and hospital records. Many are now working on their second placement within the hospital, allowing them to learn and master competitive work skills.

19 year old Reece Edwards from Croydon is one of the students who have taken part in the scheme, working in the catering department. He said: "My first placement was washing up the plates and cups and making sure they were cleaned well. I really enjoyed this, but once I had learnt how to do this I wanted to move. "Now I work on the serving line in the hospital restaurant. I found



Patients receiving their Winter Warmers package with Esta Charkham, presenter of Showtunes on The Wireless, Age UK's digital radio station

## responsible Vulnerable patients to keep warm and active through Winter Warmers initiative

St George's Healthcare has launched an innovative new campaign to keep elderly and vulnerable patients in the community warm and well in their own homes during the cold weather.

The Winter Warmers initiative sees the trust working with the Leonard Cheshire Disability charity and Age UK to reach as many vulnerable patients as possible. Specialist instructors will be visiting specialist day centres and day hospitals in Wandsworth to teach a home exercise programme designed to keep people active, healthy and warm at home.

The initiative will issue the Winter Warmers package, which includes a room thermometer, gloves, blankets and heat packs to make sure patients are well equipped to stay warm. Digital radios will also be given out to help reduce feelings of loneliness and enable access to DAB radio stations such as The Wireless, which will blast out morale-boosting show tunes, to remind people of their exercises and how to stay warm.

Bernadette Kennedy, head of integrated falls and bone health, said: "All the clinical evidence shows that keeping warm and active at home during cold periods significantly reduces the risk of being admitted to hospital, and is very good for your emotional wellbeing.

"Starting an initiative like this means we can get to more of our more vulnerable patients and ensure they have all they need to keep the effects of the cold at bay."



Reece Edwards (right) with assistant head chef Alan Nash

it hard to get the portion sizes right at first but I know them now and I like working in a team and giving good customer service."

Reece has impressed his mentors so much that he was given the chance to take a test to earn a Level 1 Food Safety certificate, which he passed. He has also since passed the Level 2 Food Safety course.

Emily Steltzer, Project SEARCH job coach, said: "Training programmes like Project SEARCH are so successful because they are a unique collaboration between an education provider, a service organisation and a business that provides real work experience for

students to build their confidence and ensure they gain competitive and marketable skills."

Shelley Moore, Project SEARCH manager, is keen to hear from departments who would like to learn more on how having a Project SEARCH student could benefit them. For further information please email shelly.moore@cricketgreen.merton.sch.uk.



## Maternity matters

It's been a great year for our maternity services. 5,128 babies were born at St George's last year, with very significant improvements to both patient safety and the quality of service over the last 12 months helping to make sure that mothers and babies get the attention they need before and during labour and after they have given birth. The maternity unit's annual report pulls together data from the service's clinical quality indicators, workforce information and patient experience. The key findings are:

- Women are less likely to have a caesarean at St George's Hospital than any other hospital in London. The St George's maternity unit has maintained the lowest caesarean section rate in London.
- We have one of the lowest emergency caesarean section rates for failed vaginal births in London. This demonstrates excellent clinical management of the second stage of labour.
- We have one of the lowest hypoxic ischaemic encephalopathy (HIE) rates in the UK. HIE is a condition that occurs when the baby's brain is starved of oxygen.
- Our rate of emergency caesarean sections for failed instrumental deliveries is amongst the lowest in the UK.
- The unit has achieved green ratings (i.e. highest performance level) for the following clinical outcomes indicators:
  - third degree perineal tears
  - readmissions after caesarean sections
  - unexpected admissions to the neonatal unit
  - unexpected admissions to intensive care
  - full-term and pre-term stillbirths
  - early neonatal deaths
  - meconium aspiration syndrome (when a baby breathes a mixture of meconium and amniotic fluid into the lungs during delivery).

### Patient experience

The number of formal compliments we received increased from 17 to 54 in 2012. The main themes for these compliments are the kind, caring and supportive nature of the staff and the standard of the facilities in the delivery unit and midwife-led birthing centre, the Carmen Suite.

### VTE prevention

Our maternity service has been awarded second place for the Best obstetric VTE prevention programme 2012 by Lifeblood, the national thrombosis charity. Venous thromboembolism (VTE) is a condition where a blood clot forms in a vein, which can cause substantial long term health problems.

### NHS Litigation Authority CNST level three status

Our maternity unit has become only the second trust in London to achieve level three status in the NHS Litigation Authority (NHS LA) Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts (CNST). This demonstrates that we are practising effective risk management to minimise harm to patients. This is a fantastic achievement and recognition of the excellent standards of care on the unit.

To achieve level three status, our maternity unit was assessed by the NHS LA against five standards applying to antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal services, including care of the newborn, midwifery led care, obstetrics, anaesthetics and

ultrasonography. These standards are:

- Organisation
- Clinical care
- High risk conditions
- Communication
- Postnatal and newborn care

Each standard covers an area of risk and has ten specific underpinning criteria, each with detailed breakdown, against which Trusts are assessed. We achieved 43 of the 50 criteria against a performance benchmark of 40. Our aim now is to maintain the excellent standards we have set in these 43 criteria and to develop our performance against the other seven criteria.

### Midwifery Futures scheme

We have established the Midwifery Futures scheme to help make sure that we continue to improve our performance and maintain our position as one of the country's leading maternity units.

For more information contact Marion Louki, deputy head of midwifery, at [marion.louki@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:marion.louki@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

### Unicef Baby Friendly Initiative award

Our commitment to the promotion of breastfeeding and support for mothers and the well-being of our families was recognised when our maternity and neonatal units were awarded Baby Friendly Initiative stage two accreditation by Unicef in January 2013. The Baby Friendly Initiative was established by Unicef in 1992 to protect, support and promote breastfeeding and to strengthen mother-baby and family relationships. We are one of only six

trusts in London to have achieved this level of accreditation, and are on course to become the first trust in London to achieve stage three accreditation, the highest possible, in autumn 2013.

## St George's cancer clinicians appointed LCA pathway group chairs

Two St George's Healthcare clinicians have been appointed pathway group chairs for the London Cancer Alliance (LCA).

Mr Nicholas Hyde, lead cancer clinician at St George's, who

already sits on the LCA Clinical Board, has been appointed LCA pathway group chair for head and neck cancer, and Professor Barry Powell, head of melanoma services at St George's, has been appointed the LCA pathway group chair

for skin cancer.

The LCA was established in 2011 as the integrated cancer system across south and west London. LCA Pathway Groups ensure that patients across south and

west London have access to the same high quality diagnostics and care, as well as taking on responsibility for co-ordinating the research, education and development of cancer services.

# Becoming a Foundation Trust

## Take part in our consultation

St George's Healthcare consultation on its plans to become a Foundation Trust will close on Friday 26th April 2013. The consultation is your chance to tell us what you think of our membership and governance proposals, so if you haven't taken part yet why not give us your views?

### What are Foundation Trusts?

Foundation Trusts are membership organisations and we have already recruited nearly 14,000 members (March 2013), almost 7,000 of which are from the public. As we become a Foundation Trust we will establish a Council of Governors, the majority of which will be elected by our members.

The Council of Governors will engage with the membership and represent members' views when decisions are made about future trust strategy. The Council of Governors will work closely with the Board of Directors to ensure that the trust delivers services that reflect the needs of the communities we serve.

### What have people been saying so far?

Already, hundreds of people have responded to the consultation and a number of interesting comments and questions have been submitted.

Some people think that the minimum age for becoming a member is too low. Our proposals suggest 14 should be the minimum age – what do you think?

Other people have said that the structure of our Council of Governors should be different. We've proposed having 15 public Governors, eight stakeholder Governors and four staff Governors – do you think the balance is right?

### Have your say

We want to hear what you think about our plans and it's easy to have your say:

- Visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk) to read our proposals in full
- Alternatively, call us on 020 8266 6132 to request a copy of the full consultation document

Then:

- Complete our questionnaire online
- Or post your feedback to us at: Membership office, FREEPOST RSGZ-UJJH-THEB, Ground Floor, Grosvenor Wing, St George's Hospital, SW17 0QT.
- Or email your views to [consultation@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:consultation@stgeorges.nhs.uk)





## Membership grows steadily

Over recent weeks membership recruitment staff have been out and about around St George's Hospital and in our health centres in Tooting and Balham to talk to patients, visitors and other members of the public about the opportunity to become a member of the trust.

Over 1,600 new members have joined during this period bringing our total public membership to almost 7,000. But we don't plan to stop there. Throughout the next three months our recruitment activity will continue both around trust sites and out in shopping and leisure centres throughout Wandsworth, Merton and

Lambeth. Our aim is to reach a total membership of 11,000 public members during 2013, which we believe will give us a good representation of the communities served by the trust.

All our members can help us grow our membership. If you have other family members, friends or work colleagues who are interested in the trust, do encourage them to join us: visit our website [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk), email [members@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:members@stgeorges.nhs.uk), telephone 020 8266 6132, or pop into the membership office on the ground floor of the Grosvenor Wing at St George's Hospital.

## New non-executive appointments

Dr Judith Hulf and Stella Pantelides joined the trust as non-executive directors on 1st January 2013.

Judith is the responsible officer and senior medical adviser to the General Medical Council. Prior to this she was a consultant general and cardiothoracic anaesthetist at University College London Hospital until 2009 and President of the Royal College of Anaesthetists 2006-2009. She was awarded a CBE in June 2009.

Stella has extensive commercial and human resources experience gained through senior leadership roles in a wide range of

organisational settings. She combines the running of a successful consulting company on workforce and organisational strategy with a number of public appointments.

Christopher Smallwood, chairman, said: "I am very pleased to welcome both Judith and Stella onto the trust board. Their expertise and experience will help us further strengthen the board at an important time for St George's Healthcare as we continue with our bid to become a Foundation Trust."

## Golden Hearts

Members are invited to a world premiere performance from award winning theatre company Tamasha at St George's Hospital.

Inspired by stories from the cardiology department at St George's and the work of the late consultant cardiologist Dr Charles Pumphrey, Tamasha Theatre company will be presenting Golden Hearts – a celebration of staff and patients across two generations.

Founded in 1989, Tamasha's productions include hit plays 14 Songs, Two Weddings and a Funeral, The Trouble with Asian Men and the hit movie East is East. The performance will take place

on the afternoon of Thursday 20th June (times to be confirmed) and will be accompanied by a talk about cardiac care at St George's Healthcare as south London's primary centre for heart attack management since 2010. The event is expected to be an hour long.

If you would like to share your own experiences as a cardiac patient at St George's, or your memories of Dr Charles Pumphrey, please contact: [sudha@tamasha.org.uk](mailto:sudha@tamasha.org.uk) or Sarah at [arts@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:arts@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

To book a place at the performance, please email: [members@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:members@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

## All you need to know about... norovirus

Norovirus is an illness that all of us are susceptible to, at any age. Matt Laundy, consultant in medical microbiology, tells *the gazette* more about norovirus and gives advice on what you should do if you think you have the symptoms.

### What is norovirus?

Norovirus is a very infectious illness that is generally unpleasant but rarely serious for otherwise healthy people. It can, however, become a very serious illness for patients with underlying health conditions or those who are more vulnerable. Norovirus is the most common cause of infectious gastroenteritis in England and Wales.

### What are the symptoms of norovirus?

People who have norovirus could have some of the following symptoms:

- Nausea (feeling sick)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Stomach pains or cramps
- Headaches
- Fever and tiredness

### Why does norovirus spread so easily?

There are many different strains of norovirus, so even after having the illness you would not be immune to other variations of the bug.

That is why it is important to practice good hygiene – regular hand washing and cleaning of surfaces will minimise the risk of the virus spreading.

### Why shouldn't I come to hospital if I have norovirus?

Outbreaks of norovirus are common in semi-enclosed environments, such as hospitals, nursing homes and schools. Therefore, visitors bringing norovirus into hospital are likely to put vulnerable patients at risk.

To minimise the risk of an outbreak in hospital, we ask any person who has symptoms of norovirus not to come to hospital either as an inpatient, outpatient or a visitor until 48 hours after their symptoms have stopped.

### Isn't norovirus just a winter bug?

No – norovirus can affect anyone at any time of the year. It is often called the winter vomiting bug because the virus causes an increased number of cases in

winter. It is just as likely to affect you in the summer.

### What should I do if I get norovirus?

The best thing for adults who are otherwise healthy to do is to stay at home and let the illness run its course. Make sure you rest and drink plenty of water, as the symptoms will dehydrate you.

If you need more guidance, you should speak to your pharmacy or GP, or call NHS 111 over the telephone.

If your symptoms continue for more than 60 hours or you have a pre-existing health condition, you should seek further medical advice.

Older people and children under 12 months old who show symptoms of norovirus should also seek medical advice from their GP.

# Blaine Wilson, RENAL PATIENT

44-year-old Blaine Wilson was living a healthy life in Australia enjoying golf, swimming and taekwondo when he was struck down suddenly with kidney failure in March 2004.

"The doctors didn't know what caused it or what it was – they started treating me for MCD (minimal change disease) which involved very high doses of steroids. The medication wasn't really working, and I had made a decision a few months back to move back to the UK, so once I was given the all clear to fly by my doctor, I came back."

Blaine was referred to the clinic on Buckland Ward in May 2005 where he underwent more biopsies to try and determine exactly what was wrong. "Doctors discovered I had FSGS (focal segmental glomerulosclerosis) which is a rare kidney condition. My body responded to the treatment a little but I still had to have a strong injection of diuretics every now and again to help my body get rid of all the fluid that my kidneys couldn't. I would put on 10 – 15kgs at a time which was all fluid!

"The renal team at St George's were absolutely fantastic from the beginning. Dr Stephen Nelson was my consultant and he was brilliant. He was instrumental in driving my programme of treatment forward and really helped me carry on with my life in spite of my illness." The team had agreed with Blaine to not undergo a transplant until his condition was life-threatening. "The team were so fantastic and did everything they could to keep me on my feet which was essential for my demanding work schedule. Hazel Pinto, clinic co-ordinator, was wonderful – if I needed an urgent appointment I could call her up and get one quickly – this was so invaluable when I was in pain."

In November 2008 Blaine's kidneys needed more support than the medications he was on could supply and so he went onto peritoneal dialysis (PD). Dialysis is a process used for kidney patients in renal failure, and replaces the



Blaine (centre) with some of the renal staff who cared for him

function of a kidney by removing waste and excess water from the blood. There are different kinds of dialysis; peritoneal dialysis uses the patient's peritoneum (the thin membrane that surrounds the outside of the organs in the abdomen) to clean the patient's blood inside the body. The peritoneum allows waste products to pass through it and is very rich in small blood vessels. By running a dialysis fluid into the peritoneal cavity, through a catheter – and then out again – waste can be filtered from the blood. The advantage of PD is that the treatment affords patients more independence than haemodialysis and can very easily be set up as a home treatment.

"Fiona Robinson (Lead dialysis nurse) and the PD team looked after me so well – they made sure that my treatment was able to fit into my life. Because I was on PD I was able to dialyse at home which meant I didn't have to come into hospital every few days.

"Again, I cannot say enough how wonderful the team were in supporting me. I had a very busy job at the time and was setting up a new company. I had to take a trip to Botswana and with the help of the team I was able to ship the boxes of fluid I needed for my PD with me."

Blaine then went onto haemodialysis in 2009, as PD was no longer providing adequate dialysis. Unlike PD, which uses the patient's peritoneum to clean the blood inside the body, haemodialysis takes place outside the body in a filter known as a dialyser (artificial kidney). Blood is taken from the body, pumped into the dialysis machine, cleaned and then pumped back into the body via a circuit. This is done as continuous process three times a week for about four hours each time.

"The hardest thing throughout my illness was getting on with life. It's tough because it's all-consuming: everything depends on how well you are going to feel from day to

day. I was constantly tired and felt like my body was running at about 40 per cent all the time."

"In August 2009 Dr Nelson told me that we were at a point now for a kidney transplant. A friend of mine in Australia had agreed to be a donor so I got in touch with her to give her the thumbs up.

"Helen Gregson, renal transplant sister, was amazing; she told me to put her in touch with my donor and she sorted out the rest.

10th May 2010 was transplant day, but unfortunately further tests revealed that Blaine's potential donor's kidney had a tiny growth and Blaine required further treatment to get him fit for a transplant. "It was obviously devastating for both of us, but with the help of the renal team, I worked hard over the next few months to get my blood healthy again.

"My new transplant date was set almost a year to the date later and I went in on 11th May 2011. My sister was tested and though we had different blood groups due to new technology in the unit (known as ABO incompatible transplantation) she was able to be my donor in the end. To get over the blood group barrier Blaine required a special treatment similar to dialysis to remove any antibodies (proteins which could have caused him to reject his sister's kidney). "Initially things were looking good and my sister recovered quickly from the operation and was on her feet after a few weeks. But a day after the operation my kidney 'went to sleep' again and tests showed that the same condition – FSGS – that had damaged my own kidneys was affecting the kidney transplant I received from my sister."

Dr Joyce Popoola, renal and transplant consultant, said: "FSGS is a challenging condition for kidney patients who undergo transplants as the condition is well known to recur in the transplant kidney. In some cases the newly

transplanted organ is 'lost' within days, which is devastating for both the patient and donor.

"A lot of research is being undertaken worldwide to understand the cause and best management of this condition. At St George's we have been working with the team on Ruth Myles to provide plasma exchanges with a view to suppress the condition. We also adjust the medication used for transplantation to take the condition into account. When the disease recurs management involves a more intense follow up period for the patient after the transplantation but ultimately can mean a better outcome longer term for both the patient and their transplant."

Blaine said: "The team worked hard to get the kidney working – this included many plasma 'exchanges' which I had on the Ruth Myles unit."

"I finally got the all clear in December 2011 from Dr Joyce Popoola, renal/transplant consultant, and immediately booked a trip to South Africa to have a holiday and visit friends. Dr Popoola was so caring and helpful – she even found a renal consultant in South Africa that I could talk to if I had any problems!

"I spent many hours on Buckland Ward throughout my treatment over the years and I can safely say it is the best ward I have ever been on. The nurses have a wonderful leader in matron Monica McCann and you really feel that they are passionate about nursing and genuinely care about every single patient they look after.

"Nearly two years on from my transplant I feel 100 per cent and while I still come to the hospital for regular check ups, I'm not on any dialysis and no longer require plasma exchanges.

"I cannot thank the team enough for being so amazing – from all the nurses on the ward, and in the clinics, to my consultants. They are an outstanding bunch of individuals."



Snapshot: (left to right) Keith Williams, porter, Herculano Coelho, portering co-ordinator, Michael Baker, porter, Jason Mills, porter, Paul Hassett, porter, and Richard Shannon, portering manager

# PORTERING TEAM

The portering team work hard behind the scenes, carrying out a number of duties that keep the trust ticking over. Without them, the trust would come to a standstill.

The team work 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. When asked what a porter does, many of us would assume it simply involves moving patients to and from wards, collecting blood products and delivering specimens. But the team do so much more and the list of tasks is every increasing. They cover a range of departments and areas including radiology, the transport lounge, and do everything from equipment and furniture deliveries to moving waste, ensuring post is delivered, and making sure

that medicines get to wards and departments on time. The porters also have a fundamental role in A&E - transferring patients to various wards and radiology departments, collecting samples and making sure that A&E is stocked with oxygen and other equipment. The team also cover cardiac arrests and are an important part of the fire response team.

The 80 strong team are led by Richard Shannon, portering manager, who agrees that his team are invaluable. He said: "I am very proud of the porters and the work they do. They are a very important frontline service and without them the hospital would stop. They cover key roles in major departments and always give 110 per cent to everything they do.

"The portering co-ordinators do an amazing job logging the tasks into the trust's teletracking system [the automated system

that allows users to book jobs and porters to accept jobs]; they work under extreme conditions but always remain composed. As St George's has become a busier trust in recent years the porters are working harder than ever to deliver a great service and I think their efforts should be applauded. Having been a porter myself in the past I can see how the role has changed and how diverse the role has become lately, meeting the needs of a very busy trust."

The porters cover St George's Hospital site and there is also a dedicated portering team at St John's Therapy Centre.

The porters are also involved in different projects at the hospital, such as the Project SEARCH scheme which helps students with learning disabilities gain work experience for future employment (read more about Project SEARCH on page 4).

## WASTE WATCH

There are porters whose sole job is collecting and transporting waste, including bulky items such as broken desks and chairs. All furniture collected is reviewed before it is recycled.

During the last year these porters moved

**2,650** tonnes of waste to the waste compound for collection by our contractors. Of this,

**1,230** tonnes was clinical waste,

**930** tonnes was domestic waste and

**490** tonnes was recycling.

The recycling included eight tonnes of cardboard and 20 tonnes of metal; there was also two tonnes of single use instruments sent for scrap. This has resulted in an income of £5,000 and a saving of nearly £1,000 to the trust. The porters work hard to keep the waste and recycling separate, baling the cardboard saved from the waste stream and ensuring there are empty waste caddies for staff to use. Alan Hall, waste manager, said: "This work is carried out no matter what the weather is like, and they do a marvellous job in keeping the buildings free of waste."

*"Being a porter means that I get to meet someone new every day..."*

Michael Baker has been a porter at the trust for 25 years. He started working at Bolingbroke Hospital in 1988, moving to St John's Therapy Centre in 2006 and then to St George's Hospital in 2010.

He said: "I work across the ultrasound, CT scanning and nuclear medicine departments – making sure that patients get to their scanning appointments on time. The best part about my job is communicating with patients on a daily basis. I like talking to them and caring for them. I also get to meet someone new every day which is really interesting!"



## Past and Present

### Belgrave Ward

Belgrave Ward probably has the most exciting history of all the wards under St George's Healthcare today! The ward was named after Viscount Belgrave in 1867 who served as Treasurer of St George's Hospital. In 1935, nearly seventy years later, Dame Marie Tempest, who was regarded as one of the "greatest stars of the stage" in her day offered to put on a matinee performance at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, to mark her fifty years as an actress and singer, with the aim of raising money to fund a ward for actors and actresses at St George's. Her performance raised £6,000 for the hospital

and Belgrave was renamed as Marie Tempest Ward. In 1938 the music hall artist Turner Layton was a patient at St George's after breaking his leg. Ever the professional, Layton recorded two songs, Thanks for the Memory and Tears in my Heart for Columbia Records, donating a special royalty to St George's from all records sold!

Later that year, the BBC broadcast a Christmas party held on the children's ward – this marked the first ever broadcast of a TV programme from hospital by the BBC. A host of famous names of the era took part in the show, but the children's highlight was the seven clowns who performed an acrobatic display for the

young patients!

In 1953, Belgrave was one of the very first names chosen by the Board of Governors for a ward in the recently designated Grove Fever Hospital in Tooting; the site on which St George's

Hospital was later built. Today, Belgrave Ward is a cardiology ward situated in Atkinson Morley Wing, caring for patients with heart problems.



In 1935 Marie Tempest raised £6,000 for a ward for actors and actresses at St George's Hospital



Bertram Mills' circus performed in the children's ward at St George's Hospital in 1938

### Patient feedback...

Every year the trust cares for more than a million patients and many of those patients take the time to write and express their thanks. In every edition of *the gazette* we publish a selection of those letters.

#### FAO McKissock Ward

I think it important that I draw your attention to the excellent treatment and duty of care I received from doctors, nurses and support staff at your hospital when I was admitted to McKissock Ward.

Everybody involved in my stay were exemplary with Mr Minhas' surgery team led by Mr Uday Ghate a credit to your hospital and the medical profession.

Thank you for the attention I received and please take time to congratulate those concerned in providing outstanding care and treatment.

#### FAO Urology

It would be remiss of me to walk away from St George's without expressing my sincere thanks. I experienced excellent professional care in the dedicated, competent and skilled hands of your consultant surgeon, Mr Chris Anderson and his team, which I understand included Mr Ben Ayres, as

well as the anaesthetists and other theatre staff in Mr Anderson's team.

The same can be said regarding the professional care, attention to detail, sensitivity and bedside manner experienced at every stage of my journey.

While I am sure all your departments in the hospital are equally excellent, I must say that from my experience, it appears that urology seems to attract the very nicest and dedicated of people.

#### FAO paediatric ENT

Please can you pass on my thanks to Dr Tweedie for his wonderful consultation with my three year old son.

We have had to see a few doctors about his tonsils and sleep apnoea, but Dr Tweedie was the first to actually involve him in the consultation and make him feel at ease. In fact he was so taken with Dr Tweedie that he asked if we could come back and see him again today!

When the time comes for his operation I think we will both feel more comfortable knowing what lovely staff you have.

#### FAO Carmen Suite

I would just like to take the time out to write to you about the outstanding care

I received on the Carmen Suite.

I was lucky enough to give birth to a healthy baby girl during my time on the Suite. While I was there I was amazed by the service we received. The unit was clean and well maintained with all of the staff team being friendly. I was looked after by lots of brilliant midwives who were all very professional, caring and calm.

My main midwives were Mika and Lucy who helped me deliver my baby safely into the world. I can't thank them enough.

#### FAO Richmond Ward AMU

My mother was admitted to the AMU which was a very stressful time for all of us. We thought the medical care she received whilst in your hospital was outstanding and all the doctors and nurses who treated her were fantastic.

Joanna O'Connor was there when she was admitted and was lovely, sweet and gentle with my mum. She was also fantastic with my father and I, taking as much time as we wanted to explain any questions or concerns that we had. She was always cheery and had a lovely sense of humour.

#### FAO Cancer

I wanted to express my thanks and admiration for everybody I encountered. Kind, helpful, understanding and most important of all, great communicators. The sterling work you do is simply not appreciated by enough people.

I spent months at St George's during my sister's long and ultimately unsuccessful battle with cancer, and always believed the one thing that was beyond fault was the levels of care.

So thank you – you all do what must be a demanding job, but with great dedication.

#### FAO Queen Mary's Hospital

I would just like to write to you and say how impressed I am with Queen Mary's Hospital and the care the staff take over dealing with their outpatients. I had an appointment for a CT scan and was met with help and kindness all the way.

I was a bit apprehensive about the scan, but the lovely lady who dealt with me was kindness itself, and talked me through the whole process so I had no worries at all. Please pass on my thanks to the staff who really 'bother' about the patient.

## Patient safety ambassadors

Four members of St George's Healthcare staff recently embarked on a trip to Ghana as part of a patient safety partnerships programme organised by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Yvonne Connolly, head of patient safety, tells *the gazette* about their visit.



St George's was lucky to be selected by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to work on a patient safety project with the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) pictured left in the Kumasi region of Ghana. The project takes a partnership approach with visits in both directions by project leads and a visit of the St George's team to Ghana took place in January 2013.



While the KATH team were at St George's Healthcare they had been presented with an infection control lightbox to show how effectively staff had washed their hands. Nurses were enthusiastic to try out this resource during the return visit.

The St George's team were impressed at the progress made since the KATH team had visited the trust in September 2012, despite difficult circumstances and limited resources.

They told us how they were piloting the introduction of name bands in a surgical area for the first time to reduce identification errors. This would be invaluable as wards are often overcrowded because no patients can be turned away and they hope to expand this initiative once they have learnt from the pilot.



The team from St George's was: Kristina Hager, infection control nurse (top left); Alan Hall, waste manager, (top, third from left); Yvonne Connolly, head of patient safety (bottom, second from left); Cathie Stirling, head of nursing for theatres (bottom, right)

What most impressed the St George's team was the commitment and enthusiasm of the KATH team to take on the considerable challenges to make a difference and prevent avoidable harm. The KATH team also demonstrated how resourceful they could be despite the limitations of their environment and equipment. For instance, this wheelchair shows how resourceful one can be with limited resources!



**The project is set to continue this year with another visit to St George's Hospital from the KATH team during the summer and a further visit to Kumasi from our team at the end of the year. For further information, please contact Yvonne Connolly on [yvonne.connolly@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:yvonne.connolly@stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

## Top tips

From Paltrow to Paleo, there's no end of dietary advice on how to eat at the moment – but with much of it being flaky just what should you do if you're thinking of slimming down for summer? St George's principal dietitian, Catherine Collins, shares her tips for us to try.

- **Calories:** It's an unfortunate fact of life. Eat or drink too much. Exercise too little. Expect to store body fat. A pound of body

fat equals 3,500 stored calories, so to 'lose' several (or seventy!) pounds in weight needs a determined, sustained dietary approach. That's the reason why 'easy-does-it' is better long term than a 'quick fix' approach. One current dieting craze I'd recommend is the 5:2 diet, where you eat as usual 5 days a week then limit yourself to around 600kcal a day of proteins and veggies on two days. There's some science to support this, and it's easy to adopt for the long term, but make sure you make some healthy changes as well if you don't want to ruin your hard work.

- **Write to remember:** Research shows that if you think about the previous meal when hunger pangs attack you won't nibble as much. Tracking food intake in real time actually improves your dietary habits.
- **Sneak health into snacks:** Snacking ruins diets, so make at least one of your snacks low calorie fruit – a small banana, couple of satsumas, or a handful of grapes. They're all easy to eat and provide one of your five-a-day. Too messy? Keep kiddie snack-packs of dried apricots or raisins to hand rather than

a large bag of dried fruits or nuts to nibble.

- **Portion distortion is also a diet killer:** The larger the pack, the more you'll eat, be it Pringles or peanuts. Less is more. If you're checking calories on prepared foods, make sure the manufacturer and you agree on portion size. It's common that people will eat a whole prepared lasagne at one meal that is actually meant for two. Save the second portion and fill the gap on the plate with salad, fresh or frozen veggies.

*Why not give these a try?*

## Tackling the Marathon des Sables 2013 to raise money for First Touch

Simon Vickers, along with two of his friends, Tom and Dan, are hoping to raise £5,000 for First Touch by taking on what National Geographic has described as "the toughest foot race on the planet" - The Marathon des Sables (Mds).

Simon's wife gave birth to their twin boys, Alex and Ben, on 4th April 2012. They were born by emergency caesarean section after only 29 weeks, having developed severe late onset Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome, a potentially fatal condition occurring in only a few identical twin pregnancies. The boys were very sick when they were born and were immediately admitted to the neonatal unit. They spent a total of 35 days each on the unit; they defied the odds and exceeded everyone's expectations by being discharged when they were still six weeks premature.

The couple is now fundraising for First Touch to express their sincerest thanks to everyone involved in Alex and Ben's care.

The Mds is a 250km ultra-marathon, run over six days in the Sahara Desert. Daytime temperatures will reach 45°C (113°F). The men will have to carry all their kit and food for the duration of the race.

Water and a tent is the only support provided (no showers or comfortable bed at the end of each day!). For more information visit the website [www.marathondessables.co.uk](http://www.marathondessables.co.uk)

To support Simon, Tom and Dan on their epic adventure, please visit [www.justgiving.com/SITomDan](http://www.justgiving.com/SITomDan)



Left to right: Tom Day, Dan Burdett and Simon Vickers



Left to right: Natalie Short, Darryl Pack, Miles Scott, Sadiq Khan MP, Luke Waterfield, Kate Beaumont, Ben Rigby

## Westminster Reception

The Rt Hon Sadiq Khan MP for Tooting kindly hosted a Reception for our 2013 and 2012 London and Brighton Marathon runners

at the Houses of Parliament on the 21st March. The event was an opportunity for our past and present marathon runners to exchange running tips and experiences. Our runners were also given a guided tour of the Houses of Parliament.

If you would like to join the fundraising team at either the London Marathon or the Brighton Marathon to cheer on our amazing runners, please contact Lorna Hale in the fundraising office on 020 8725 4987.

## Our fantastic marathon fundraisers!

This year St George's Hospital Charity has six runners in the London Marathon and six runners in the Brighton Marathon!

One of our London Marathon runners this year is Kate Beaumont. She is running in memory of her baby girl called Tilly Grace, who sadly died from early infantile epileptic encephalopathy last April. Kate has already raised over £4,000 and hopes to raise over £5,000. She explains: "I am raising money for St George's Hospital as, despite the devastating outcome, the staff at St George's PICU (paediatric intensive care unit) cared for Tilly incredibly,

showing compassion and professionalism throughout. "As we come to terms with losing Tilly and adjust to life being very different than we expected I feel very strongly that I would like to give something back to the hospital. I think that until you are faced with a situation like ours, you take for granted services that are offered and to be able to run the marathon and raise money in Tilly's memory is my way of saying thank you."

Another of our runners, student Richard Cater, ran the Brighton half marathon for us in February and is running the Brighton Marathon for us in April! He is running to thank neuro ICU (intensive care unit) for saving his nan's

life in 2011. Richard said: "The half marathon was really fun! I haven't done a full 26.2 mile run before, so it is a massive step up for me and will require a lot of effort and commitment, but I am determined to finish the Marathon in April." Good luck to all of our inspiring marathon runners. We will be there to cheer you on!

## Putting in the Miles

Miles Scott, chief executive, is running the London Marathon for us this year and is raising money for Children's and Women's services.

To support Miles and St George's Hospital Charity, please visit his justgiving page at [www.justgiving.com/Miles-Scott1](http://www.justgiving.com/Miles-Scott1)

## Dinner4Good

Would you like to fundraise for St George's Hospital Charity but feel that running a marathon isn't for you? We can offer a tasty alternative. Simply host a dinner party through [www.dinner4good.com/StGeorges](http://www.dinner4good.com/StGeorges). You create your

personalised Dinner Page and send invitations from the site. Your guests then accept and donate online, which means you can see who's coming, and how much is being raised, in a click. There's no embarrassment over having to ask for money, no hassle with collection, and everyone is really involved.



Dinner4Good takes care of everything, including the Gift Aid application – so all you have to do is hold the dinner, eat, drink and enjoy yourselves!