Your healthcare in North Tyneside

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In November last year, the trust welcomed a team of CQC inspectors with further ‘unannounced’ visits. Findings from the CQC’s Chief Inspector of Hospitals, Sir Mike Richards, reveal Northumbria Healthcare as only the fourth organisation nationally to receive the highest possible accolade – ‘outstanding’.

North Tyneside General Hospital was rated ‘outstanding’ alongside the trust’s two other general hospital sites at Wansbeck and Hexham.

The Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital in Cramlington which opened in June 2015 was also rated ‘outstanding’ as were community services.

The trust was commended for its innovative and pioneering approach to end-of-life care and services provided for children, young people and families in the community. There was respect for the individual person, rather than the condition or service.

The CQC report also identifies some areas for improvement. Northumbria Healthcare places great emphasis on listening to the views of patients, staff and members of the public. Known as ‘The Northumberland Way’, this continuous focus on quality means that the areas identified by the CQC had already been identified by the trust with work underway to make the necessary improvements.

Mr David Evans, chief executive of the trust, said: ‘We are immensely proud to receive such positive recognition from the CQC after such a landmark year for Northumbria. ’

On behalf of the trust board I would like to thank each and every member of staff for the commitment they show, every single day, to provide high quality patient care.

“Our teams look after people when they are often at their most vulnerable, whether that is coming into hospital, coping with an ongoing health problem, or learning to live with an unexpected illness.

“The care and compassion shown by our workforce touches people’s lives on a daily basis and every one of our employees should be rightfully proud of the great value they bring to our local communities and the people we serve.

“As always, we must now look forward to the future so that we can continue to build on our successes to date and push the boundaries of excellence in everything we do.

“We will continue to listen to our staff, patients and the public so that we can improve the quality of care we provide even further.”

The CQC report also recognised the trust’s work in infant and young people, including meeting their emotional needs.

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High praise for family community health services

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The community health services for children, young people and families rated ‘outstanding’ in all areas covered services provided to people in their own homes, in schools and in clinics across North Tyneside and Northumberland.

These include health visiting, school nursing, community nursing, children’s nursing, looked after children, the family nurse partnership, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and sexual health services.

Key findings from the report included:

- Staff created a strong, visible, person-centred culture and were highly motivated and inspired to offer the best possible care to children and young people, including meeting their emotional needs.
- Staff were very passionate about their role and, in some cases, went beyond the call of duty to provide care and support to families.
- There was respect for the different personal, cultural, social and religious needs of the children and young people they cared for, and care and treatment was focussed on the individual person rather than the condition or service.
- Families were very positive about the service they received. They described staff as being very caring, compassionate, understanding and supportive.
- The culture was open and transparent with a clear focus on putting children and young people at the centre of their care.
- Staff were very positive about working for the trust and leadership was excellent across all services.
- Services were flexible, provided choice and ensured continuity of care.

‘Outstanding’ dental service focuses on patients’ needs

Dental services provided by Northumbria Healthcare at community clinics and hospital sites were rated ‘outstanding’ by the CQC.

The clinics provide a range of specialised dental services which are not routinely available in general dental practice, including general anaesthesia, inhalation sedation, orthodontics, oral health promotion, dental epidemiology, special school screening and dental care for patients with a variety of special care needs including patients with complex medical needs, looked after children, anxious and phobic patients and patients with a range of disabilities.

The service was rated ‘outstanding’ because:

- It is effective, evidence-based, innovative and focused on patients’ needs.
- It is as extremely responsive to patients’ needs: people could access services in a timely way that suited them.
- Effective multidisciplinary team working and links between clinics ensured patients received appropriate care at the right times and without avoidable delays.
- Patients from all communities could access treatment if they met the service’s criteria.
- The service had a proactive approach to understanding the needs of different groups of people.
- Patients, relatives and carers said they had positive experiences of care within the service with staff providing compassion and effective care.
- Staff are hard-working, caring and committed to the care and treatment they provided.
‘One year on’ for new model of emergency care

So impressed with specialist heart care

Doreen Wilkinson is one patient who is benefitting from specialist heart care available at The Northumbria hospital.

Doreen, 86, experienced sudden chest pain and shortness of breath at home in the early hours of Sunday 5 June. She called 111, however an ambulance was sent to her home in North Shields which took her straight to The Northumbria for emergency treatment.

When in the emergency department, where emergency medicine consultants are on site 24/7, Doreen was quickly assessed and underwent diagnostic tests which showed she was having a heart attack.

She was moved to the specialist cardiology ward where she was seen by one of the team of cardiologists who work every day of the week – with ward rounds on Saturdays and Sundays to see emergency heart patients.

Doreen immediately received blood-thinning medication to help reduce the blockage in the arteries in her heart while she awaited transfer to the Freeman Hospital.

Doreen said: “The doctors have said this has been a warning for me and could have been much worse. ‘I really couldn’t fault any of the staff at all, they have been brilliant. “Nothing has been too much bother for them and they go the extra mile.”

Doreen was cared for in one of the single en-suite rooms on the ward and has been very impressed with all aspects of her experience.

“Alongside having access to specialists throughout my stay what I’ve really liked about this hospital is that it’s not a long ward,” she said.

“The nurses can stand in the middle and look into every patient’s room and you never feel on your own.”

Doreen, a mother of two, also praised the food and the fact that diagnostics is based adjacent to the emergency department, meaning patients do not need to go to another part of the hospital for tests.

Dr Colin Doig is a consultant cardiologist who works in The Northumbria looking after emergency heart patients.

He said: “The really big difference of the new model is the speed at which everything happens and the quick diagnostics which mean we are getting patients home much sooner than ever before. “For patients being admitted with heart failure, the speed of diagnosis and ready availability of a cardiologist opinion, means their average stay in hospital is now one or two days – previously they may have been in hospital up to six days if they had been admitted on a weekend.

“The emergency service we offer now is exactly the same on a Friday, Saturday, and Sunday as it is on a weekend.

“In my 25-year career as a consultant cardiologist, nothing comes close to this level of quality improvement and it’s a privilege to be part of it.”

Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital is now the largest receiving emergency department in the North East and the centralisation of emergency care has impacted on the performance of ambulance handover times with around 7 per cent of all ambulance arrivals at The Northumbria waiting over 30 minutes to handover patients.

Northumbria has been working closely with the ambulance service and other partners to actively address this problem and make sure patients have a smooth transition into the emergency department, especially during periods of peak demand. This figure is now showing signs of improvement and plans are in place to improve the physical space for ambulance arrivals in preparation for next winter.
Endoscopy prepares to move to its new home

As part of significant developments at general hospitals following the new model of emergency care, North Tyneside General Hospital’s endoscopy department is gearing up to move to its new home.

The opening of The Northumbria hospital at Cramlington has meant there is more space at North Tyneside General Hospital to develop facilities to ensure that patients coming in for planned operations and procedures experience the very best care, in the best environment, with the utmost privacy and dignity.

The endoscopy department at North Tyneside hospital is currently housed in temporary buildings attached to the main hospital and will relocate to the area where critical care was based, which has now transferred to the new Northumbria hospital.

Sandra Marshall, who is matron in charge of endoscopy, said: “It was always planned that we’d move to a permanent home instead of being in temporary buildings attached to the main hospital - the discussion was just where that would be. With the new emergency care hospital opening last year the intensive care unit and high dependency were freed up, and they proved ideal for our department.

“We want our patients to get the very best possible care, in the very best environment, with the utmost privacy and dignity.”

The new endoscopy department offers bowel screening including the government’s flexi-sigmoidoscopy bowel screening for the over 55s. This involves passing a tube into the back passage to look for abnormalities which can be treated years before any symptoms are present. If minor abnormalities such as bowel polyps are found, they can be removed quickly and painlessly saving the patient a possible progression to bowel cancer.

Sandra said: “People do get very anxious about endoscopies. They hear stories from their friends and they normally come in here and say they want to be sedated throughout the procedure.

“When we talk them through the range of options available to them they can make an informed decision. Approximately half of our patients choose to have throat spray if the scope is going into the stomach and choose to use entonox (gas and air) if the scope’s going in from the bottom.

“Choosing these options makes recovery much quicker but we understand it’s not for everyone. Our pre-assessment nurses are experts in setting out the options and explaining very clearly exactly what a patient can expect.”

JAG accreditation

The kite mark for endoscopy units is called JAG accreditation. It is awarded by the Royal College of Physicians Joint Advisory Group and it shows that endoscopy departments have the equipment, procedures and appropriately skilled and trained people in place to offer the highest quality services possible.

“As part of significant developments at general hospitals following the new model of emergency care, North Tyneside General Hospital’s endoscopy department is gearing up to move to its new home.”

Nursing assistant Donna Thompson looks after a patient in recovery.

“As part of continued investment in services at North Tyneside General Hospital, a new £500,000 CT scanner has proved its worth and its flexibility in its first year of operation.

Installed in June 2015, the team of diagnostic radiographers have carried out over 8,000 scans in the past year. Whether it’s a referral, from the hospital’s 24/7 urgent care centre, a patient attending as an outpatient following a GP referral, or a ward in the hospital needing a scan for an inpatient, the scanner is on hand 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

“CT (or computed tomography) works by passing the patient through a scanner which takes images of the patient’s body. These images are taken in slices. Consultant radiologists look at the scans, diagnose the illness or injury and report back to the professional who requested the scan.

CT lead for Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Dave Winthrop said: “As a CT surgeon at North Tyneside General Hospital can be used for all types of scans from soft tissue and muscles, bones, veins, arteries and organs and it’s so fast it can even image a beating heart.

“It’s very fast and versatile which is why it was chosen for the hospital. Diagnostics such as scanning are vital in modern healthcare. They are a very important part of decision-making for professionals and produce high-quality images which can be looked at in great detail.

“All of the diagnostic imaging across the trust is supported by a picture archiving system which means they can be viewed on any PC by the relevant health professionals.

“For example, this means our orthopaedic teams can look at images in theatre to help them decide on the surgical procedure to use. It also means the reporting on CT images can be done by qualified professionals wherever they are; they don’t need to be in the radiology department. This means they can make much better use of their time and cuts down the need for travel.

“If patients need to be referred to another hospital for treatment their images can be seen by the medical team there so it’s not necessary to repeat scans which is much better for the patient and a much more efficient use of NHS resources.

“We have a fantastic team of highly-skilled diagnostic radiographers and support staff who help put patients at ease when they come in for a scan.

“Having such state-of-the-art facilities available is excellent for people living in North Tyneside and means we can provide the best possible high quality diagnostic available anywhere in the world.”

The scanner complements a £1m MRI scanner installed at the hospital in 2014.

High praise for Northumbria Birthing Centre

Over 3,400 babies have been born at the new Northumbria Birthing Centre since it opened.

30-year-old Sarah Trevena, of Whitley Bay, gave birth to baby Florence earlier this year at the hospital.

Having had two other children, Sarah had experience of different hospitals. She said: “I had Lowenna, now five, at Wansbeck hospital and Arthur, now three, at the RVI. I chose the new hospital because they welcome partners to stay throughout, and even overnight, and I wanted my husband Stu to stay with me. The facilities in the unit are really good. They have chairs that convert to beds for partners - to me that was priceless.

Sarah, a secondary school teacher, added: “I was monitored closely throughout my pregnancy as both of my other children were small at birth. For that reason, I decided to be induced. I had also developed SPD (sympathetic pubic dysfunction), a condition which results in severe discomfort and pain in the pelvis.

“I went into hospital on 22 February to be induced. I got settled in and the induction was started. My waters were broken at 11pm and after that it went very fast – Florence was born at 12.30am on 23 February.

“My midwife Michelle and student midwife Liberty were amazing. Michelle made me feel confident and get Florence delivered. Liberty was so calm which was fantastic as I felt out of control when the labour was progressing so quickly. Florence weighed in at a healthy 7lb 8oz.

“Afterwards it was nice too. I had a shower and tea and toast before I was transferred to the ward. I couldn’t rate the experience highly enough.

“It was lovely having my husband Stu there all the time. This really swayed my choice and I would recommend the Birthing Centre at Cramlington to any pregnant woman. The facilities were excellent and the care was fantastic.”

One year in, new CT scanner proves its worth
Two new knees and nothing but praise for North Tyneside hospital

Recovering in hospital after a second knee replacement at North Tyneside General Hospital, Dave Clark has nothing but praise for the care he has received.

North Tyneside hospital is widely recognised as one of the best in the NHS for its expert orthopaedic care.

In the trust’s recent CQC inspection which highlighted North Tyneside as an ‘outstanding’ hospital, inspectors also recognised the orthopaedic team as ‘one of the best in the country’ for the quality of training of orthopaedic surgeons of the future.

The trust has one of the largest orthopaedic departments in the region with short waiting times and surgeons recognised as some of the best in the UK.

Since last June, around 3,000 people have chosen to have their planned orthopaedic procedures at North Tyneside General Hospital.

Expert help and support is available round the clock to get patients up on their feet as soon as possible and back home quickly with the right support in place.

For extra peace of mind, the trust runs a 24-hour dedicated helpline to help answer patients’ questions about their wound or rehabilitation after leaving hospital.

Dave, 68, who is under the care of consultant orthopaedic surgeon Mr Seif Asaad, has had two knee replacement procedures in the past 12 months.

He said: “In October last year I came into North Tyneside hospital to have my right knee replaced. I recovered pretty quickly and asked Mr Asaad when I could have the other one done!

“He put me first on the list for 31 May just gone. I came in at 7.30am and, as with my right knee, I had a spinal anaesthetic. I even saw a sample of the knee replacement before it went in.”

Dave added: “The whole team here are great. I’d say to anyone coming in ‘not to worry. They put themselves out for you, they’re sincere and they’re interested in you.

“They want to look after you and do their best for you and I’m talking about every single member of staff.”

After just a two-night stay I was ready to go home. I can’t fault a thing. The food was good and there was plenty of choice.”

Since opening The Northumbria hospital in June last year and with the separation of emergency care from the trust’s general hospital sites, this has helped create a much calmer environment and seamless experience for patients, like Dave, coming in for planned operations.

Dave, who had been facing the prospect of life in a wheelchair due other health issues, said: “I honestly can’t thank Mr Asaad and the team at North Tyneside General Hospital enough.

“Hopefully I’ll be able to dance with my wife Evelyn soon - it’s been 11 years since I’ve been able to do that.”

Mr Asaad said: “The separation of emergency and planned elective care has transformed care at our general hospitals.

“It means that patients are able to prepare for, and recover from, their planned operation in a calm environment dedicated to elective patients, without the hustle and bustle of patients having emergency procedures.

“This is greatly improving the experiences of patients choosing North Tyneside hospital for their planned procedures with patients also benefitting from the round-the-clock help and support we provide following surgery.”

A new £6million inpatient facility at North Tyneside General Hospital dedicated to supporting older people with dementia and other mental health issues is set to open this month.

The new facility will provide a purpose-built environment for older people suffering from the various stages of dementia as well as other mental health illnesses such as anxiety and depression. It will bring together inpatient services which were previously spread out across North Tyneside.

Matron Samantha Allen, who has spent her career looking after adults with mental illness, explained: “The CQC, during their visits to our services has praised the care we give to our patients but has always commented that our ward environment could be better. We look after older people with a range of problems – from depressions, anxiety or bi-polar conditions, to those affected by dementia and those with challenging behaviour.

“While the facilities we had were fine when they were first built, standards in modern healthcare have changed. The focus of our care environments now is to make things as normal as possible.

“For example, we want our patients, who can spend months in our care, to get up and dressed in the morning, come to the dining room for meals and to take part in activities. While they are under the care of the consultant and the team we want to make their life as normal as it can possibly be.

“Bringing our wards together in this new facility means a much improved environment but is also much more convenient for when a patient needs help with bathing. Fixtures and fittings have been carefully chosen to prevent patients from possible harm. Nurses’ stations provide a hub for staff to be on hand and to observe patients.

“Day rooms lead out onto paved patios with artificial grass, living walls and areas where patients and staff can plant vegetables and enjoy some therapeutic gardening. Even the ward on the first floor has a carefully-designed roof terrace to enable patients to enjoy some fresh air.

“At the moment the ward corridors are white and clean but that’s about to change. A welcome donation from the trust’s charitable funds means an art project will get underway soon.

“The aim is to have some relevant art work with some fixed work, complemented with a more dynamic element which can be changed as new patients are encouraged to express themselves through art.

“This will be part of the trust’s award-winning healing arts programme which has enabled partnership work with local universities, colleges and community groups to improve the patient environment.

“Samantha continued: “All of the staff are really excited about the move. For many years we’ve had very favourable inspections but the thing that lets us down, and we could do nothing about, was the environment for care.

“We’re also pleased that the community mental health services from Ash Court are joining us on the new wards so we will be working much more closely.

“This is really important because our patients are often in the care of community colleagues before and after their stay with us. It makes our patients’ care continuous and much more holistic.

“A significant part of designing the new wards was to listen to what patients and their families said. For example, after listening to views of families we changed the name of the service from Psychiatry of Old Age to Mental Health Services for Older People.

“It does what it says on the tin and, actually, is a much better description of what we do.”

www.northumbria.nhs.uk
A new rapid response service is providing urgent specialist nursing for patients nearing the end of life in North Tyneside.

The new team called Marie Curie @ Northumbria Rapid Response is part of a partnership between Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Marie Curie.

The team, which includes palliative care clinical nurse specialists, Marie Curie nurses and healthcare assistants, supported by an on-call palliative care consultant, responds within an hour to referrals for urgent support from healthcare professionals or from patients and their families.

It provides specialist advice, hands-on nursing care and support, and emotional support to patients in their own home, residential or nursing home.

The aim is to deliver high quality care to patients in the North Tyneside area and to support patients with their preferred place of care at the end of their lives.

The rapid response team works alongside established community teams to ensure effective coordination of patient care.

The partnership brings together the strengths of the charity Marie Curie, which provides nursing care and support to people living with terminal illness, and Northumbria Healthcare with its expertise delivering dedicated palliative care in hospital and community settings.

The new team provides support seven days a week between 9am and 10pm.

Modern matron Michele McKidd said: “The Rapid Response team provides urgent care and support for people with any complex, advanced or life-limiting illnesses, and their families. This could be for a range of urgent nursing, social, physical or psychological needs, such as a patient who is struggling to cope with their symptoms or condition, or experiencing a rapid deterioration in their condition, or a carer who is in crisis and needs support.”

The rapid response we provide supports people to be treated and cared for in a setting of their choice, reducing the number of unnecessary hospital admissions for patients with palliative care needs, which can be traumatic for them and their families.”

The trust’s partnership with Marie Curie is jointly funded and aims to improve the quality of life of patients and their families across North Tyneside and Northumberland, who are living with life-limiting illnesses.

Karen Torley, divisional general manager for Marie Curie, North East Division, said: “The early signs are encouraging that our rapid response team is making a real difference to local people with a terminal illness and their families.

“The team has already had lots of referrals and provided care for people in their own homes, as well as prevented unnecessary admissions to hospital, which can be distressing for everyone involved.”

“Working with Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, we want to help even more families going through really difficult times, and enable more people to receive the care they need at the right time.”

Northumbria Healthcare provides a range of support for people living with life-limiting illness and has specialist centres in North Tyneside and Wallsend general hospitals and The Northumbria hospital as well as community specialist palliative care nurses who care for patients at home or in the community.

**Representing the community**

As a foundation trust, Northumbria Healthcare has elected public governors who work closely with the trust to plan local services and respond to the needs and wishes of local communities.

In North Tyneside, 10 local people are elected as the trust’s public governors and give their views to help develop priorities and influence any proposals for change. They have vital input in how services are developed and run in the future and ultimately help hold the trust board to account.

You can contact your public governors via 0191 203 1296 or e-mail foundation@northumbria.nhs.uk

**Public encouraged to join trust**

Northumbria Healthcare is always keen to encourage local people and patients who have used services to sign up and become members of the trust.

As a trust member you can:
- help improve patient care by giving your views
- receive regular updates through e-bulletins and newsletters
- learn more about healthcare services and developments
- attend meetings of the trust’s Council of Governors
- exchange views and network with other members
- vote for public governors, or stand to be elected yourself

If you’d like to become a member visit www.northumbria.nhs.uk/members and complete the online application form or call the foundation membership team on 0191 203 1296.

**Public governors in North Tyneside**

**Stuart Blair**

Stuart has worked in industry and commerce for 40 years before embarking on a career in the care sector in 2003. He’s keen to support elderly and disabled people in North Shields having formerly worked with older people.

**Peter Latham**

Peter was an independent financial advisor until he had a stroke in 2005. He has an active interest in helping stroke patients and is part of the trust’s award-winning peer support scheme. He has also helped produce a website to help people recovering from a stroke.

**Mary Laver**

Mary became interested in the health system around 25 years ago when she became severely disabled with rheumatoid arthritis. She has been involved in various charities, health committees and inspection teams over the last 20 years. Mary has a lot of personal experience of being a patient.

**Geoff Mann**

Geoff was a chartered quantity surveyor in both the private and public sectors and worked on the procurement of many hospital projects and other health facilities. He is a volunteer at North Tyneside hospital and lives in Whitley Bay with his family.

**Ian McKee**

Ian worked in higher education for many years before being employed in the voluntary sector for the last 20 years dealing with a wide range of disability issues. He has a broad knowledge of health and social care and how statutory authorities work and function.

**Tony Turnbull**

Tony had a long career in the civil service achieving professional status in all aspects of environment and development. Seconded to the House of Commons to work in sustainability, he was responsible for writing environmental policies for central government and North Tyneside Council.

**Eunice Weatherhead**

After training as a nurse, Eunice progressed to ward sister, working mainly in cardiothoracic nursing, before moving into nursing education. Following retirement she has been involved in pastoral care for a local church and voluntary work at a first school.
We're listening

Tell us what you think and help make us even better

Quality drives everything we do and for us to continue to improve we’d like to know how you think we can make our services even better. Please tell us what you think and we will listen. Just fill in a card and pop it into a postbox at one of our hospitals, or visit our website.

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