



The results from the national staff survey run independently each year across the entire NHS nationally were published yesterday and, as always, provide valuable insight into how it really feels to work in healthcare in the UK.

This feedback from staff who have played such a huge part in our response to the pandemic over the past year is going to be instrumental in rebuilding and restoring our services in coming months so it worth understanding it more.

In the questionnaire, staff answer a range of questions anonymously based on 10 themes, such as equality and diversity, health and wellbeing, quality of care for patients and safety culture.

From a headline perspective I'm delighted to tell you that Blackpool Teaching Hospitals scored above the national average in five of the themes and were in line with the national average in three themes.

This is great news and demonstrates real progress – but we scored below the national average in the final two themes of staff health and wellbeing and providing a safe environment for staff and so there's lots to learn and do in these areas.

Just the fact that more than 3,500 colleagues diligently found time to complete it during some of the most difficult days we have ever experienced speaks volumes in itself and I want to thank each and every person who took the time to provide their views, it really is appreciated.

It cannot be underestimated how difficult the past year has been and I have said many times before how everyone at the Trust and the wider healthcare system as a whole has worked unbelievably hard.

I am grateful especially to those who were and continue to be redeployed to areas and specialities that aren't their usual place or focus of work. People have worked late, come in early and cancelled leave and other family commitments to care and support each other, as well as our patients and their families. I've seen colleagues carry on when they wanted to stop and collapse. They've gone way, way, beyond anything that could be considered an 'extra mile'. They have put their own lives on hold without a grumble.

Then there are those who have worked from home which isn't easy either and if you have home schooled as well then you have my admiration. Each and every person has played their part and I can genuinely never thank you enough.

And so it is against this backdrop that the 2020 staff survey was completed. That they took a moment to tell us how they felt, how things were and how they could improve is amazing. Then consider what they said:

- 68% said they would recommend our organisation as a place to work (the national average is 67%)
- 69% also said they would be happy with the standard of care for a friend or relative (compared to 63% in 2019)
- 79% said the care of patients and service users was our organisation's top priority (up from 74% in 2019)

When you also consider that Lancashire faced some of the highest levels of community infection from Covid in the UK, followed by extremely high numbers of people who needed hospital admission and extreme pressure in our hospitals and community settings throughout the pandemic – this really is incredible improvement.

We were hit hard by Covid and for a very long period of time indeed. The Trust lost colleagues to the virus too and the emotional burden of supporting hundreds of people who died in our hospitals was incredibly high.

The anniversary of our first Covid positive patient and the first Covid-related death both occur within days of each other next week and as Trust we will be remembering and reflecting on our response together as much as we can.

We'll be finding time and space to say thank you, taking a moment to reflect on what has happened and how we have dealt with it and remembering all those who have lost their lives – both staff and patients, friends and loved ones in our communities.

The response to Covid has taken its toll on colleagues and we'll be reiterating the health and well being support on offer on an individual and team basis to make sure people know what they can access and what is available.

As we move forward towards what is hopefully the end of this phase of the pandemic, it is right that we take time to remember and reflect. The staff survey results are there to help guide us towards the future and improvements that really matter to all of us. I know we can and will do this together.

Take care,

Kevin McGee

Chief Executive, Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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POSITIVE NEWS FOR ITU

In this week's video update Dr Jim Gardner provides the very latest overview of the improving picture across the Fylde coast, with a reduction in Covid inpatients and across the community.

Dr Gardner also has some encouraging news with the prospect of reducing the number of beds in ITU back down to 16.

Dr Gardner said: "If you remember in the very height of the pandemic we had 32 critical care beds open, where our normal number is 16. I am happy to say we have got down to 20 now, and with a bit of luck can get down to 16 at the end of the week, or next week.

"That will really be a moment when we get back to something like business as usual."

As ever, Dr Gardner stresses the importance of remaining vigilant and following the safety messages of hands, face and space.

You can view the latest episode of Dr Jim Gardner's popular Covid video update [HERE](#).



BTH BEGINS WEEK OF REFLECTION WITH 'TAKE A MOMENT'

This week marks a year since the Trust admitted our first Covid-positive patient and, sadly, we lost our first patient to the virus in the same week too.

We are encouraging all colleagues to join us for a week of reflection and remembrance which began today when the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and other senior managers hosting a special 'Take A Moment' event on Microsoft Teams.

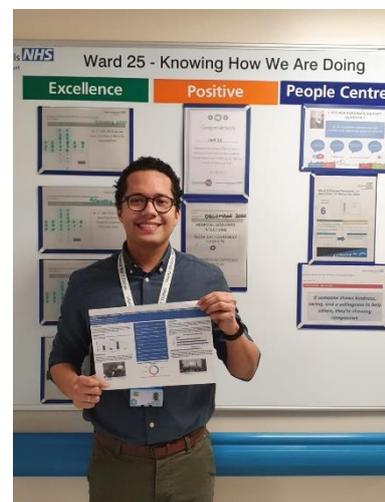
Next week the directors and senior managers will be out and about across the Trust to see as many teams and visit as many sites both in both hospital and community settings. There will also be a range of events and initiatives designed to support your health and wellbeing and encourage you to 'Take a Moment' and just think about all we have been through and achieved.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR BTH STAFF

A Blackpool Teaching Hospitals medicine trainee has won international acclaim after seeing his work feature on an influential platform in partnership with the Academy of Medical Educators.

Jhiamluka Solano-Velasquez, an Internal Medicine Trainee on Ward 25, used his experiences of working in the NHS in the UK to publish a first ever training survey in his home nation of Honduras. Jhiamluka's work was so well received that he was encouraged to put together elements of his publication and produce a poster for an event called Interrobang 2021.

"The Honduran Medical College were really happy with the work that I had done for them, so they made their ambassador," Jhiamluka said reflecting on the national



training survey he had put together in his home nation. “The whole idea was to create a knowledge bridge between the UK and Honduras. Trying to get the good things that the NHS and the GMC has, try to learn from everyone and see what we can replicate back home.

“As I was doing my exams as part of my training here, I encountered the National Training Survey which is done by the GMC and we don’t have that back home. I realised that that would be really helpful.

“So we did the first training survey and the results just show that we were far behind in terms of training and there were so much to do. We have seen in the UK how it has slowly been improving over the last decade. I think the National Training Survey started in the UK in 2013 and you can see how it progressively got better.”

The theme of the poster takes one abstract from Jhiamluka’s study, with a focus on how best to interpret interprofessional teaching, from an educator’s point of view. He said: “I wanted to prove that by the results of the poster, that we need to define clear roles for us to work as a team, instead of you doing the things that other people should be doing. Overall patient care gets effected because of that.”

People Centred

NEW HOME FOR EPAU

Blackpool Teaching Hospital’s Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit has found a new home in Blackpool Victoria, with dedicated facilities and more privacy for patients.

Previously located in Ward C, the new EPAU is now connected to the Women’s and Children’s area of the Trust, with a private entrance and exit located to the side of the building, very close to the main entrance of the hospital.



The new facility provides a calm and private location for patients to visit clinic, get scanned and discuss their history.

Speaking about the new location for the unit, Dr Uma Chetan Blackpool Teaching Hospital Trust’s consultant in obstetrics and gynaecology said: “Early pregnancy deals with women who are really going through difficult times, like miscarriages, ectopic pregnancies, and it is not always good news that we are giving them. They can be emotionally very vulnerable and in a delicate situation with their health and wellbeing. In that situation if you have a lot of people going out and coming in it is not the best place to care for them.

“The new location for EPAU is purely an early pregnancy outpatient service.”

The new EPAU was opened just before Christmas, and staff nurse Sue Brooks who has worked in the NHS for more than forty years is delighted with the relocation.

She said: “I am thrilled, it just makes such a difference, not just to the staff, but to the ladies who come. We have got three rooms now and you can have that privacy that you need.”

PATIENT FLOW PROJECT SAYS ‘THANK YOU’ TO HARD-WORKING STAFF

Members of the Trust’s Patient Flow team have been welcome visitors to wards and departments over recent weeks as they deliver boxes of brownies.



The team has been working with the Changeology Group, a change management company, on a 16-week project. Part of which has been to thank teams around the Trust who have been going above and beyond to cope with the extra pressures placed on them in recent months.

The Patient Flow team, based at Blackpool Victoria Hospital, is in charge of managing the beds around the Trust, from facilitating admissions from the moment a patient arrives to moving patients within and between wards, to ultimately facilitating the discharge process.

The project has seen team members visit those wards and departments performing particularly strongly and delivering boxes of brownies. The brownies have been supplied by Blackpool-based ‘That Baker Girl Kay.’

Mahmoud Osman, of the Changeology Group, has worked within the Patient Flow team since December.

He explained: “We wanted to raise the profile of Patient Flow and increase awareness of the team’s role, and also improve communications.

“We usually call almost every ward and department several times a day asking them questions and we just wanted to show them that we are also here to support them.

“It’s been a great programme – the first few times people were a little shocked that we were visiting just to say thankyou and hand over a gift!”

Excellent

RACHEL RECOGNISED FOR GOING THE EXTRA MILE

District Nurse Sister Rachel Jump is celebrating after being nominated for three Going the Extra Mile awards by colleagues.

Rachel, who is part of the Lytham District Nurses’ leadership team, has been nominated by colleagues Kathryn Smith, Debbie Bates and Maxine O’Grady.

In her nomination, Kathryn explained that Rachel ‘is an inspirational leader and has supported many staff.’

Meanwhile, Debbie Bates nominated her for ‘providing support and leadership to the team during a staffing crisis’ as well as for being there to reassure staff, ensure visits are safely allocated and working to keep patients safe and staff feeling supported.



Finally, Maxine O'Grady said of Rachel: "Not only is Rachel a fabulous Sister supporting all nurses and patients at Lytham District Nurses, she is always doing extra for everyone."

Rachel said receiving the awards had made her smile: "It was such a nice thing to receive them. They really do pick you up."

"It's really rewarding knowing you're doing a good job – it's so nice to know that what you're doing is effective and making a difference."

Going The Extra Mile is an initiative designed to help staff highlight the incredible work that goes on in the Trust every day.

POSITIVE COMMENTS

New mum Roxy sent us this message about her experience:

I just want to say thank you to the delivery suite. My little girl was born five weeks early in September.

Unfortunately, after everything I only remember Julia (midwife in dark blue) who was their during my emergency caesarean. I don't remember the name of the midwife that was with me but according to my notes her name is Debbie so thank you so much to her. All the doctors, midwives and student midwives were amazing. All things considered, I couldn't have asked for a better experience.

Wowsie contacted us on Facebook to thank the team on Ward 8:

'Kelly and absolutely everyone on Ward 8 are amazing, wonderful, friendly, professional, kind generous and blinking fabulous!!!

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Mother was very poorly and you did absolutely everything in your power to make her as comfortable and special as is humanely possible! I will never ever forget you all. In my darkest hours all of you guys on Ward 8 made the pain bearable and I am eternally in your debt.

I'm going to miss you all and wish every single person from Dr Bajwa down to Alan (the happiest cleaner ever) the best of everything. You're all Walking talking singing happy Angels xxx'

Thank you for reading this bulletin. If you have any comments or questions, or would like to know more about any of our services, please get in touch via telephone on 01253 300000, through our [online contact form](#), or via post at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Trust Headquarters, Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool, FY3 8NR

