

Summer 2021

**NHS**

**Medway**

NHS Foundation Trust

# news



# Medway



## My story of surviving prostate cancer



**Best of care**  
**Best of people**

### Inside:

- **New Chief Executive** - a bright future ahead for Medway
- **Understanding your needs** - 'What matters to me' boards



# “Every reason to be positive,” says new Chief Executive

I am incredibly proud to have joined the Trust as Chief Executive and I would like to thank everyone for the very warm welcome that I have received.

I have been at Medway for a few weeks now and have seen what a skilled and compassionate workforce we have. It's a really important time for the Trust as we enter the next phase of our improvement programme and restart our services following the second wave of the pandemic. And there is no doubt that with this group of staff, and the support we enjoy from

our community, there is every reason to be very positive about the future.

A lot of work has already taken place to improve the quality of care for our patients and my aim now will be for us to build on these foundations and make a real difference to patient experience as the Trust continues to drive improvement across the hospital.

We know that our patients currently wait longer than they should for treatment. This hasn't been helped by the pandemic, but we should not hide behind that and we must continue to strive to be better. That's why

improving the responsiveness of our care will be one of my key priorities moving forward. We know this matters to our patients and that's why it matters so much to us too.

Our aim is to provide the right care, in the right place and at the right time and with your patience and support there is every reason to believe we can achieve this.

*George*  
**Dr George Findlay**  
 Chief Executive



## Numbers confirm Trust's commitment to research



Over the last year staff from the Trust's Research and Innovation team have been proud to lead a number of important clinical trials that helped pioneer effective treatment of COVID-19 and save many lives worldwide in the process.

This commitment to research has been proven with the release of figures which show for a sixth consecutive year the Trust was the highest performer at recruiting patients into clinical trials in the Kent, Surrey and

Sussex Clinical Research Network. The team attracted 5,042 participants into National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) studies, against the target of 3,528.

In addition, in 2019/20 a total of 136 research studies were conducted at Medway – an increase of 28 from the previous year.

Find out more about our commitment to research on page 6.

## Staff encourage ethnic minorities vaccine uptake

Colleagues across the Trust have joined forces to record a special video encouraging members of the ethnic minority community to have their COVID-19 vaccination when it's their turn.

Dr Nandita Divekar, Consultant, said: "I have had the vaccine myself and so have lots of my colleagues from the ethnic minority community. It is safe, effective and the most important thing you can do to keep your friends, family and community safe. Please book your vaccination as soon as you are eligible to do so".

View the video which has been featured on BBC and ITV news.

## National recognition for teams' dedication



The MeFit prehabilitation service, which provides support to patients undergoing surgery and treatment for conditions such as cancer to get physically and mentally prepared before their treatment (read more on page 12), has been shortlisted for the acute service redesign initiative category at the HSJ Value Awards 2021.

In a double celebration for the Trust, the team from the Emergency Department has also been shortlisted. This recognises the outstanding dedication they had given to making things better across their organisation during an extremely challenging year for the NHS.

The teams will find out who brings the award home at a ceremony in Manchester in September.

## Working with our community to make improvements

We know that Medway is your local hospital and most people will come into contact with our services at some point.

It is therefore essential we listen to your feedback to help make improvements. We really value the support of our local community and involvement of patients, families and carers. We are continuing to build relationships with the community of Medway and Swale so that people can have their say about the future of healthcare services.

This project is being led by the Trust's new Communications and Engagement Officer, Sophie Cawsey (pictured) who joined the Trust in April. Email Sophie ([sophie.cawsey@nhs.net](mailto:sophie.cawsey@nhs.net)) if you have any ideas, suggestions or if you represent a community organisation. We'd love to hear from you!





# “Don’t leave it to chance – my story of surviving Prostate Cancer”

by Andrew Bell

To mark Men’s Health Week in June we spoke to the Trust’s Clinical Systems Trainer Andrew Bell, following his diagnosis and recovery from Prostate Cancer.

The condition is the most common cancer in men in the UK, affecting about one in eight.

## Andrew’s story...

In 2019 I developed a pain in my abdomen, so I went to my GP and was referred for an ultrasound scan. At the time I was 61 and considered myself very healthy for my age; I was a keen long-distance cyclist and walker.

At the scan I was informed I had a small issue with my gallbladder, not unusual for a man of my age, so I was sent for a second scan. At this appointment I was asked if I knew that my prostate was enlarged and although I didn’t, I was conscious that I had been going to the loo more frequently. I was urged to see my GP, so I went straight to the surgery from the hospital.

There I took a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test and was informed my PSA level was 9.1, which was very high. I was aware that the PSA is an indicative test and there were a number of reasons why it might be high, with Prostate Cancer being just one of them.

*“I am very grateful to Professor Sheriff and all the clinical staff at the hospital involved in my treatment and rehabilitation; I literally owe them my life.”*

After that things progressed quickly; I was referred to the hospital, sent for an MRI, and had a biopsy, with a follow up planned for two weeks later.

I was still relatively relaxed as a two week wait seemed like a good sign. However, I was telephoned by Professor Martin Sheriff (Consultant Urologist) and invited to an appointment at the hospital. There I was told that the biopsy results showed cancer in a number of the samples.

Despite the news, I was remarkably relaxed, in part because working in the hospital I had met so many people living with or surviving cancer. Prof Sheriff laid out the options and the potential risks involved and I decided that surgery was the best move.

The process accelerated with commendable speed – I was given the diagnosis on the Monday, on the Wednesday I had a bone scan, on

Thursday I had a pre-assessment and I was scheduled for surgery on the following Tuesday.

I remained relaxed apart from during one scan where I became overwhelmed by what was happening; I had to go out and have a cup of tea and calm myself before going back to work.

On the day of the operation Prof Sheriff saw me beforehand to run through everything and rang my wife immediately after the operation to explain it had gone well.

I awoke in recovery and once I stabilised, I was taken to Kingfisher Ward, where I was admirably cared for by the nursing staff.

Six weeks after the operation I returned to work, and then had a follow up appointment, where I was told my bloods were clear, and there was no cancer in the margins of the prostate.

I consider myself very lucky, because had it not been for the gallbladder problems I would never have known. However, I strongly recommend all men over 50 have a PSA test as a matter of routine.

I am very grateful to Professor Sheriff and all the clinical staff at the hospital involved in my treatment and rehabilitation; I literally owe them my life.



## Spotting the signs

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK. It usually develops slowly, so there may be no signs for many years.

Symptoms of prostate cancer do not usually appear until the prostate is large enough to affect the tube that carries urine from the bladder out of the penis (urethra).

If you notice any of the following symptoms it does not mean you have prostate cancer, but you should contact your GP immediately:

- An increased need to urinate
- Straining while you urinate
- A feeling that your bladder has not fully emptied.





## Artwork installation celebrates clinical research

An exciting piece of artwork has recently been unveiled at Medway Maritime Hospital.

The artwork symbolises Medway NHS Foundation Trust's commitment to providing the best care to our patients and our desire to offer the newest techniques and treatments to them.

The main feature of the piece is the DNA helix – an emblem of clinical science. DNA is also fundamental to the biggest clinical research project ever – the Genome project, through which, it is believed, we will not only be able to treat any disease but also reverse the ageing process and extend life expectancy.

Dr Edyta McCallum, Head of Research and Innovation said: "I would like to thank the Medway Hospital Charity and its donors for making this art project and DNA Helix a reality.

"We created the area to highlight our

*"We want our patients to know that when they are treated here at Medway, it is done with compassion and access to the best care."*

engagement in clinical research. We want our patients to know that when they are treated here at Medway, it is done with compassion and access to the best care."

Dr Iram Ahmed, Clinical Operations Manager, Diagnostics and Clinical Support Services who led the project added: "I felt very passionate about creating a visual display to increase awareness of research within the

Trust, to encourage and engage both staff and patient participation and to showcase the number of specialities that we conduct research in.

"Evidence suggests that hospitals that conduct research have improved patient outcomes. I therefore wanted everyone who walks through our doors at Medway NHS Foundation Trust to know that we are a research active organisation and provide them the opportunity to participate in a research study, if they are eligible."

Medway NHS Foundation Trust is the leading Trust in Kent, Surrey and Sussex for patients participating in research studies and has been recognised at national and international levels. By taking part in research, we offer our patients new and up-to-date treatments and are always working to seek new treatments in all specialities.

## Creative therapies: an unusual but highly effective treatment

When most of us think of healthcare, we don't normally picture patients listening to music, colouring in, making artwork or looking after a lifelike therapy doll. But these tools, and many more like them, are being used with great success across the Trust and the wider healthcare community.

Creative health therapies help to keep people well, aid recovery, provide comfort and support longer lives.

John McLaughlin, former Orthotic Lead at Medway NHS Foundation Trust said: "We have a huge variety of therapies available to our patients. Some of the more unusual are our lifelike dolls and babies which can be really helpful in reducing stress and agitation and improving communication, especially for people with dementia. The dolls also help to provide a sense of purpose and stimulation."

Sue Gadsdon, Occupational Therapist

Clinical Lead for Older Adult Inpatient Services in Kent and Medway Partnership and Social Care Trust (KMPT), said: "We've been using the dolls with people who have a dementia and learning disabilities and they've responded really positively to the dolls. Recently we had a patient who would rock the baby and gently talk to it and he would sometimes put the doll in his shirt to keep it warm. These were really therapeutic moments where his whole demeanour would soften and brighten.

"Being able to use the dolls has really enabled us to explore further what strategies help our patients feel safe and validated. More importantly, due to the Creative Therapies Pathway, they are able to take the dolls with them when they leave. We are really grateful to the Orthotics Service for their innovation regarding creative therapies."

Many of the tools used are relatively

low cost but help to empower patients and can be factored into care plans and prescribed as a medicine would be.

Art therapy, such as mindfulness colouring, clay sculpting and decoupage all help with relaxation, focus and can also help to improve communication and concentration. Art therapy has also been shown to lead to increases in self-esteem and self-awareness.

John added: "We have seen first-hand that these therapies significantly improve the behaviour of patients and help them to manage their thoughts and feelings much more successfully. Often it also leads to improved social interaction and sometimes positive medication reviews."

Medway NHS Foundation Trust is the only Trust in the country to offer such a service and the hope is to continue to expand and offer further resources and tools to our patients.





# Understanding your needs – the ‘What Matters to Me’ boards

Spending time in hospital as a patient will mean you are away from home. It is unlikely that you will be able to observe the day-to-day routines that you have at home and we know that can be very unsettling and stressful.

We want to make sure that we fully support all of our patients throughout their time with us, and that they have the best possible experience of care that we can provide. To do this, we know we have to understand what is important to patients – something that is different for every person – and do our best to help accommodate what they need.

One of the ways that we are doing this is by rolling out ‘What Matters to Me’ boards on our wards across the Trust.

The initiative is led by our Chief Nursing and Quality Officer, Jane Murkin. The boards are small whiteboards that will be by every patient bedside, where the patient can let us know what is important to them while they are with us.

They provide us, very simply, with an understanding of what this patient personally needs, alongside their clinical care, to ensure their experience with us is the best it can be. From this we can talk to our patients – through ‘What Matters to Me’ conversations – about what they have told us on the board, and how we can make their expectations a reality.

This is at the heart of the care that we aim to provide; not asking patients ‘what’s wrong with you?’ but rather ‘what matters to you?’

This can be as little as having a newspaper to read, to making sure that family members are kept informed of their condition.

Feedback from the patients who have used the boards so far has been very positive. If you would like to find out more about how the boards are being used where you are, please ask a member of ward staff.

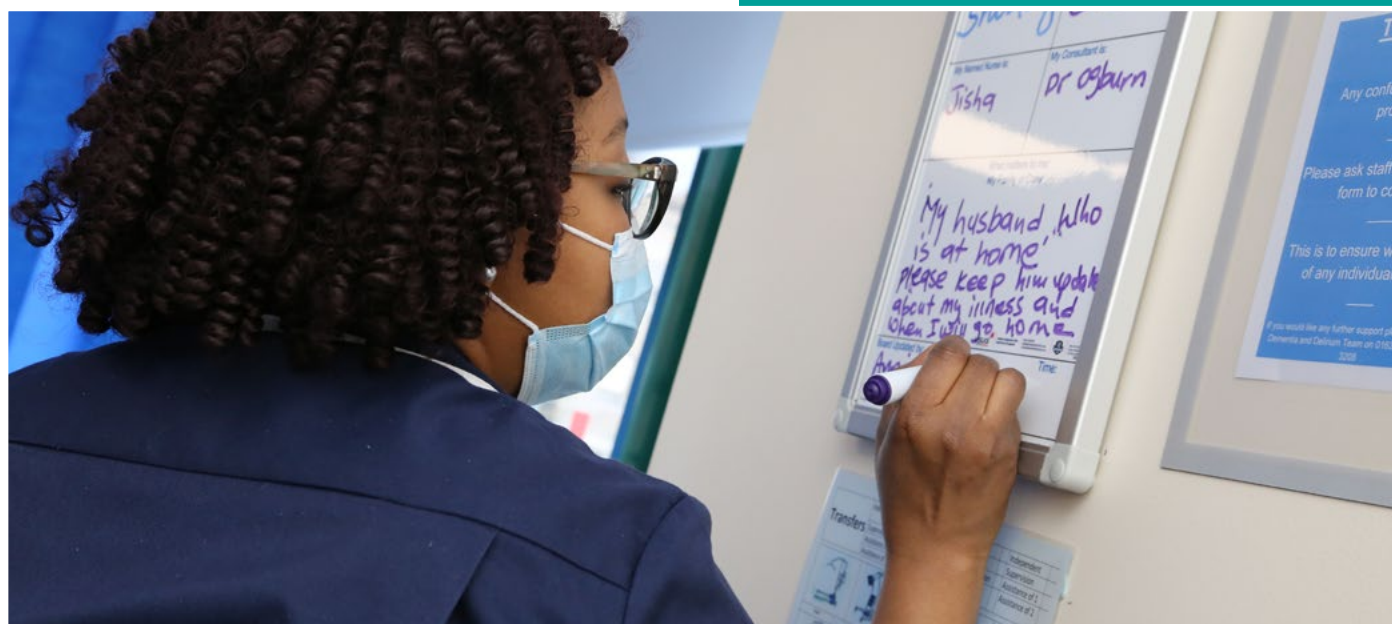
## What our patients told us about the ‘What Matters to Me’ boards

*‘I felt as if the staff knew more about me and what was important to me’*

*‘I was able to talk about my concern for the day and it opened up a different conversation’*

*‘It felt as if I was a person and not just going through a process’*

*‘It felt as if the staff cared about me’*





# Taking care of our people

Never more so than over the past year has the importance of personal wellbeing been clearer.

Our colleagues have worked tirelessly in extremely demanding and difficult circumstances to provide excellent care for our patients, but for many, this has taken a toll on mental and physical health.

The Trust recognises the importance of wellbeing and has introduced a number of measures and systems to support staff during the pandemic and beyond.

Last year we created a Wellbeing Hub for staff to enable them to enjoy a few moments of peace and relaxation in pleasant surroundings. The Medway Hospital Charity funded items for the Hub, such as colouring sets, yoga mats and snacks and drinks. We were also fortunate enough to be joined by Project Wingman – a group of furloughed airline crew who visited the site regularly to chat with staff and distribute food and drink.

An incredible 6,500 airline crew

answered the call for volunteers, from across every UK airline. They offered their time and skills to serve and support NHS staff, providing vital wellbeing and mental health assistance.

In addition, funding has been provided to create a gym to help support staff and construction work is already underway. This will have a hugely positive impact on their physical wellbeing but exercise also has many positive benefits for mental health.

Participation in regular physical activity can increase self-esteem and can reduce stress and anxiety. It also plays a role in preventing the development of mental health problems and in improving the quality of life of people experiencing mental health problems.

Alongside this, a small group of staff have launched a Trust running club to offer support to seasoned and new runners and we are working in partnership with Medway Public Health to encourage physical activity.

Every week, colleagues receive a



Taking a break in the Wellbeing Hub

Wellbeing Wednesday email with information, hints and tips as well as details of courses, support services and events. They are also encouraged to regularly think about their personal wellbeing and take steps to improve it wherever possible and staff have all been given an additional day of leave to focus on wellbeing and doing something that they enjoy or brings them relaxation.

We would urge you to do the same – take a few moments to think about your mental and physical wellbeing. There are lots of things you can try to take care of yourself, such as finding ways to be creative, spending time in nature and outside, connecting with others and getting enough sleep. Visit NHS Live Well here for more information.



Project Wingman: supporting our hospital staff

## Charity news



### Raising our charity's profile

Our community's support has been heart-warming throughout the pandemic and donations have enabled The Medway Hospital Charity to provide much-needed wellbeing support to staff and patients.

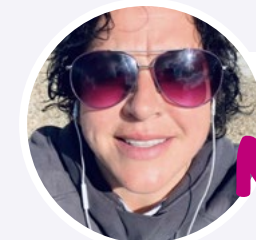
To raise awareness of our charity's work, the 'wheelchair wall' in the main reception has received a colourful makeover with a text donate banner. Circular vinyls are also dotted around the site to show how you can get help.

Donations to our charity really do make a HUGE difference to everyone at Medway Maritime Hospital and every gift, big or small, is very much appreciated.



### 10,000 Steps Challenge - complete!

A huge thank you to everyone who took part in our 10,000 Steps Challenge throughout May. We were thrilled so many people took up the challenge, especially staff, and raising more than £3,000 for The Medway Hospital Charity.



A big shout out to Nicola Norris, our top fundraiser, who raised £460!

#### Did you know?

310,000 steps (155 miles) is the equivalent of walking from Medway to Cardiff – which is phenomenal!!



Do you know a local school who would like to get involved and 'Have a Rainbow day for Medway'?

Celebrating the birthday of the NHS

They can take part in this special day on Friday 9 July by organising a dress down day where children donate £1 and go to school in bright coloured clothes.



If you know a school who would like to take part, or you want to find out more about fundraising for our hospital, please contact Cheryl and Donna in the Medway Hospital Charity team:

01634 825398

medwayft.charity@nhs.net



## Spotlight on...

# MeFit - Medway's Prehabilitation Service

Learn more about some of the 4,000 people who work at Medway Maritime Hospital, all focused on providing the best of care to our patients.



● Dr Manisha Shah, Consultant Anaesthetist

**Being physically and mentally prepared for a surgical procedure can reduce the risks of complications and help speed up recovery. Members of the MeFit team, who run the Trust's prehabilitation service, describe how they are helping patients get fighting fit for their treatment.**

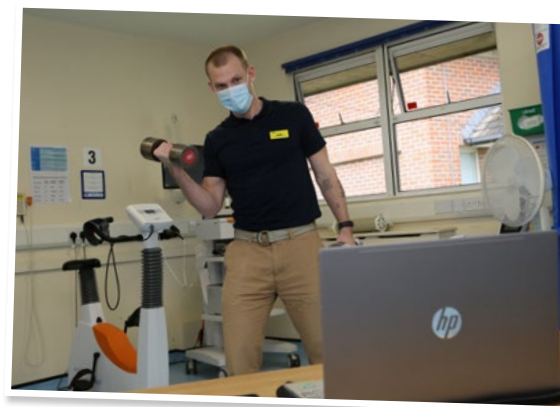
"Because the NHS is very good at what it does, we can sometimes forget that even high quality treatment can be very physically and mentally challenging to patients. Anyone who has significant surgery or goes through cancer treatment will take a while to bounce back, but what you do to prepare can have a major difference on both reducing the risk of complications, and how quickly you recover.

"The MeFit team is what we call a multi-disciplinary team. That means we've got people who are experts in surgery, physical fitness, diet and mental health, who come together

to work with patients to support them prepare for their treatment. Every patient is different, so prehabilitation begins with a full assessment of the patient's health and habits, before we draw up a programme of support that is specific for them, their condition and their treatment needs.

"Our fitness can be a factor in how quick we recover from treatment. By supporting patients to undertake an individualised exercise plan, we can help them improve their fitness and reduce risk of postoperative complications. Similarly, smoking puts a significant strain on your lungs as well as contributing to a range of other health issues. As part of a treatment plan, we can support patients to stop smoking before their procedure.

"Mental health is also an important aspect of prehabilitation. It is entirely



● Exercise Physiologist Josh has been able to provide virtual support sessions to patients

natural to be anxious ahead of an operation – who wouldn't be? Prehabilitation can help patients mentally prepare for their experience, and help them stay calm and positive before their procedure – as well as prepare for their recovery.

"We work with a range of different patients, including those undergoing major surgery for cancer or for hip replacements. We also support patients who will be going through chemotherapy or radiotherapy for cancer; these treatments, while effective, can also be quite tough on patients' health – but we are here to help."

To find out more about whether you would benefit from Prehabilitation, talk to the staff caring for you or go to the Trust website ([www.medway.nhs.uk](http://www.medway.nhs.uk)) and search for 'MeFit'.

**MeFit**  
The Medway Prehabilitation Service



● Some of our fantastic Prehabilitation Team



## Using the latest technology to improve care

The Trust is developing an Electronic Patient Record (EPR), system which will help us to treat patients more effectively.

This means that, over time, all the information about a patient's medical history and treatment will be in one place rather than in separate locations within the hospital.

The existing system which includes both paper-based notes and

information on different computer systems, means that sometimes information about a patient's care can be held in multiple departments, which could sometimes cause unnecessary delays.

By bringing access to these systems together in one place, we can provide better continuity of care wherever patients are treated in the hospital. As a result patients will no longer have to

give the same information to different members of staff and our clinical staff will be able to spend more time caring for patients as they will have faster access to information.

The new EPR will be rolled out in stages over the next three years, with the first stage due to go live in September 2021.



## Supporting patients with communication barriers

We are delighted to be launching the Just a Minute (JAM) card scheme in our Emergency Department as we take our first steps towards becoming a JAM card friendly Trust.

The card allows people with a learning difficulty, autism or a communication barrier to tell others they need 'Just A Minute' discreetly and easily. Those with a communication barrier are often reluctant or unable to tell others

about their condition. The card allows this to happen in a simple, effective non-verbal manner.

Not all disabilities are visible, many are hidden and so we are promoting the use of the card for our patients.

JAM Card is now available for free as a plastic card or an app for your phone. Or, if you like, both! Visit <https://jamcard.org> for more information.



NHS CHARITIES  
TOGETHER

**YOU'RE INVITED TO  
HOST A TEA PARTY  
LIKE NO OTHER**

**From  
Monday  
5 July**



The NHS celebrates its birthday on the 5 July. To mark this special occasion, we would like you to take part in the nation's biggest tea break by hosting a tea party. Invite friends, family and colleagues along and help raise money for the Medway Hospital Charity!

Brew your thank you for every nurse, hospital porter, cleaner, clinician and paramedic – who have given so much to care for us.

**To get your FREE fundraising pack, please contact the charity and fundraising team:**

email: [medwayft.charity@nhs.net](mailto:medwayft.charity@nhs.net) call: **01634 825398**

 The  
Medway  
Hospital  
Charity

Registered Charity Number: 1051748