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The quarterly newsletter for Foundation Trust members

# Maternity refurbishment.

## New improved facilities for women



Women giving birth at Mayday will enjoy even better facilities following the opening of the newly refurbished labour ward early in Spring '09.

The ward's 11 labour rooms, utility and other areas have all been upgraded and improved to ensure that women have the latest technology available to them in the most comfortable and sensitive surroundings possible.

All the rooms have ensuite facilities, bright, fresh décor, individual temperature control and comfort cooling and dimmable lighting to allow all women, including those needing more support during birth, to have a calmer and more comfortable experience. Each room has a computer so that midwives can update

information immediately whilst providing patient confidentiality.

Sally Brittain, Head of Midwifery, said: "These improvements will bring our higher dependency labour facilities to the same modern, high standard as our midwife-led birth centre, which provides a 'home from home' environment for women having more straightforward births. The refurbished ward will help to ensure that Mayday is the hospital of choice for local women, and will also provide a better working environment for our staff."

The improvements will include additional disabled facilities, ensuring that Mayday can cater for all local women's needs.



### Mayday Chief Executive to retire

Helen Walley, Chief Executive for Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust has announced her retirement from the Trust she has led for nearly three years, and the NHS where she has worked continuously for 35 years.

In a letter to staff she explains she will be leaving at the end of April for personal reasons. She told staff "I feel privileged to have had such a rewarding career in the NHS as both a nurse and a manager. I have been your Chief Executive for nearly three years and have found the role challenging and fulfilling and I believe together we have achieved a great deal. However I cannot carry out the role of CEO if I cannot give 100% and the recent ill health of a close family member has made me re-evaluate the balance between home and work."

Brian Phillpott, Chairman of the Trust has paid tribute to Helen. "Mayday has measurably improved under her visible leadership. Her personal commitment and professionalism have improved clinical services provided to the local community at the same time as delivering a sustainable financial future as the Trust moves towards Foundation Trust status."

Helen became Chief Executive of the Trust in May 2006 and will continue to perform her duties fully until the end of April 2009. The current deputy CEO, Tony Leonard has been asked to act as Chief Executive when Helen Walley leaves, whilst plans to appoint her successor are finalised.

# We were here, **where were you?**

**Did you know that on average over 100 people a day do not attend (DNA) their outpatient appointment at Mayday?**

DNAs have an enormous impact on the healthcare system in terms of cost, increasing waiting times and inevitably adding to delays in treatment.

At the moment routine clinic waiting times in various specialities at Mayday are at a maximum of 13 weeks. If we knew in advance about DNA appointments we would be able to reduce this waiting time to 9 weeks.

It's hard to be sure why people don't let the department know they can't make their appointment, but below are some common reasons and what the Trust is doing to help.

## **"The appointment's not convenient"**

Wherever possible we offer patients the opportunity to agree dates for hospital attendances that are convenient. We aim to make the booking process - whether by phone, electronically or by letter - timely, clear and concise.

## **"I couldn't find the phone number"**

Each appointment letter will have a number to call. Additionally our website [www.maydayhospital.nhs.uk](http://www.maydayhospital.nhs.uk) has a list of department phone numbers to call if you need to cancel your appointment. For out-patients and X-ray we have dedicated e-mail addresses [opdcancel@mayday.nhs.uk](mailto:opdcancel@mayday.nhs.uk) and [xray@mayday.nhs.uk](mailto:xray@mayday.nhs.uk).

We have recently made this information more prominent on the website's front page.

## **"I don't need the appointment anymore"**

Even if patients are feeling better, we ask that they either keep their appointment or cancel it so we can offer the date and time to someone else.

## **"I forgot!"**

In the summer of 2008 the Trust used a text messaging reminder system for some clinics with a high DNA rate; unfortunately this did not make a significant difference. Smaller specialised clinics are continuing to use telephone reminders with the option of text message reminders.

The Patient Access Centre, in the Outpatient Department, is now trying postal reminders for those clinics with a DNA rate above 9% or with a maximum waiting time above 9 weeks.

## **What more can we do?**

We will continue to look at ways of lowering the DNA rate but we cannot achieve this on our own. Do you have any ideas or suggestions that we could consider?

If you or a member of your family have an appointment that you are unable to keep please let us know either by email at [opdcancel@mayday.nhs.uk](mailto:opdcancel@mayday.nhs.uk) or you can also leave a message on the Patient Access Centre voicemail system on 0208 401 3801.

## **New integrated service for specialist diabetic, vascular and wound care treatment**



Mayday's new integrated Diabetes, Vascular and Wound Care Centre is leading the way in treating patients with complex wounds and vascular conditions which can result from diabetes. Led by Stella Vig, Josh Derodra, Malcolm Prentice and Richard Savine, this ground breaking centre is one of

only a handful in the country treating patients with these conditions in such close proximity.

The Trust has spent £980,000 refurbishing wards in the Centre which aims to provide:

- 20 bed diabetes ward
- 20 bed vascular surgery ward
- 4 en suite "negative pressure" isolation rooms for those with serious infections
- Vascular ultrasound facility
- One-stop clinic for rapid assessment of wound problems
- Vascular physiotherapy facility
- Training, research and development

People with diabetes are prone to serious wounds which can lead to amputation of lower limbs, many of which are preventable.

The new centre aims to bring together teams of podiatrists, vascular surgeons, nurses, educators, and diabetes specialists, working together to offer the optimum treatment and care for these patients.

Mayday's vascular consultant Stella Vig says: "The new centre is providing treatment and support for people with complex wounds both in and out of hospital, giving them rapid access to experts when they need it. Early intervention can prevent the more drastic results from open wound infections and we are already carrying out fewer amputations and offering less invasive treatments."

The hospital of **firstchoice** for the people of Croydon and surrounding populations.

# A Blood Sample's Journey Through Pathology

Pathology laboratories have a central role in modern healthcare today. Mayday Hospital's pathology department has a number of laboratories which carry out different types of tests. One of the most common tests involves phlebotomy – taking a blood sample.

The pathology department receives around 1,500 blood samples a day, and in a year carries out over 3.5 million tests. There are around 170 pathology staff including consultant pathologists, clinical and biomedical scientists and other clinical, managerial and support staff who provide on-call services 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.

Samples sent to the laboratory for testing include:

- blood sample
- stained slides
- samples of other body fluids
- human tissue

To the outside world a blood test can seem simple enough, but it is actually a complex technological process which has to be carried out to set standards to ensure that the final result is correct and matched to the right patient.

## Read on to find out more.

A blood sample's journey usually begins when a doctor or nurse needs more information than they can get from taking a history and examination. This helps them make a diagnosis or monitor a known condition, for example testing for anaemia, diabetes, cholesterol levels or checking for an infection.

- The blood sample is taken by a doctor, nurse or phlebotomist - a trained person who specialises in taking blood. The sample may be taken on a ward, in the phlebotomy department, at a GP surgery or in the Croydon Walk-in-Centre.
- Blood may be taken into different tubes depending on the tests required, and labelled carefully so they match with the right patient.
- When the samples arrive in the Pathology Central Sample Reception, the request forms are time and date stamped and then transferred to the labelling bench.

Urgent samples are fast tracked, as patients may need immediate treatment.

- The sample and forms are checked to confirm that patient details match and a unique bar-coded number is then placed on the form and on the side of the sample tubes.
- Most blood tests can be analysed immediately, but others have to be spun (centrifugation) to separate the red blood cells from the liquid part of the blood (serum or plasma), which is then analysed.
- The samples are loaded onto the analysers and quality controlled. The laboratories also all participate in external quality assurance schemes, to compare our results with those from other laboratories.
- Before results are released for reporting, other checks are carried out by the biomedical staff. Once the result has been assessed as correct it is released and will



appear in the patient pathology results record. Abnormal results are viewed by consultant pathologists and further tests may be requested at this stage. Any unexpected or urgent results are phoned or bleeped directly to the requesting doctor.

- The final test report becomes available for the requesting doctor to access on the computer system, which is password protected. A printed-paper report is forwarded as confidential mail by courier to GP surgeries.
- The pathology computer system is continually backed up so all patient records are kept secure, safe and confidential.

## Do you want to be **more involved?**

**We would like to invite you to the first meeting of the Patient Assembly which will be held on Wednesday 18 March, 7pm to 9pm, in the Post Graduate Medical Centre Conservatory, at Mayday.**

Mayday recognises that it is vital we learn from the experience of our patients and carers and listen to both their views and those of the wider public. To help this happen we are setting up a Patients' Assembly to work alongside us as the voice of our patients.

If you are interested in finding out more or would like to book a place please contact us, our details are at the bottom of the back page.

## Member profile:

Mary Chandler is the member in the spotlight in this issue of Accent.

Mary became a member in June 2008 and is keen to see Mayday progress and improve to gain Foundation Trust status.

Mary was born in Croydon in 1929. She originally trained as an orthopaedic nurse and worked as a student at St Thomas's Hospital in London. After having her children she trained and had a full career as a social worker.

Mary has continued to keep active and although she is now a full time carer, in 2008 after 5 years study was

awarded a certificate in General Studies – philosophy at Oxford (OUDCE) and London (Birkbeck).

If you would like to feature in this newsletter we'd love to hear from you about who you are, why you chose to get involved and what you would like to see happen as Mayday becomes a Foundation Trust. Our contact details are at the bottom of the page.



## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN 2009?

### Members meeting - Focus on Dietetics, Eating Well for Health

On 4 March 7pm to 8pm, you are invited to join us at the Arnhem Gallery, Fairfield Halls in Croydon. The venue has wheelchair access and there is a hearing loop in the Arnhem Gallery.

Please help us by letting us know if you plan to come along by either telephone, email or use our freepost address. Details are at the bottom of this page.

### Are you interested in becoming a public Governor?

Foundation Trusts are more accountable to local people through a Council of Governors, made up of members of the public and staff who have been elected to directly represent local interests

within the governance structure of the Trust. They have a range of statutory responsibilities which include to:

- Appoint or remove the Chair and Non-executive Directors
- Approve the appointment of the Chief Executive
- Decide on the remuneration and terms and conditions of the Chair and Non-executive Directors
- Appoint the Trust's auditor
- Scrutinise the Trust's annual plan

They are, therefore, in a position of considerable responsibility, with genuine powers.

If you are a member and you want to become a Governor for your constituency it will involve being elected by the other public members in that area. These elections are formal events run by an independent body.

If you are interested in becoming a Governor, an informal, no-commitment open evening has been arranged where you can meet a governor from a Foundation Trust Hospital and find out more about the Council of Governors election process.

**The event will be held on 25 February in the Arnhem Gallery, Fairfield Halls, starting at 6.45pm and ending at 9.00pm.** The venue has wheelchair access and there is a hearing loop in the Arnhem Gallery.

If you would like to book a place, please let us know by telephone, email or using our freepost address. Details are below.

### Foundation Trust Membership Update

It is now a year since Mayday re-launched its Foundation Trust application and completed the public consultation process on 15 May 2008.

We now have 4000 public members but we still have a way to go to reach our target of 5000 public members before we become a Foundation Trust. You can help us increase our membership by asking your family, friends and neighbours to join you and become a member. If you would like us to send you some application forms please contact us on the telephone number or email address on the bottom of the back page or alternatively look on our website where you can find more information

## Foundation Trust Membership Office

If you would like this information in large print please contact us, our details are above.

Please contact either by;

Email: [ft@mayday.nhs.uk](mailto:ft@mayday.nhs.uk)

Write: **FREEPOST MAYDAY FT**  
(all in capitals, no stamp or further address required)

Telephone: **020 8401 3209**

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