

Update from Alison Jones, GP Engagement

Maternity update from the Trust's Director of Nursing, Hayley Flavell

“Given the current pressures in the NHS generally and at SaTH specifically, and the uncertainties these might be causing, we thought it would be useful to give an update on the position of our maternity services. With COVID-19 numbers still high – certain parts of the local communities around our hospitals have infection rates significantly above the national average – some impacts on the services we are able to offer are unfortunately inevitable.

“Some of the pressures are as a result of colleagues following the current guidance and needing to self-isolate for the protection of our patients and fellow staff, which is leading to short notice staff shortages. One of the areas where this is being felt at the moment is in our provision of maternity care, where we are currently making day-to-day decisions on the opening and operation of the Wrekin Midwife-Led Unit (MLU) at the Princess Royal Hospital in Telford. We are doing everything we can to keep the MLU open as much as possible but the temporary and short term closures may mean that some women are asked to attend our delivery suite at the Consultant-led unit to give birth.

“I would offer my reassurance that we are continuing to offer a comprehensive service for our mothers-to-be. Crucially, this means working hard to try and ensure that their birth preferences and choices are still met – something we know is of great importance to birthing women, their partners, and families. The vast majority of the services offered at the MLU – for example access to water birthing – are available elsewhere within our maternity facilities. Also, it is important to note that this issue is only affecting births – antenatal and postnatal care continues as before and locations for appointments and scans are not affected.”

Hayley Flavell also stresses the importance of women attending their maternity appointments, which can be complicated by the remaining COVID-19 restrictions, especially in a healthcare setting. Sometimes, routine antenatal appointments can be moved back a few days if the woman needs to self-isolate: however, if a woman has an important growth scan she is encouraged to attend, even if she has been confirmed as COVID-19 positive – the message is to let the department know in advance, and the necessary arrangements can be made to manage this.

Hayley would urge women who have any concerns or questions on any of these issues to speak to their community midwives, so that they are prepared and know what options are available. We will continue doing all we can to minimise any impacts and will give a further update when anything changes.

GPConnect contact: Alison Jones, GP Engagement
Stretton House, Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, Mytton Oak Road, Shrewsbury, SY3 8XQ

Telephone (01743) 492591

Email: alison.jones25@nhs.net

Website: <https://www.sath.nhs.uk/healthcare-professionals/gpconnect/>

Surgeon, Mrs Blossom Lake, awarded scholarship

A breast surgeon at the Trust has been awarded a scholarship to develop her breast cancer research.

Mrs Blossom Lake (*pictured right*) has been awarded a Clinical Trials Scholarship from the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) West Midlands Clinical Research Network.

The funding secured will enable Mrs Lake to work with the University of Birmingham, Institute of Applied Health Research, to develop her research into breast cancer over the next two years.



Mrs Lake said: **“I am really excited to work with the University of Birmingham to enable me to progress de novo breast cancer research at SaTH as a chief investigator.**

“My field of interest is improving outcomes from breast cancer, and in particular in those who are overweight or obese. There is a growing body of evidence that suggests breast cancer is more likely to recur if you have an elevated BMI. My research will be aimed at ways to enable and engage breast cancer survivors to improve their own outcomes by modifying their lifestyle and wellbeing.

“This is an excellent opportunity for the breast service at SaTH and for our patients to be involved in research and to improve outcomes from breast cancer.”

Mrs Lake is one of 22 researchers across the region to have been awarded the post to maximise research into key health areas across the West Midlands. She will spend one day a week participating in research activities, and will also receive one-to-one personal mentoring.

Jane Willcocks, Learning and Workforce Development Project Facilitator for NIHR, said: **“The research and scholarship programme was launched in 2018 and we have now funded 63 scholars across 29 specialty and subspecialty areas in the West Midlands. Many of them have become chief investigators or co-investigators on studies and have secured grant success.**

“The programme is highly competitive and has been extremely successful. Our scholars funded in 2018/19 have generated approximately £18million in grant and project income to develop new areas of research and improve outcomes for patients.”

Introducing Mr Salil Sood, ENT Head and Neck Consultant

The Trust has appointed a new ENT Head and Neck Consultant, Mr Salil Sood, who has started working for SaTH from September 2021. Mr Sood comes with a lot of experience and his special interests include thyroid, head and neck cancer, and facial plastic surgery. Mr Sood replaces Consultant Mr Richard Harris who has moved on to a post in Coventry.



Mr Sood (*pictured left*) did his initial medical school and surgical training in Delhi, India. Subsequently he moved to the UK in 2004 and completed his higher surgical training. He has had broad training in all subspecialties with a recent fellowship in head and neck, thyroid surgery and paediatric ENT.

With over 22 years' experience in the specialty, Mr Sood is part of the head and neck, thyroid and skin cancer multidisciplinary teams. He also has been involved with numerous national, international publications and presentations and has been a faculty member on many teaching courses in the UK on nasal, sinus surgery, head and neck, and ENT emergency.