



# Health Matters

Keeping you informed about the news and views of Blackpool Teaching Hospitals



## Stepping up the pace of surgery

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Issue 131, Friday, January 6, 2017

## Welcome from the Interim Chief Executive

**HAPPY New Year and welcome to our first Health Matters newsletter of 2017.**



At the Trust we are welcoming the New Year with news of a landmark operation to implant a new form of pacemaker.

This surgery is less invasive and recovery time is vastly improved for patients.

This is a massive step forward in the treatment of certain cardiac patients and a real milestone for our superb Lancashire Cardiac Centre.

We are also proud to announce that one of our skin cancer coordinators has been asked to become a regional ambassador for the Karen Clifford skin charity, Skcin which is dedicated to the prevention and early detection of all types of skin cancer.

And we are also hoping that you will be able to help us continue to provide excellent facilities for our patients by supporting some of our Blue Skies charity events which could see you on treks to Morecambe Bay or even the Grand Canyon.

**Wendy Swift,  
Chief Executive (Interim)**

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Health Matters is also available online at [www.bfwh.nhs.uk](http://www.bfwh.nhs.uk)

You can sign up to receive our fortnightly news bulletin directly to your inbox by clicking on the following link: [www.bfwh.nhs.uk/healthmatters](http://www.bfwh.nhs.uk/healthmatters)

**Any comments ideas or suggestions? Please contact: the Communications Department, on 01253 953059, 956875 or 953538 or email [communications@bfwh.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@bfwh.nhs.uk)**

# Landmark operation for cardiac surgeons

HEART surgeons on the Fylde coast are among the first in the region to perform a “landmark” operation to implant a new form of cardiac pacemaker.

Carol Railton, 87, from St Annes received the new “leadless” pacemaker after the first operation of its type at the Lancashire Cardiac Centre based at Blackpool Victoria Hospital.

The new pacemaker, a tenth of the size of current devices, is the smallest in the world and is tucked inside the heart itself via a catheter.

As it is self-contained, it does away with wiring into the heart needed by normal pacemakers. And, as the surgery involved with the new device is minimal, it should reduce the danger of infections developing, while at the same time improving the speed of the patient’s recovery.

Consultant Cardiologist, Dr Grahame Goode, who performed the operation with Dr Khalid Abozguia, (both pictured on our front cover) said: “This is a major step forward for the centre and for patients across the Fylde coast.

“Once we know the patient is suitable to have this type of pacemaker fitted there are huge benefits for them as the leadless technology means it is minimally invasive and carries fewer complications. Cosmetically there will be no scars and as the pacemaker is implanted there will be no visible lump in the chest.

“The simpler operation takes less time and patients can get back to normal in just two to three days, compared with six weeks currently.”

The device could be suitable for around a third of pacemaker operations.



Dr Goode said: “This is a big step forward in patient treatment and a milestone for the Lancashire Cardiac Centre.”

Mrs Railton said: “It feels incredible to know I am the first person locally to have this operation and I feel very privileged. I am very grateful to everyone here for what they have done for me and I can’t thank them enough for their support.”

Pacemakers regulate the heart’s rhythm and are implanted in more than 40,000 patients in England each year. Although they have been getting smaller in recent years – the first to be implanted, in the 1950s, were the size of a small tin of shoe polish – modern devices are still too big to be placed inside the heart itself and so are put in the upper chest.

In contrast, the new device is small enough to be ferried into the heart via a catheter that is passed up through the groin and because it is placed in the heart, there are no wires to be attached.



Members of the Trust's Couch to 5k programme at the Lytham Park Run



Hannah Corless, left, with programme member, Sandra Rudd

# Trust wins gold for active staff

BLACKPOOL Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has received a gold award for supporting staff to become more physically active.

The Trust was one of only eight in the country to receive the gold award in the national Sport and Physical Activity @Work Awards in recognition of the ground-breaking work done by the Trust and its 'Better Tomorrow for BTH Staff' campaign.

Tim Bennett, Deputy Chief Executive of the Trust, said the Trust was delighted to receive the top honour.

He said: "Being physically active is an important part of physical and mental wellbeing, so we are very pleased to have been awarded gold status. The health and wellbeing of our staff is one of our main focuses of attention, so this award is an acknowledgement of the Trust's ongoing commitment to help address the barriers which

make it difficult for the diverse NHS workforce to remain physically active."

The Trust has implemented a number of schemes over the past 18 months including exercise classes, free bike hire, 'Couch to 5k' running groups, weight management programme, resilience training and several health and wellbeing roadshows where staff could be tested for their blood pressure and cholesterol and picked up tips on improving their health.

Hannah Corless, Healthier Workforce Project Manager at the Trust, said: "Since the start of the project staff have been actively encouraged and supported to be more physically active and the feedback we have had has been excellent.

"It has been fantastic to see staff who have not run for years take part in 5k races and are now running regularly because of the classes we put on for them."

DO you make New Year's resolutions you never keep? It could be because you expect to make them last a year.

However, there are some resolutions you could complete within minutes of making them – and you could be healthier for it.

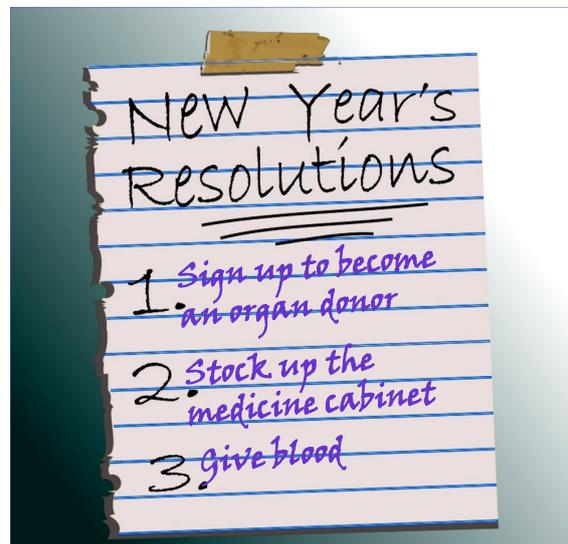
Instead of setting a goal and then feeling bad for not sticking to it, why not make a goal you can complete in a just a few minutes and start the New Year feeling like you've already accomplished something.

The most popular resolutions are usually ones based on health - stop smoking or drinking and joining a gym are near the top of the list. So here are a few health resolutions that you can complete straight away.

- Register for GP online services. It means you'll be able to book appointments with your GP, order repeat prescriptions and see your medical records online at any time. Start by telling your GP practice that you'd like to register for online services.
- Sign up to be an organ donor. It's a promise to save someone's life. Do it here: [www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk)
- Give blood. Find out more at: [www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk)
- Book an appointment for a health check, particularly if you're over 40 it's a good idea to have regular health checks.
- Get involved in your local NHS by completing feedback questionnaires or surveys that will help commissioners plan services in the future. Visit [www.blackpoolccg.nhs.uk](http://www.blackpoolccg.nhs.uk) or [www.fyldeandwyreccg.nhs.uk](http://www.fyldeandwyreccg.nhs.uk) to take part.
- Call an old friend or relative you haven't spoken to in a while. Your call could make the world of difference to them and their wellbeing as well as help reconnect you.
- Get to know your local pharmacist. They

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# New Year pledges that you can keep in minutes



are a great way to get advice on minor ailments when you feel unwell.

- Get your medicine cabinet stocked up with common remedies, medicines and a first aid kit. Find out what should be in yours at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) or ask your local pharmacist. (You could do both of these last two suggestions at the same time!)

# Honour for skin cancer champion



Michelle Forsyth

CLIFTON Hospital's Skin Cancer Care Coordinator, Michelle Forsyth, is set to become a regional ambassador for a national charity.

Michelle is to use her skills to benefit Skcin, the Karen Clifford skin charity, which raises awareness through education, promoting prevention and early detection.

She said: "It is nice to be recognised and be invited to be an ambassador, as my main role is to raise awareness about skin cancers as everyone is at risk."

Following a big rise in referrals for possible skin cancers, Michelle is funded by Macmillan to educate the public about skin cancers.

She organises a lot of outreach events, visiting individuals or groups who will benefit from having more information on skin cancer and she also welcomes people popping in to see her at Clifton Hospital.

She is currently visiting care homes, GP practices, beauty therapy colleges and nurseries as well as holding sessions in more public arenas, such as garden centres. She leaves attendees with a pack containing information and sunscreen samples.

Michelle said: "Part of the training session covers

identification of lesions. While we don't expect people to be diagnosing skin cancers, noticing a change and seeking medical advice is paramount as early detection ensures the best outcome.

"Raising awareness is a huge part of my varied role. I am fortunate enough to still provide support within a clinical setting which I love."

Skin cancer is the UK's most common cancer and more than 80% of them are caused by over-exposure to the sun and/or sunbeds making the majority of all skin cancers preventable.

She added: "Car windows, conservatories, etc, are no barrier to the damaging rays of the sun and this affects everyone.

"We don't advocate anything less than a factor 30 sun cream. It's also important that people are protected against UVB and UVA rays. The star rating for sun cream should be more than four. It doesn't have to be expensive as long as it provides that protection."

She added: "I am available to visit any school or business as we would all benefit from learning about prevention and early detection."

For further information, you can contact Michelle by emailing [Michelle.Forsyth@bfwhospitals.nhs.uk](mailto:Michelle.Forsyth@bfwhospitals.nhs.uk).



The Supporting Minds team

# Team is here to help...

THE New Year isn't always an easy time for people with mental health problems so a service run by Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is here to help.

People experiencing problems such as anxiety or depression are welcome to contact the Supporting Minds mental health service which operates in Blackpool and Cleveleys.

Alison Best, Team Manager for Supporting Minds, said: "There are high levels of anxiety and depression generally within the population in Blackpool and this can impact on all areas of people's lives.

"One in four people will experience problems such as anxiety or depression at some point in their lives and we want to encourage these people to get in touch.

"Some of our clients will be working and some will be off work, due to their mental health problems, or struggling to get into work.

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Addressing anxiety and depression can help people to engage more fully in their lives again.

"When someone calls us they will firstly speak to a member of our team who will take some basic details and then offer an appointment with one of our Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners.

"This is usually a telephone appointment that enables us to find out more about the person's problems, before deciding the kind of intervention that is most likely to help the individual."

The service is available in several venues across Blackpool and Cleveleys and is for people from 16 years upwards.

Members of the public can refer themselves to the service or it can be done through GP surgeries. The Supporting Minds leaflets are available in all GP practices.

For more information on the Supporting Minds service call 01253 955 700 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. You can also contact your GP.



# Walks to paradise

Morecambe Bay

BLUE Skies Hospitals Fund is offering you the opportunity to take part in the iconic Morecambe Bay walk with the wonderful Queen's Guide to the Sands, Cedric Robinson MBE.

Crossing Morecambe Bay is an unforgettable experience which can only be undertaken with an experienced guide.

This famous walk is approximately eight miles long and should take about four hours to complete, depending on the route taken and progress on the day.

The walk, on Sunday, June 4, starts at the picturesque promenade of Arnside and ends at Kents Bank. Registration is between 1.30pm and 2pm. The route affords plenty of panoramic views of the surrounding Lake District, Lancashire and Yorkshire hills.

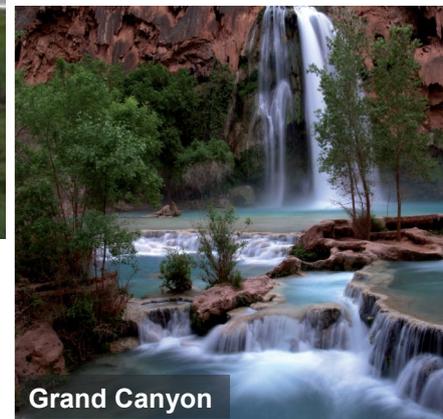
For more details please contact Ann Hedley or Nicci Hayes 01253 957381 or email [blueskies@bfwhospitals.nhs.uk](mailto:blueskies@bfwhospitals.nhs.uk).

Alternatively you can book via [Eventbrite](#)

And for those a touch more adventurous, Blue Skies are very excited to announce they have

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launched their first international challenge and... it's a big one!



Grand Canyon

On this walk you will descend over 3,100 feet into the mind blowing Grand Canyon following an ancient Indian trail that leads you into the breathtaking Havasupai Indian Reservation – the bright blue green lagoons, huge waterfalls and scenery within the reservation are by far some of the best our planet has to offer.

The Blue Skies organised event is scheduled for September 16 to 23 and the charity will be with you all the way supporting you with training and fundraising. They'll also be putting on additional events this year to help you meet your fundraising target.

Why not come along to the launch event on February 9 and hear more about it?

For more details about this exciting adventure and the launch event please contact Nicci Hayes on 01253 957904 or email [nicci.hayes@bfwhospitals.nhs.uk](mailto:nicci.hayes@bfwhospitals.nhs.uk)



## Share your views on local healthcare services at one of the following drop-in sessions:

- Thursday 12 January 2017, 1pm - 2.30pm, Central Library, Queen Street FY1 1PX.
- Monday 16 January 2017, 11am - 12.30pm, Moor Park Library, Bristol Avenue FY2 0JG.

For further information about these sessions or to share your views in an alternative way please contact the CCG on 01253 951349 or email [ccgcomments@blackpool.nhs.uk](mailto:ccgcomments@blackpool.nhs.uk).



Health... at the heart of life in Blackpool