

GP FOCUS

The latest news and developments from your local hospital

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A warm welcome from Martin Wetherill



Mr. Martin Wetherill FRCS

Welcome to the latest edition of GP Focus. Our Press for Change programme, which is improving patient care and experience as well as ensuring the hospital achieves its financial savings target, is continuing apace. This issue contains the latest developments from

some of the key projects that are helping to improve the quality of care and patient experience at Milton Keynes Hospital, and other news which we hope will help keep primary care colleagues up-to-date.

MKHFT knows it needs to listen to everyone who uses our services, and has recently undertaken a series of listening events with patients ('In Your Shoes') and staff ('In Our Shoes'). These sessions have proved invaluable in listening to patients as these comments show:

- "Staff very helpful and encouraged everyone to 'open up' and speak honestly about their experiences"
- "I found the various discussions very useful – especially if the issues can be rectified"
- "Positive and constructive ideas to help transform what is ok/good to even better"
- "To feel like my feelings, views and opinions will be

heard is great"

- "A good idea which promises well for the future and inspires some creative improvements"

Having listened to patients and staff, we are also very keen to hear from you – our GP partners. We would like you to give us your feedback on the hospital, its services and the experiences you and your patients have had over the past 12 months through a stakeholder survey that will be sent to you in November.

We are also very keen to hear from you concerning articles and information you would like to see in future editions of your newsletter. Please do get in touch with any suggestions or feedback via communications@mkhospital.nhs.uk

Martin Wetherill
Medical Director
Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

New Consultants

Over the summer months, the following new consultants have been appointed:

General Medicine - Dr Christopher Lindesay
Accident & Emergency - Dr Eleanor Beswick
Palliative Care - Dr Jane Wale
Obs & Gynae - Dr Peter Yeh
Paediatrics - Dr Renton L'Heureux
Anaesthetics - Dr Hanna Chin and Dr Thomas McCarthy
Pathology - Dr Gayathri Wathuge



Early pregnancy assessment unit

Delivering better care for women right when they need it

Moving our Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU) to a new location has helped raise the quality of care and experience for pregnant women experiencing pain and bleeding, as well as increasing the capacity and responsiveness of the service.

Previously, the EPAU was located in a small space in Luing Cowley and had limited space so women attending for an appointment at the EPAU would have to wait to be seen with other patients waiting for general appointments. Waiting times for the service were one week and during that time many

women would present to A&E because they were so worried or their symptoms worsened.

The service was being used by around 350 patients a month – half of whom would sadly be given bad news about their pregnancy. The restrictions of the space meant that delivering and receiving such difficult news was made much worse; and women needing further treatment would be faced with a long trip to the Surgical Assessment Unit (SAU) or theatre.

At the beginning of 2012, the Trust undertook a project to move the EPAU to a larger, dedicated space in the former Ward 17, within the main hospital building. This larger space provided a dedicated patient waiting area, an extra scan room and access to beds. The Trust was able to increase the EPAU opening times to offer an all-day service and increase capacity to shorten waiting times so that women are now able to get an appointment within 24 hours of referral within the working week. This helps reduce their stress at such a worrying time. Women using the service who need to be referred for further treatment can be more quickly and conveniently admitted to the SAU which is now adjacent to the EPAU.

Emma Codrington, Matron Gynaecology/Sexual Health at the Trust, confirmed that the new EPAU service has received excellent feedback from patients since the move:

“The EPAU has really benefitted from being in its new space. We are now able to offer women in the early stages of pregnancy who are experiencing difficulties more timely and more appropriate care. It helps make a difficult and stressful situation a bit easier for these women and their partners.”

Research & Development

As a district general hospital, the Trust is funded for its participation in clinical trials (mainly drug research), and takes a pride in contributing to the development of new therapies.

You may have patients within your practice who would be interested in participating in some of the current clinical trials that are being carried out at Milton Keynes Hospital. Two current studies may be of particular interest:

Understanding the early pathological pathways in Parkinson's disease (Principal Investigator – Dr Michele Hu) – a £1.6 million, five-year project funded by Parkinson's UK which aims to recruit 3,000 volunteers and identify elusive biomarkers for Parkinson's which could revolutionise the diagnosis and management of the disease

DUTY - The Diagnosis of UTI in Young Children Study

Your practice can play a valuable role as a Participant Identification Centre for the Trust, providing information about a research study to a potential participant and inviting the patient to contact the Trust's research team or obtaining appropriate agreements to pass on the relevant details of the patient to the hospital research team for assessment and possible recruitment to a study.

The R&D team can provide your practice with electronic and hard copies of booklets such as Understanding Clinical Trials from the National Institute for Health Research. There is also a wealth of information available to share with patients online, including:

Patient and public information from the National Institute for Health Research – www.crncc.nihr.ac.uk/ppi/ppi

A summary of some of the other trials currently running at Milton Keynes Hospital – www.mkhospital.nhs.uk/our-services/r-and-d/our-studies

If you would like further information about specific clinical trials or have a general enquiry, please do get in touch with the Trust's R&D department at research@mkhospital.nhs.uk

Nurse at Milton Keynes Hospital shortlisted for 2012 Nursing Times Awards

The staff at the Trust are second to none. We know it and, from time to time, others also recognise it. We are delighted to announce that Alison Sandaver, Macmillan Senior Sister and Advanced Nurse Practitioner (pictured, right), was one of only six nurses across the UK shortlisted for the prestigious Cancer Nurse Leader Award at this year's annual Nursing Times Awards.

Colleagues nominated Alison for the considerable impact she has had on improving the standard of care for cancer patients being treated at Milton Keynes Hospital. She has been the driving force behind a number of initiatives including:

- **A 24-7 advice line that provides information and support to all patients undergoing chemotherapy**
- **A chemotherapy alert card given to all cancer patients that identifies they need IVABS to be administered within one hour of presentation at hospital**
- **An acute oncology service which means that any patient who comes into hospital for other health-related matters who has a known cancer diagnosis is seen by a specialist Macmillan nurse within 24-hours of arrival.**

Alison also works closely with the MK Hospital Cancer Patient Partnership Group, ensuring that their views and experiences are listened to closely to improve cancer services at Milton Keynes Hospital. One new initiative as a result of this has been the development of a new prescription wig service at Milton Keynes (one of only two such services in the country) for patients who have suffered hair loss as a result of their cancer treatment.

In 2010, the Macmillan Haematology and Oncology Unit at Milton Keynes became the first unit in England to receive the Macmillan Quality Environment Mark for high standards of cleanliness and comfort and the welcoming attitude of staff. As the senior sister for the unit, Alison was instrumental in the Trust achieving this award.

Commenting on her nomination from hundreds of applicants, Alison said:

"I am delighted to have been shortlisted for this award. I share the achievement with all the staff on the Macmillan ward. Together we work to provide the best possible care to our patients and try to make a challenging time of life a bit easier."



Better breast screening for MK

Milton Keynes Hospital's breast screening unit has just put in place two big new improvements - installation of two fixed digital mammography machines and one mobile machine, and extending the Trust's breast screening programme to cover women aged 43-73 years old. This means that whether women attend for their mammogram at the hospital or at the mobile unit, they get all the benefits of digital images (clearer images produced more efficiently).

We have also been running a bespoke promotional campaign to raise awareness of the importance of breast screening amongst hard-to-reach communities (such as some ethnic minorities and women with learning difficulties) in Milton Keynes and the surrounding communities.

Dr Amanda Harvard, Consultant Radiologist and Director of Breast Screening at the Trust, said:

"As well as building capacity into the screening programme and extending the age range to meet the requirements of the Government's Cancer Reform Strategy, the team have been active in both health promotion and fundraising locally. I am delighted that our innovative approach means that our results are regularly in the top three for the South Central region in comparison to other acute trusts."



(Left) The new interventional suite is filled with hi-tech gadgets and (right), patient artery post angioplasty

£350,000 Investment in trust interventional room for less invasive procedures

A replacement for the Trust's obsolete Interventional Room has broadened the range of procedures that can now be performed. The examinations and procedures undertaken in this room will benefit patients that would previously have had to undergo surgery, with its associated risks, and may reduce length of stay whilst achieving the same therapeutic result.

The Trust will be able to deliver reduced radiation doses following the installation of the latest digital interventional imaging equipment. The new suite will allow increased capacity for the department to provide patients with more responsive and less invasive care.

The last few months have been a challenging time for Imaging with the building works and installation of the new Interventional Suite continuing whilst the team maintained a high quality service for patients. The installation of the equipment is now well under way and transition to a full, live service is expected in early November.

The new equipment is extremely versatile and will enable patients coming to Milton Keynes Hospital to have a wider

range of pinhole surgical procedures, such as patients with severe pancreatitis, women suffering severe post-birth bleeding and those requiring biopsies as part of a diagnostic investigation. Milton Keynes is one of the few centres in the UK with this sophisticated level of equipment and the potential it offers.

The impact of Amalga for patients

The implementation of Microsoft Amalga across the Trust now means that A&E clinicians are recording discharge information in real time. This means we have been able to increase the quality of information provided to a patient's GP practice following a visit to A&E as clinicians log in to one screen on Amalga and it pulls up all patient information from all areas of the hospital.

Nearly three-quarters of discharge letters are also now sent electronically in PDF format directly to a patient's GP via the NHS.NET email facility as soon as the patient is discharged from the A&E department, providing a more responsive information service to local practices.

We know that GPs are keen to collaborate in managing their patients' urgent care needs. The Amalga system also allows discharge summaries to be sent to your practices to let you see how many times a patient from your practice has attended A&E in the last 12 months. This will let you to proactively review individual patients who are frequent attenders and help reduce attendance and possible admission, as part of a concerted effort on all our parts to help commissioners reduce activity in the system.