

# Our news

## Enhancing and expanding the Royal Eye Unit

The Royal Eye Unit is one of the hospital's busiest departments, serving over 75,000 patients each year and delivering the largest ophthalmology service in South West London, including South London's principal eye casualty service. Sight loss is closely linked to ageing and Kingston and Richmond are two of the five boroughs with the highest life expectancy in the country, so in recent years the demands on the service have increased significantly.

With support from Kingston Hospital Charity, the hospital is now committed to a multi-phase development programme to enhance the care environment and provide a more efficient service.

The first phase of this programme commenced in May and is focused on the refurbishment and expansion of eye casualty to provide a new purpose built unit, designed to meet the increasing demand for this service.

The new unit will include, a resuscitation area and six purpose-built clinic bays, resulting in better patient flow around the unit and ease of access for patients.

The layout of clinical rooms and the positioning of equipment has also been planned to support more efficient and better care, so patients are seen more quickly, while improving their privacy and dignity.

It is expected that this first phase will be completed in August this year. The second phase of the development will see the Royal Eye Unit extended to create the space needed for a dedicated medical retina unit to support the growing number of patients with age-related macular degeneration and other conditions affecting the back of the eye, in an environment that meets the needs of all its users.



Royal Eye Unit

Mr Hooman Sherafat, Consultant Ophthalmologist and Clinical Lead for the Royal Eye Unit, said:

**“This is a hugely exciting period during the evolution of the Royal Eye Unit and the realisation of our vision finally coming to fruition. I am confident that this, alongside other forthcoming IT developments, will enable us to continue to meet and exceed the deserved high expectations of our patients, which we are privileged to serve. We are enormously grateful to Kingston Hospital Charity for its support of phase one of this development, while fundraising for the proposed medical retina unit.”**



Mr Hooman Sherafat, Consultant Ophthalmologist and Clinical Lead for the Royal Eye Unit

If you are interested in supporting our plans, please call or email Rob Aldous on **020 8973 5042** or email **[r.aldous@nhs.net](mailto:r.aldous@nhs.net)** for a more considered discussion.

# An extraordinary winter

The very significant second wave of coronavirus meant this winter was probably the toughest ever test Kingston Hospital and the NHS more widely has had to face.

Once again, the support across our community was amazing during this time of great challenge. This enabled us to work with some local restaurants to provide hot evening meals for staff working nights throughout January and February. Fresh fruit was also made available to staff during the day, ensuring they had easy access to a healthy snack and this is to be continued over the coming months. We were also able to extend the employment of a clinical psychologist to help staff suffering with stress and trauma related illnesses.



Other initiatives have included the provision of additional showers for staff and a new centrally-located storage facility for those who cycle to work, which is expected to be ready by the end of June.

Our thanks to everyone who has supported our hospital over the winter, in particular: NHS Charities Together, Marit Mohn, the Bridgepoint Hardship Fund, RBKares and The Trillium Trust.

## Recliner chairs

With the support of our community, we have purchased 40 recliner chairs since 2017 for our care of the elderly, surgical and medical wards to help our weakest patients recover their strength after serious illness.

20 of these chairs were delivered earlier this year to increase the provision of specialist seating, as studies have shown that sitting out of bed not only helps improve patients' breathing, digestion and circulation, but promotes independence, interaction, a sense of normality and improves overall recovery times.

These specialist support armchairs can be raised into a near standing position allowing the patient to get out of them much more easily. They can also be reclined so patients can elevate their legs to ease swelling and joint pain. Physiotherapist Emily Orme commented:

**"During the pandemic, we have been caring for so many patients recovering from the devastating effects of COVID-19. It's such a wonderful feeling to see patients recover their strength and independence and get back home to their families and these chairs have helped us achieve that."**

# Caremed chairs

Two specialist Caremed chairs were purchased with charitable monies for our intensive care unit to help in the rehabilitation of the hospital's sickest patients.

After critical illness, patients are often very weak and deconditioned. As they start to improve it's essential that their postural muscles become stronger. These chairs allow the therapists to transfer patients from a lying position in bed, to a lying position on

the chair and then gently and slowly elevate them into a sitting position. This position is really important to promote rehabilitation and to start to strengthen the postural muscles, as well as helping wean them off mechanical ventilation and reduce the length of stay on intensive care.

These Caremed chairs are greatly benefitting the most critical unwell patients, helping them get stronger more quickly and be discharged to the wards being more active and independent.

## Kingston Hospital Charity and HelpForce fund community-based physiotherapy project

Kingston Hospital Charity has joined with HelpForce to fund a new community-based physiotherapy project supported by volunteers.

Rehabilitation post discharge is a vital part of a patient's recovery, especially if they have become deconditioned while in hospital. Falls are the sixth largest cause of disability in the UK and it is anticipated that a quarter of all falls could be avoided.

This project provides up to eight weeks of rehabilitation-focused exercise to our frail and elderly patients who are going home alone after hospital discharge.

The funding enables the volunteering team to build on an existing 'Gentle Movement' project whereby volunteers meet patients at their bedside and, more recently via tablet computer, to run through exercises prescribed by the physiotherapy team and encourage patients to get moving whilst still in hospital.

Over the summer, volunteers will be recruited to get active in their communities, by visiting patients discharged from hospital in their home and running a structured movement programme that is tailored by the hospital's physiotherapy team for each patient.

# Providing information that meets patients' needs

Kingston Hospital Charity is helping the Patient Experience and Involvement team to take a fresh approach to ensuring patient information meets their needs and is more accessible in different formats.

With our support, Jane Lewis joined the team officially last November in a co-ordinating role to work with a larger and more diverse range of people in producing patient information for services across the hospital. As well as volunteers, Jane has to date involved our Cancer Patient Partner Group, the Maternity Voices Partnership, the Intensive Care Unit Support Group and the Kingston Hospital Cardiac Trust among others when developing new information leaflets.

An example of one project Jane has been managing is the development of a resource hub, with information about childhood conditions and referral information.



Consultant Paediatrician Becky Hodgkinson explained:

**“At the beginning of the pandemic we recognised that we needed a better way of supporting GPs making decisions about children’s health.**

**Our feeling was that it would be really helpful to have downloadable PDF leaflets for parents to read that explain conditions and also provide information about what to expect at specialist clinics should they get referred to one.**

**We’ve had lots of parents involved in our meetings via Zoom and it’s been so helpful to see things from their perspective. We’ve made many changes based on their suggestions and we’re now getting really good feedback about the leaflets we’ve produced. When referring children into specialist clinics, GPs are signposting parents to these information leaflets. Jane has brought clinicians together with parents and we now have 25 leaflets in various stages of development.”**



# Kingston Hospital Dementia Hospital of the Year

Many thanks again to all who generously supported our dementia care programme which concluded in the autumn of 2019 with the re-opening of Kennet Ward. One year on, Kingston Hospital won the 'Best Dementia Friendly Hospital' category in the National Dementia Care Awards 2020 last November.



Kingston Hospital won the 'Best Dementia Friendly Hospital' category at the National Dementia Care Awards 2020

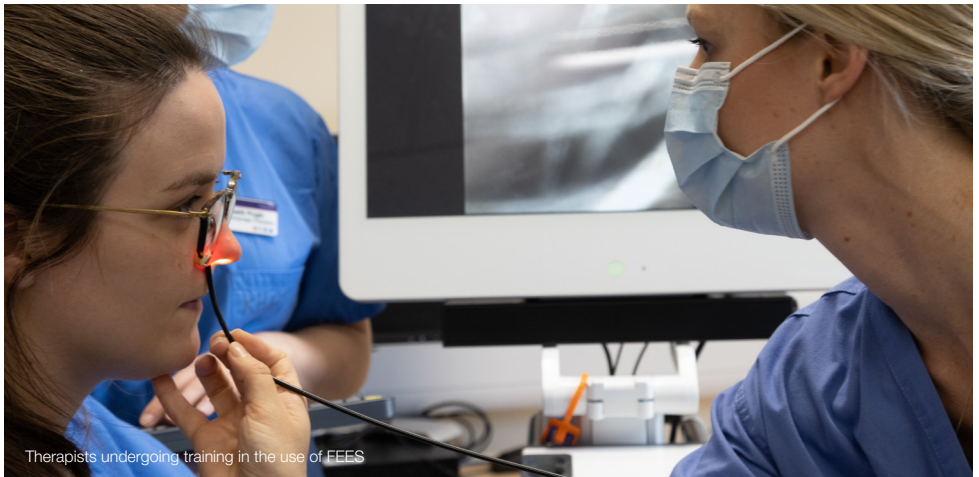
The National Dementia Care Awards are an annual event organised by the Journal of Dementia Care, a multidisciplinary journal for all professional staff working with people with dementia, in hospitals, nursing and residential care homes, day units and the community. The awards were created to recognise the very best people in the dementia care sector, whose exceptional work and contributions make better, person-centred care a reality.

There were 15 categories to enter overall and there were up to five finalists in each category with two independent judges.

The judging panel acknowledged that the hospital's success reflected its **"exceptional commitment to improving the hospital experience for patients with dementia and their carers."**

# Supporting our Speech and Language Therapy team

The Speech and Language Therapy team is very excited to have been able to acquire a Fibre-Optic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) with charitable funds. FEES is an instrumental assessment that provides an accurate and in-depth assessment for patients with swallowing difficulties. It also helps therapists to detect whether food and/ or drink is going down the wrong way.



Therapists undergoing training in the use of FEES

The procedure involves passing a tiny camera on a flexible scope through one nostril to visualise the structures in the throat. FEES primarily looks at how patients are managing to swallow their own saliva. Unlike video fluoroscopy (a moving X-ray of swallowing), it is portable and does not involve radiation, so has the advantage that it can be repeated frequently. It is quick and cost effective and can be used on patients who are bedbound or too unwell to attend radiology, making it particularly useful for stroke patients or those in intensive care.

The use of FEES in the acute setting has been shown to improve patient outcomes, with a reduction in chest infections. It also reduces dependence on alternative feeding, mortality and length of stay, while improving quality of life.

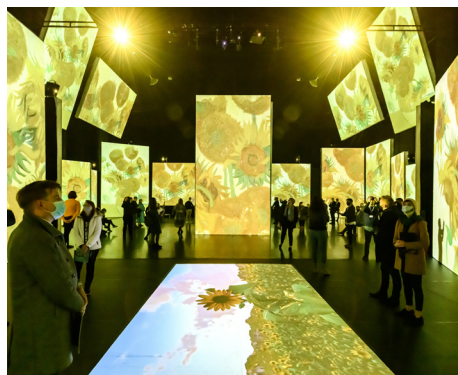
As FEES is a new service being introduced at the hospital, the therapists are undergoing training and they hope to be able to begin to introduce a FEES service to patients during the summer.

# Van Gogh *Alive* the experience

Van Gogh *Alive* produced by Grande Experiences is coming to Kensington Gardens this summer.

This immersive multi-sensory experience exhibits the life and work of the seminal Dutch artist with more than 3,000 images spectacularly presented using a combination of sound, visuals and the aromas of Provence.

Presented by the independent financial advisory firm Timothy James & Partners, Van Gogh *Alive* has partnered with three charities, including Kingston Hospital Charity.



For further information and to book tickets, please visit the website at [www.vangoghaliveuk.com](http://www.vangoghaliveuk.com).

## Join us for the NHS Big Tea on 5 July

We are urging people and organisations from across our community to join the nation's biggest tea break on 5 July and help raise money for the incredible people in our NHS who've done so much to help everyone get through this pandemic.

Following a year like no other, we want as many people as possible to get involved in a national outpouring of love and thanks for NHS staff and volunteers on its birthday by hosting or taking part in an NHS Big Tea at 3pm on 5 July.



**NHS CHARITIES  
TOGETHER**

Each event can be in person or virtual, with the community, friends, family or at work, and is a chance to reflect and say thank you for everything that NHS staff and volunteers have done and continue to do, by taking part in the nation's biggest tea break to raise money for Kingston Hospital Charity.

To take part and get your pack, please visit [www.khc.org.uk/events/the-big-tea-2021/](http://www.khc.org.uk/events/the-big-tea-2021/) or call **020 8973 5040**.



# Thank you

As always we'd like to pay tribute to all those who have supported Kingston Hospital Charity over the last few difficult months. We are very grateful to each and every one of you, regardless of whether we have been able to acknowledge you below. Thank you so much!



Staff with some of the wellbeing bags provided by RBKares

- **RBKares** for the handmade wellbeing bags they provided for staff who had been working long hours or who were off sick at an extraordinarily difficult time. Each bag, which contained a card with a thank you message, various treats and a mindful activity, were greatly appreciated by those who received one.
- The local Korean communities, including the **London Full Gospel Church, Korean Residents Society and the Korean Chamber of Commerce UK**, who have generously contributed over £62,000 in support of our staff's wellbeing during the pandemic.

- **The Screaming Jacksons** who raised £201 from their annual musical Christmas card. Stu and Natalie and their three children, who were born at Kingston Hospital, record a song each year – last December's was called 'The Christmas Spirit'.
- **Wimbledon District Nursing and Midwifery Benevolent Society** for providing the funding to purchase two recliner chairs for the labour ward rooms.
- **Annabel Simmonds** who raised nearly £1,350 after taking on a 100-book challenge when the first national lockdown was called in March last year, finishing her 100th book 12 months later.



- The 100 members of **Digme Fitness** who took part in a 100km cycle challenge from the comfort of their own homes on 30 January, with the help of music and banter, raising over £18,500 to support our staff's health and wellbeing. Led by Bill Carey-Evans, World Cup winners Michael Lynagh and Lawrence Dallaglio were among the Diggers who took part.



- **Ellen McGeevey**, aged six, for raising £100 after deciding to sell some of her old toys on Facebook.







One of the recliner chairs in action on Alex Ward



**Kingston**  
Hospital  
Charity

Kingston Hospital Charity  
Galsworthy Road  
Kingston upon Thames  
Surrey KT2 7QB  
Telephone 020 8973 5040  
Email [khft.charity@nhs.net](mailto:khft.charity@nhs.net)

**[khc.org.uk](http://khc.org.uk)**

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