



Community Engagement Update

March 2021

Hello

As some of you are aware, I have been appointed to a more senior role and I am leaving Medway NHS Foundation Trust today (15 March). Thank you to those who let me attend your meetings to share updates and opportunities to get involved. I have learned so much about the support provided in our communities and I really value how this has helped build awareness and strengthen networks.

Recently, I met with the delightful Annmarie Frenchum, Community Hubs and Partnership Manager from Strengthening Minds. Annmarie is responsible for the development of partnerships and activities working towards three strategic aims of: supporting young people into education and employment; reducing social isolation for elderly residents; and ensuring thriving communities through sustainable interventions. Please feel free to contact Annmarie at: annmariefrenchum@strengtheningminds.co.uk

Our community engagement activities over the past few months includes holding two virtual **'Meet the Governors'** sessions, that have been well attended, with the next planned on 18 March at 10am. Items of discussion at previous sessions included: how the hospital is coping during COVID-19 and the impact of this, sharing information about the vaccination programme, communication methods used during the pandemic and the 111 Clinical Assessment Service.

As part of our continuing Improvement Plan, we have held three **Digital Strategy** engagement sessions covering: shared care records, digital exclusion, electronic patient records, restarting and post COVID-19, technology and the digital future. We will be holding our final session in April.

We also held a **Quality Priorities Members' Event** on 24 February where we provided an update on progress with our quality priorities and held a discussion on safe, effective and person centred care.

Finally, we are pleased to share our **Engagement and Involvement Framework** which includes our **Governor Involvement Plan, Community Engagement Strategy and Membership Strategy**.

Examples of questions raised include:

Some cards being sent into hospital haven't always reached patients because they were delivered to hospital with insufficient information. There was a sad case of a card being sent back to the sender and not reaching the intended recipient before they passed away because they had a common name and no ward details were supplied. We raised this with the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are now checking these cards to try to track down the patient so this doesn't happen again.

We were asked how people with dementia along with visual impairment receive communications and are informed of changes to services etc. We informed that we share updates with community organisations and stakeholders that we engage with e.g. Medway Dementia Action Alliance, who share these updates with their communities and associated services. We also provide updates on our website regularly; email our Members; and share information through social media. Larger print can be requested to: communications.medwayft@nhs.net

Trust News:

There has been a lot of news since December and I have highlighted these with links below:



In December, our news updates included: [pressures on NHS services](#), information about [limited visiting](#) in the maternity department, how our Trust's Emergency Department scooped a [top nursing award](#) (picture above), COVID-19 [vaccine information](#) for patients, how to get [messages to loved ones](#), information on 'Think 111 First', and an update on the [suspension of the home birth service](#).

In January, news included: a story from a [patient paying tribute to staff](#) for saving his life after he was admitted to hospital with COVID-19 on Christmas day. There was also a reminder to patients to attend their [endoscopy appointments](#), information on the [new service to drop off patient belongings](#) (picture below), an invitation to our 'Meet the Governors' session, and an update on [home birth services](#).

In February, we were pleased to announce the [home birth service reinstatement](#) and inform that [x-ray appointments](#) at Medway Hospital, Sittingbourne Memorial and Sheppey Community Hospitals are now accepting walk-in patients with a referral from their GP. We also shared the [success of the patient belongings drop off service](#) and included a story about a [family donating £5,000 to the cancer unit](#). People were invited to stand to [become a Governor at the Trust](#) and we provided an update where [COVID-19 vaccinations](#) are now available at Medway Maritime Hospital.

As you may be aware, the Care Quality Commissioner (CQC) published a report following an unannounced inspection of the Emergency Department on 14 December 2020, at the height of the pandemic. Although there were positive observations, the report highlighted where improvements are needed. We have taken immediate steps to make these improvements and you can find out more about the actions we have put in place since the inspection [here](#).



Our most recent news update for March is about **wearing a face mask** when in hospital for treatment. [Read more here](#).



There has been a steady fall in the number of inpatients with COVID-19. At the same time, the Trust's vaccination programme is going well, with thousands of staff, employees from partner organisations, and now local residents, having had their jab. Second doses are now also being given.

It was noted that although fewer COVID-19 patients are coming into the hospital, the number of patients with other conditions has increased. The Trust has now begun to reintroduce surgery for more cancer patients, and plans are being developed to restart elective surgery in the coming weeks.

Join us at our future events:

Meet the Governors

Our Governors, who represent local people in Medway and Swale, are pleased to invite you to our **virtual 'Meet the Governors' session**. This virtual meeting is your opportunity to ask questions and share your views about services provided by Medway Maritime Hospital.

You are welcome to join us on **Thursday 18 March at 10am**. This meeting will take place via MS Teams and here is the link to join the meeting: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

For ease of access, we recommend downloading the MS Teams app beforehand. (For mobile devices this can be done via the normal app stores and is free of charge).

Patient Experience Members' Event

Come along to our virtual event on **Wednesday 28 April at 6pm** and find out more about how we are working with patients, carers and staff in co-designing the **Patient Experience Strategy**. There will also be an opportunity to share your experience related to our identified areas of improvement which are culture, leadership, communication and learning from feedback.

If you would like to attend, **please do contact us for a link to join** at: met-tr.members-medway@nhs.net

[Become a member of Medway NHS Foundation Trust](#) (it's free) so you are kept up to date with the latest news and events.

Get in touch

We really appreciate all that you do to support our community engagement and as soon as a person is appointed to my role, they will contact you to continue with our community engagement and attend future meetings.

In the meantime, you can still get in touch with our team at: communications.medwayft@nhs.net

Thanks again everyone and take care.

Bobbie Walkem-Smith
Community Engagement Officer