

The DCH Dispatch

News from across our Trust

June 2025

New patient experience and engagement hub opens

A new patient experience and community involvement hub has opened at Dorset County Hospital (DCH).

The HIVE (Health and Wellbeing, Information, Volunteering and Engagement) will offer a welcoming space for patients and families to provide feedback about their experience, raise any concerns, and be signposted to various support services available in Dorset.

Overseen by the Patient Experience Team, The HIVE will be used to promote hospital initiatives, such as the volunteer service, and by local organisations for drop-in information events. Examples of planned activity include carer support information, armed forces community engagement, Trust Governor surgeries and membership recruitment, NHS Dorset events and Dorset Council digital champion sessions.



The DCH Charity will also be using the space as a 'front-facing door' to the community to promote and encourage fundraising activity.

The HIVE was officially opened by well-known journalist and author Kate Adie.

Kate, who is also the Patron of the DCH Charity's Emergency and Critical Care Appeal, said: "As a passionate supporter of the hospital, I was delighted to be invited to open The HIVE. It's wonderful to see such a fantastic space that will further support patients and their loved ones at times of stress and anxiety."

The hub was funded by the DCH Charity and gave opportunity for the hospital to repurpose the old Friends of DCH shop, located in South Wing, Level 1. It will be open Monday to Friday, 10am to 3pm. More information about The HIVE is available on our website at dchft.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/the-hive

In this newsletter you will find:

Latest site developments, charity news, governor updates and more...



Welcome from Lead Governor Kathryn Harrison

In this edition I am delighted to introduce you to more of our Governors who have been out and about in the community, with the Weymouth and Portland Governors particularly active. These visits, along with attending Board meetings, committees and visits across the Trust show how the role of the Governor is varied and really interesting - I am learning new things all the time. I hope you enjoy this edition of The DCH Dispatch.

Out and about in the community

By Jean-Pierre Lambert

As Governors within our local NHS Trust, a key part of our role is to act as a vital link between the community and DCH. We are here to ensure that your voices are heard at the very heart of all decisions made. To achieve this, we actively engage with our community, attending events and holding drop-ins where we can.

Together with my fellow Governors Anne Link and Alan Clark, we recently visited a knitting group and a mother and baby group at The Palm House in Weymouth and a coffee morning at the Family Church in Weymouth, where we had valuable conversations. The feedback was largely positive, with many praising the care and kindness of DCH staff, in particular those in the Emergency Department.

After each meeting, our findings - both positive and negative - are then shared for follow up with the Trust's Patient Experience Team.

If you are part of a community group and would be interested in a visit from the Governors, please get in touch.

We are here to listen and ensure your voice is heard.



Enjoying the arts in hospital

By Simon Bishop

I rather enjoy Dorset Arts Week because it's a chance to see the artists in their own studio, in their own environment and get a nice cup of coffee! It was thus with a sense of enthusiasm that I looked at the map of venues only to see Dorset County Hospital! It's not an artist in residence but a charitable programme called Arts in Hospital and has an extensive catalogue of works. So next time you are visiting DCH have a look on the walls around you and you might be surprised and delighted!



Emergency and Critical Care Appeal reaches £1million mark



An incredible £1.1million has now been raised for the Dorset County Hospital Charity's Emergency and Critical Care Appeal.

It is thanks to the fundraising efforts, donations from the local community and businesses, gifts in wills and DCH staff that we have been able to reach this amount.

Money raised will fund enhanced facilities and equipment for the new Emergency Department and Critical Care Unit. Plans include a new child and adolescent mental health suite, dedicated relatives' rooms and a paediatric critical care bed space, a patient garden, artistic designs and equipment.

If you would like to fundraise for the DCH Charity and help us reach our £2.5million target for this appeal, please get in touch.

You can find out more on the DCH Charity website at dchcharity.org.uk or scan the QR code.



Spotlight on... Decontamination Services

The team in the Decontamination Department at DCH are responsible for processing all reusable surgical equipment. The service is split into two areas, Sterile Services and Endoscopy Decontamination. Equipment is processed by way of washing and disinfecting, inspection and packaging and finally sterilisation. This service is provided for departments within the Trust as well as external practices, such as dentists and GPs, and charities.

All instruments are tracked through the decontamination cycle by a specialist computer system called T-Doc which allows the staff to ensure correct cleaning and sterilisation has taken place. This system also allows trays of instruments to be tracked to each patient and procedure, giving complete traceability.



The role the department holds within the hospital is vital for patient care in ensuring that all re-usable instruments and scopes are processed in accordance with Medical Devices Directive UK MDR 2002 and British Standard ISO 13485.

All staff within Sterile Services are highly trained making sure that these standards are met. The staff also are required to know the names and function of all re-usable medical devices that pass through so that they can check for any imperfections or repairs that might be required.



Your Future Hospital

Major milestone in site construction

This spring marks a major milestone in the construction of our new £100million Emergency Department (ED) and Critical Care Unit. Works to level the site and prepare the ground for main construction are almost complete and have included a new electrical substation, waste compound and access road. This means the next phase of work can begin soon and we will start to see the frame of the new building begin to appear over the coming months.



Accessing our existing Emergency Department



To help keep our emergency services running smoothly during main construction of the new building, people arriving at the current ED on foot or by car now must enter via South Wing, Entrance 1. A dedicated area has been created in South Wing where staff will assess patients and make sure they receive the appropriate care. Ambulances will arrive at the existing ED via the access route that goes around the construction site off Damers Road.

Improved facilities for cancer patients

Work is underway to transform our Fortuneswell Unit for patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment. The £2million refurbishment will include a revised layout with more space, better facilities for patients and staff and an outdoor courtyard space. Chemotherapy outpatients are temporarily receiving their treatment on Fortuneswell Ward while work is underway. The refurbished unit is due to open this summer.

More details about our site developments are available at dchft.nhs.uk/about-us/your-future-hospital

Your Council of Governors

Elected Public Governors

West and South Dorset

- Judy Crabb
- Kathryn Harrison
- David Taylor
- Mike Byatt
- Alan Clark
- Jean-Pierre Lambert
- Anne Link

North and East Dorset

- Simon Bishop
- Maurice Perks
- Carol Manton

Staff Governors

- Max Deighton
- Midhun Paul
- Jack Welch

Appointed Governors

- Barbara Purnell (Friends of Dorset County Hospital)
- Cllr Rory Major (Dorset Council)
- Terri Lewis (Age UK)

DCH AGM/AMM

Please join us on Monday, 15 September for our Annual General Meeting and Annual Members' Meeting. It will be held in our Education Centre (East Wing, Level 0) from 5pm to 7.30pm. Refreshments will be provided in Room 1 before the meeting begins in the Lecture Theatre.

Contact us



If you would prefer to receive this by email, please get in touch.

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