

Update from Alison Jones, GP Engagement

Trust celebrates its apprentices during National Apprenticeship Week

The Trust celebrated its apprentices during National Apprenticeship Week (7-13 February), as a time to raise awareness about the diverse and wide variety of apprenticeship opportunities that are available at SaTH and throughout the NHS.

This year's theme was 'build the future', to reflect on how apprenticeships can help people develop the skills and knowledge for a rewarding career.

Here at the Trust there are currently 185 individuals on apprenticeship programmes, and there are a range of apprenticeships including Customer Service Practitioners, Pharmacy Technicians, Assistant Practitioners – Radiography and Registered Nurses.

Apprenticeships introduced last year include Physiotherapist, Senior Healthcare Support – Maternity and Healthcare Science Assistant – Audiology.

Some of the apprenticeship opportunities available later this year may include Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy, Operating Department Practitioner Trainee and Engineering.

At SaTH, apprenticeships provide an opportunity to support local people of any age to begin and make progress on their journey in the NHS, providing them with a career option that they might otherwise not have had or even considered.

Apprenticeship qualifications are available to support the development of both new and existing staff members and the Trust embraces this route to help people progress in their chosen career.

Rhia Boyode, Director of People and Organisational Development at SaTH, said: **“People undertaking apprenticeships are an important and valued part of our workforce.**

“There are so many different roles, and apprenticeships are a fantastic opportunity for people to consider as a pathway into the NHS and to underpin their progression on their chosen career route within our organisation.”



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Care Quality Commission 2021 Maternity Survey

In response to the Care Quality Commission 2021 Maternity Survey, Louise Barnett, Chief Executive of the Trust, said: **“The Maternity Survey highlights the hard work and dedication that has been shown by our teams through some incredibly difficult times. Given that it directly reflects the experiences of those we care for, I’m very pleased to see we are performing strongly in several areas, particularly those where women’s choices are placed at the heart of the services we provide.**

“Building on the examples of “outstanding practice” highlighted in the recent Care Quality Commission report on the Trust, the survey shows the progress that has been made in the transformation of our maternity services so far. We are determined to build on these significant steps forward as we know that there is still more to do, and we will keep focusing on those areas where further improvement is needed.”

“I want to thank the whole team for their continued commitment to bringing about positive change and to providing excellent care to those we serve.”

The full report is available here: www.cqc.org.uk/maternitysurvey

News from the Gastroenterology team on Barrett's Oesophagus and Cytosponge

Dr Jeff Butterworth, Consultant Gastroenterologist at the Trust, is very keen for GP colleagues to know of a recent development in managing patients with Barrett’s oesophagus, which means that not all patients will be having an endoscopy as we move towards a less invasive method of surveillance. Dr Butterworth writes:

“SaTH is part of a national pilot in evaluating the use of new technology for surveillance of patients with Barrett’s Oesophagus, called Cytosponge.

Cytosponge is a non-endoscopic diagnostic tool that was developed to detect Barrett’s oesophagus in patients with reflux disease. Recent data have shown that this can also be applied for Barrett’s surveillance. It consists of a tethered sponge in a capsule that is swallowed, and when removed, collects oesophageal cells which can be assessed for intestinal metaplasia (TFF3) and dysplasia and carcinoma (atypia and p53).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, endoscopy waiting lists increased significantly in the NHS in England. Although the majority of people waiting to be seen will not have cancer or other serious pathology, Cytosponge can be used to prioritise access to upper GI endoscopy for patients with diagnosed Barrett’s Oesophagus undergoing surveillance who are therefore at an increased risk of cancer. Identifying those patients with likely dysplasia and cancer will support services to prioritise patients who are most at risk of serious pathology for endoscopy and treatment, whilst minimising the number of upper GI endoscopy procedures required for those at low risk and for whom endoscopy can be delayed or in some cases avoided.”

Dr Jeff Butterworth is happy to be contacted by GPs who would like to find out more, at jeffrey.butterworth@nhs.net