

Pulse

March 2021

Chair's Welcome

Hello everyone, pleasingly across the Trust we have seen significant movements away from Covid towards a new normal.

As you might imagine we are working hard across all our facilities to speed up our return to non-Covid activities in all specialities, albeit in a way where we uphold the Covid rules for now, even in the hospital. Here in the Trust we are capturing all the learnings from the last year and will always have one eye on the months ahead so we are prepared for whatever comes. In addition of course, it is great news on vaccines and all staff are now being offered their second doses - vaccines offer so much for our return to a real normal, I encourage all of you that can to accept the vaccine when it comes.

Finally, the easing of covid, doesn't mean the easing of workload and you should all feel very proud, as I do, of all the teams across The Trust who have worked so hard and selflessly through Covid and now are just carrying on delivering great care to everyone that needs it: They Are Amazing!

Second vaccines

The second round of Pfizer vaccines will be delivered to staff at the RBH hub later this month. Staff who have yet to have their first vaccination will also be able to attend. Earlier this month the Trust sourced a quantity of the Astra Zeneca (AZ) vaccine which was offered to staff in a one off clinic to assess demand. It's also been administered to high risk patients including those in renal HD, new cancer patients, long stay stroke patients and neuro rehab patients at the West Berkshire Community Hospital.

Mass Vaccination Centre

Reading's mass vaccination site has opened at the Madejski Football Stadium offering Astra Zeneca (AZ) jabs, starting with those aged 65 and over and other eligible groups and working through the prioritisation lists set out by the Government's Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

Earlier eligible groups who have not yet taken up a vaccination offer can also book an appointment at the Centre. This includes those aged 70/80+, as well as front line health and social care workers and those who are clinically extremely vulnerable.

Work to encourage vaccine uptake

A key focus of the Covid vaccination programme is around the hesitancy of some groups of people to have the jab and the Trust and Berkshire West CCG are working closely with partners from local authorities, community and faith groups, voluntary and health sectors to address these concerns.

Consultant Obstetrician Jane Siddall hosted a staff livestream to reassure people about the vaccine, pregnancy, fertility and breast feeding.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_7LYW97xNo&feature=youtu.be.

Midwife Jammie Korona and Obstetrics and Gynaecology Consultant Dr Shu Wong have also featured in videos to address hesitancy and encourage uptake of the vaccination. Here's Jammie's film

https://youtu.be/GGSUWdBm8_Q and this is a link to Shu's [Covid vaccine video](#)

In addition, Wokingham MP Dr Amit Sharma recorded this video [Mass vaccination centre at the Madejski Stadium](#) during a visit to the Centre by Sky Sports. This one is aimed specifically at sports fans, and more targeted videos are planned to ensure the right messages are reaching the right groups of people.

RBH supports drugs trials

Oxford University researchers are assessing the results of a four week clinical trial which was carried out at the RBH last month to test whether a drug called Almitrine can help people who are seriously ill with Covid. The Hospital was one of three centres carrying out the research on around 116 patients – the other two were the John Radcliffe in Oxford and University Hospital of Wales. The trial team hopes that administering Almitrine to Covid patients will reduce the amount of other respiratory support the patient needs.

The hospital is also taking part in the major RECOVERY trials which are researching and assessing a range of potential treatments for Covid patients. These range from an anti inflammatory drug, an antibody 'cocktail' and aspirin.

Healthcare Science Week

The Trust took part in this month's Healthcare Science Week in a bid to encourage more school pupils to consider a career in this area of work. Chief Medical Officer Janet Lippett fronted a video showcasing the role that science plays in healthcare, from frontline testing of patients to interpreting new technologies and introducing them into patient care. David Cook, the Trust's Lead Healthcare Scientist, highlighted vital work being done in cardiology, respiratory and audiological science, as well as his own Department of Medical Physics and Engineering. The videos are being shared with local schools. <https://youtu.be/eMRX1nJVrO8>

Thames Valley Cancer Alliance

The Thames Valley Cancer Alliance is keen to hear from people who have had cancer, or their relatives or carers, to help improve services in the region. Please contact Lisa Cox, the patient engagement and experience lead on 07900 715074 or l.cox7@nhs.net.

Hospital's special delivery

The online service for families and friends to send messages to loved one at the RBH has been relaunched following its success over Christmas. People can now download a card, personalise it and send back to the hospital for distribution. The online service complements the phone and virtual visiting via iPads which are available for patient use on all the wards. <https://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/special-messages-to-your-friends-and-family-in-hospital.htm>

Patient's gifts

Big hearted local people have donated to a Royal Berks Charity 'Amazon Wishlist' to buy gifts including 50 white boards to help patients communicate whilst on assisted ventilation; hair care products for patients in ICU; 100 heat packs to support cannulation in the Berkshire Cancer Centre; small radios and 'night and day' clocks for patients with dementia. There's a link to the giving page here https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/3AI78JXAUPU9Z?ref=wl_share

Older People and digital GP access

South Reading Patient Voice is holding an event to highlight the results of research they carried out into 'What older patients think about digital access to their GP surgery'. It's on Wednesday 17 March from 10-11.30am. The group carried out the survey in partnership with Reading Voluntary Action and Berkshire Community Foundation and they will jointly present the results of the survey, discuss and review suggested actions. Register at: healthsurvey.uk/workshop

Developing pathology services

Proposals have been drawn up to integrate Surrey and Sussex Healthcare (SASH) NHS Trust into the four existing Boards of BSPS which includes the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust. There will now be a 21 month integration programme which will include formal staff consultations. The proposals will involve some changes, but RBFT is not affected by this at the moment.

Children's Mental Health Survey

A survey looking into ways to access the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is currently running here <https://survey.zohopublic.eu/zs/w2Bzlu>. It's being run by Healthwatch West Berkshire and closes on 31 March. The findings will be shared at the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board later this year.

Support Service following Forbury Gardens Attack

A new service has been set up in response to the incident that happened in Reading's Forbury Gardens last June in which three men were killed. It provides support to people affected by the incident and is being provided by Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Traumatic Stress Service and Victims First. It offers screening, active monitoring, clinical assessment, psychological treatments and/or signposting to other suitable services. There's more information here www.victims-first.org.uk/forburygardens

Trust Doctor's book hits bestseller list

A leading pain consultant from the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust has published a new book offering a set of techniques to enable people to overcome chronic pain. "The Pain Free Mindset" by Dr Deepak Ravindran, a Consultant in Anaesthesia, Pain and Musculoskeletal Medicine, outlines seven key steps to understand and take control /overcome chronic pain. The book made No.1 on the best seller lifestyle list just days after it was released last week

Staff Governor report

My name is Andrew Haydon and I am the Staff Governor for Nursing and Midwifery. Firstly I would like to say a massive thank you, and give you all some feedback from the governors about the monumental effort that every single person has put in through this pandemic. Staff have been relocated to wards completely outside of their comfort zone, as well as looking after patients with a far higher acuity than they have looked after before. It's been a steep learning curve for all, and this has been recognised by the Governors as well as the Senior Leadership Team.

As the Staff Governor for Nursing and Midwifery it is my role to feedback to the governors and senior leadership teams about any concerns, challenges we may be facing or clarity on new areas that are being implemented. I have recently spoken about the uncertainty of the NHSP pay structure as well as my concerns about the stress and strains that this pandemic will have had on staff, both in the present and long term. In the future it would be great to speak to some of the staff face to face and be able to gain real time honest feedback. In the meantime I would welcome anyone to contact me to see how we can support the staff, either if it's an ongoing problem or a suggestion that you have.

As we are slowly coming out of this wave, I would encourage you all to have some time to reflect and take some time to refresh your batteries. Thank you for all your continued hard work and support.