



Cumbria, Northumberland,  
Tyne and Wear  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Strength and transformation

Annual magazine 2020/21



Caring | Discovering | Growing | **Together**

# Editorial

Welcome to our first annual magazine from Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust. This is the sixth magazine produced by our organisation but our first following our colleagues from Cumbria joining us in October last year and our new name.

Each year our annual magazine has a theme and this year its strength and transformation. 2020 has impacted on us all and is a year that will be remembered in history. We have all had to adapt, change and our resilience has been tested. This magazine pays tribute to what has been a remarkable year, focussing on how our staff have adapted and evolved their ways of working in order that our services could continue.

As an organisation we are one of the largest mental health and disability care providers in England, employing over 7,000 staff and serving a population of approximately 1.7 million covering a catchment area of 3,350 square miles.

We work from over 70 sites across Cumbria, Northumberland, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland as well as providing a number of national and specialised services.

We hope you find the articles throughout the magazine interesting and that they provide you with a good insight into our organisation.

If you would like to find out more about us you can visit our website at [www.cntw.nhs.uk](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk) or find us on social media on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn or Instagram. Just search for [@CNTWNHS](https://twitter.com/CNTWNHS)

We'd love to hear from you with any suggestions or feedback about our magazine ideas or future editions.

You can reach us at [communications@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@cntw.nhs.uk)

**Adele Joicey**  
Head of Communications

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# A message from our Chair

Our theme this year is strength and transformation. Both of these things are badly needed in this extraordinary and challenging time.

The people and communities we serve are facing many difficulties. The impact of COVID-19 on their own health, the impact on those they love and care for, bereavement, loss of contact, unemployment and poverty. Many of these things we can only influence as citizens.

We need to do what we can do as an organisation, and as individuals working for Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust. We can go on providing the best possible treatment and care and support to carers, families and communities. To do that we will need the strength to serve, endurance, patience and determination.

For many of us this will be a challenge because we will be concerned for ourselves and for our families, partners and children, many of whom will be experiencing the challenges of illness, loss, unemployment and poverty. We are people too.

We also need to transform our services to adapt to the new world. A great deal has already been done but there is much more to do. We need to continue to work closely with service users and carers to understand what they value about the way we do things now and what needs to change. It would be natural if we sought to return to the way things were because familiarity is comforting in the unprecedented situation in which we find ourselves.

However, we need the strength to transform and to change services so that they work for those we serve. In this task our wonderful peer supporters will have a valuable role to play given their lived experience and their understanding of the service provision.

In both my work and personal life I have found the words of an old prayer to be comforting and helpful. We need to have the courage and the strength to change what we can change, the grace to accept what we cannot change and the wisdom to know the difference.

The dark clouds that seem to be gathering over much of the world, and our own society, may be beyond our reach. We can make sure that together we provide the best possible treatment, care and support to those we serve.

Strength and transformation.

**Ken Jarrold CBE**  
**Chair of the Council of Governors and**  
**Board of Directors**





# A message from our Chief Executive

I have been reflecting on how much things have changed since I joined the Trust as Chief Executive in 2014. In that time we have, despite many challenges gone from strength to strength as an organisation (including being awarded an outstanding rating from the CQC twice). We have also seen the expansion of the range and types of services we provide.

There have also been changes nationally in terms of the focus and priority being given to mental health and disability services. We are seeing a real sea of change in societal attitudes to mental health, led by celebrities, sportsmen and women, politicians and business leaders speaking out about their lived experiences.

Last October we welcomed colleagues from North Cumbria into the Trust and started a new chapter together under our new name of Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust. In the last year we've learned so much together, we have shared what is good across our enlarged organisation, and we have worked hard to strengthen and improve our services where it's been needed.

Most recently, we have, like the rest of the NHS, brought about rapid service changes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. 2020 will certainly be a year for the history books, which I hope in time will show how resilient we were in the face of such adversity. We have transformed the way we work over the COVID-19 period. Many staff have been working from home, whilst others have worked flexibly so we could respond to the needs of our service users.

Sometimes the challenges seemed insurmountable, but, by working together, using new technologies, finding solutions and adapting, we have strengthened our services for those we're here to serve. I'd particularly like to highlight the work of our team in 'Gold Command' who oversaw our response to the pandemic. I would also like to recognise the work of our informatics team who rose to the challenge of revolutionising our use of technology.

I remain proud and honoured to be part of the CNTW family. I'd like to highlight the talent, dedication and determination of all of our colleagues across the Trust who kept the show on the road and services open for business.

That includes our Governors, our volunteers as well as our staff. The words 'thank you' aren't nearly enough, but I would wish to say them nevertheless: Thank you to each and every one of you. Whether you work in clinical areas or in support services, you are all part of what makes CNTW special.

COVID-19 has affected us on so many levels. As well as the physical symptoms for those who have been exposed to the virus, the pandemic has also placed a heavy burden on the mental wellbeing of us all. It is not surprising that there is evidence that people's mental health and wellbeing has worsened during the pandemic. We will need to rise to these challenges over the coming months, as the need for our services grows.

At times such as these, it's important that we are there for each other. If you know that someone is going through a difficult time, please reach out to them and ask, not once but twice, if they are ok.

I look forward with enthusiasm and confidence that we will be able to continue to provide high quality treatment and care by working together and building on the innovations we introduced this year.

**John Lawlor, OBE**  
**Chief Executive**





# A year in CNTW

So much has happened since we published our last magazine in July last year and we have much to be proud of. We hope you enjoy this roundup of highlights across CNTW in the last 12 months.

In **July** we celebrated being listed in the top three mental health trusts across the country for recruitment to research studies and we also opened our doors to the public for our annual members meeting where we showcased our services with the many stalls on show.

In **August** almost £4,000 was donated to local foodbanks. Following our CQC 'outstanding' rating a number of staff selected the option to donate their £10 to a foodbank and a total of £3,820 was divided across six foodbanks across our geographical area, making a real difference to families in the region.

**September** was a time of recognition and we celebrated with Peter Haddow, nursing assistant at Ferndene who was honoured as a health hero and two of our self-help guides were recognised at the British Medical Association Awards.

In **October**, after months of preparation, we welcomed our colleagues from north Cumbria and officially became Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust. We also held our first ever world mental health day event which also coincided with the 150th birthday of St Nicholas Hospital.

In **November** we were celebrating again as the Children's Learning Disability Service in Cumbria won a prestigious Nursing Times Award. We celebrated again in December when the South of Tyne Pathway Support Team were highly commended in the Patient Safety Category of the Health Business Awards.

In **December**, Gillian Thomson, an advanced occupational therapist at Walkergate Park was appointed to sit on a national forum which will help shape legislation and share knowledge that will benefit other occupational therapists and service users. Gillian is now a committee member of the Royal College of Occupational Therapists' Long Term Conditions Forum.

**December** also show a number of celebratory events taking place across the Trust to celebrate 100 years of learning disability nursing as well as case studies being shared showcasing the centenary.

We got **January** off to a healthy start when over 300 staff across all of our sites donned their walking boots and took part in the launch of guided walks, the walks, organised by A Weight off Your Mind are designed to improve physical and mental wellbeing.

In **January** we signed the TUC's Dying to Work Charter which aims to help employees who become terminally ill at work so staff can be secure in the knowledge that if they ever face a terminal diagnosis they will be supported every step of the way and provided with security of work, peace of mind and the right to choose the best course of action for themselves and their families.

In **February** a group of allied health professionals in Cumbria took part in a 'Big Sleep' to raise money for older people struggling to stay warm raising money for Cumbria Community Foundation's winter warmth appeal. February also saw the Trust's first art fair displaying patient artwork and raised over £1,000 for the Arts Therapy Project. The two-day art fair received an overwhelming response with a wide range of visitors and lots of responses to the artwork. Such was the success of the event there are now plans in place to make this an annual event.





**April** became a period of adjustment. We celebrated Autism Awareness Week with the news that a former resident of the Trust's Mitford Unit was publishing a book of poems after finding poetry helped her cope with life's challenges. It wasn't long during Amy's stay on Mitford Unit that staff discovered her talent for poetry and encouraged her to write more. She is now discharged and enjoying life in her new flat, has started volunteering and has joined a choir.

**April** also saw the transformation of Castleside at the Campus of Ageing and Vitality thanks to the work of a local artist. As part of a 12-month project, the ward was revamped to provide more visual stimulation for people with dementia. Named 'The North-Eastern Way', the artwork depicts local scenes and historic landmarks and famous North East faces including Ant and Dec and Bobby Robson.

In **May**, we encouraged people to take part in #WalkThisMay. May is National Walking Month, which took on a whole new meaning this year as going for a walk was one of the few things we were able to do during lockdown.

Deaf Awareness Week also fell in **May**. This was an opportunity to promote the Trust's Mental Health and Deafness Service which works with D/deaf and deafblind people aged 18 years or older who have mental health problems. Working with individuals and their support teams, the service adapts communication, resources and information to promote accessibility and support staff to work with people in a meaningful way.

**June** was a month for national accreditation, with recognition for both the Centre for Specialist Psychological Therapies (CSPT) and the Newcastle Gateshead Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team (CRHT). The CSPT received accreditation from the Accreditation Programme for Psychological Therapies Services which recognises services that have high standards of care and treatment, share their good practice with other teams, and encourage continuous improvements.

The Newcastle and Gateshead CRHT was accredited by the Royal College of Psychologists' Home Treatment Accreditation scheme, despite the team only merging last year. One of the things that stood out the most from the report was feedback from service users and carers, both in terms of how staff communicate and listen to them, as well as their overall experience of the service.

In **July**, catering assistant Peter Cowan reached the milestone of 50 years in the Trust. Peter started in the catering team at St Nicholas Hospital aged just 16 and has been there ever since. He jokes that the early mornings have been the most challenging part of his job but that it's the feeling of being appreciated and thanked when you bring someone their food that has kept him going all these years.

**July** also saw the north Cumbria Locality hold its first Patient and Carer Involvement and Experience Group since joining the Trust. With more than 40 people in attendance for the virtual meeting, the group has got off to a brilliant start. The group's purpose is to ensure that the Locality has effective systems and processes in place to meaningfully listen to and respond feedback from patients and carers, and to identify themes, issues and areas of good practice which can be shared and addressed across the Trust.

In **August**, we held a virtual graduation for our Project Choice students recognising their achievements over the last year. Project Choice works with young adults with a learning disability, disability, mental health issue or learning disabilities or autism gain work experience and improve their employability and independence. Joined by students, mentors and professionals, the inspiring ceremony included words from Chairman Ken Jarrold who talked about making the most of the opportunities we are presented with.

This is just a snapshot of the things our staff have achieved in such a short space of time. Their strength and compassion has been admirable in what could be described as the most difficult year of many of our careers. Read more for even more examples of our staff embracing change and transforming the way we work to continue to deliver outstanding care against the odds.



# Our emergency response to COVID-19

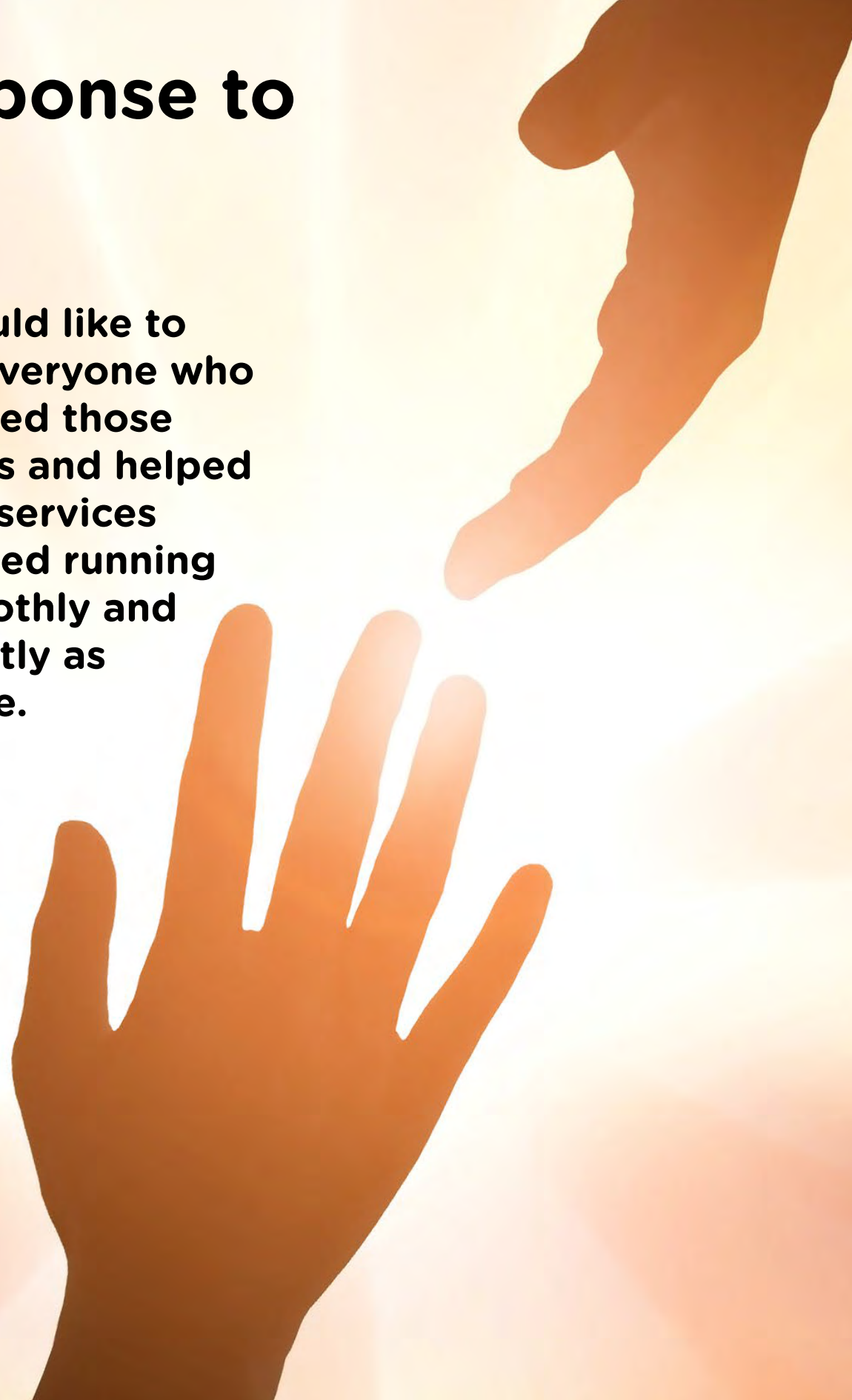
This year has been one of the most challenging in a generation. The world has gone through an unprecedented time with lots of change, worry and uncertainty. While the pandemic has caused a lot of stress and anxiety, we have also seen people come together like never before.

The first few weeks of the pandemic may feel like a long time ago to some, but the impact is ongoing and is likely to last a very long time. We set up our Gold Command Centre to ensure services continued and important messages were communicated to staff.

The wellbeing of our staff, service users and carers will always be at the heart of what we do. We needed to ensure staff felt supported and well enough to continue to provide the best possible care to those we serve.

This was done through a number of initiatives, including staff 'wobble rooms' and the creation of a wellbeing newsletter AWISH (Advice, Wellbeing, Information and Self-Help). We also saw a number of teams and individuals being redeployed into other roles. Being moved from your own job and put into something potentially completely different can be very daunting.

**We would like to thank everyone who embraced those changes and helped ensure services continued running as smoothly and efficiently as possible.**







# Stepping up to new roles...

As COVID-19 cases peaked across the country, almost every team in the organisation was affected by staff absences. To ensure that we could maintain safe staffing levels across our services many staff were asked to redeploy into different teams, with some returning from corporate services to patient-facing work.

We know how anxiety-providing and stressful this was for many staff, and the Trust sincerely thanks every member of the organisation who stepped up to this task and put the wellbeing of our patients first.

Our staff have shared some of their personal experiences of what it felt like for them which we hope you enjoy reading:

## **Carol's story**

Clinical support assistant Carol Templeton has been redeployed to help on the wards during the COVID-19 pandemic.

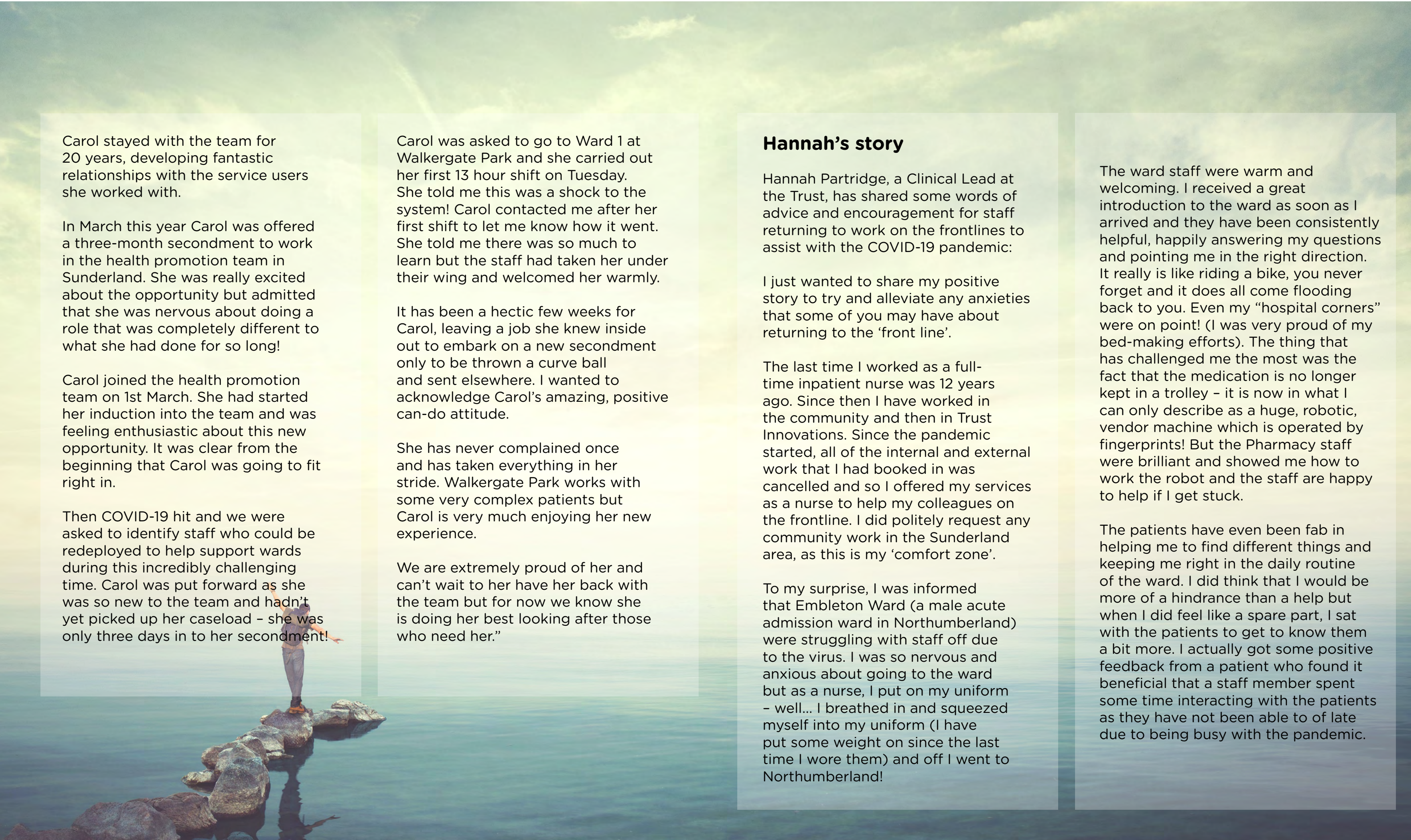
Her colleague Ashley Murphy has shared Carol's story as a way of saying thanks for her going to work on the frontline:

"Carol joined the Trust as a support worker in 1999 at Grindon Hall, a unit for people with learning disabilities.

She then moved to the intensive support team, a smaller stream of the community learning disability team. This was a unique team that offered intensive support to a small group of men with a learning disability and complex needs.

Carol stayed with the team for 20 years, developing fantastic relationships with the service users she worked with.





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In March this year Carol was offered a three-month secondment to work in the health promotion team in Sunderland. She was really excited about the opportunity but admitted that she was nervous about doing a role that was completely different to what she had done for so long!

Carol joined the health promotion team on 1st March. She had started her induction into the team and was feeling enthusiastic about this new opportunity. It was clear from the beginning that Carol was going to fit right in.

Then COVID-19 hit and we were asked to identify staff who could be redeployed to help support wards during this incredibly challenging time. Carol was put forward as she was so new to the team and hadn't yet picked up her caseload – she was only three days in to her secondment!

Carol was asked to go to Ward 1 at Walkergate Park and she carried out her first 13 hour shift on Tuesday. She told me this was a shock to the system! Carol contacted me after her first shift to let me know how it went. She told me there was so much to learn but the staff had taken her under their wing and welcomed her warmly.

It has been a hectic few weeks for Carol, leaving a job she knew inside out to embark on a new secondment only to be thrown a curve ball and sent elsewhere. I wanted to acknowledge Carol's amazing, positive can-do attitude.

She has never complained once and has taken everything in her stride. Walkergate Park works with some very complex patients but Carol is very much enjoying her new experience.

We are extremely proud of her and can't wait to have her back with the team but for now we know she is doing her best looking after those who need her."

## Hannah's story

Hannah Partridge, a Clinical Lead at the Trust, has shared some words of advice and encouragement for staff returning to work on the frontlines to assist with the COVID-19 pandemic:

I just wanted to share my positive story to try and alleviate any anxieties that some of you may have about returning to the 'front line'.

The last time I worked as a full-time inpatient nurse was 12 years ago. Since then I have worked in the community and then in Trust Innovations. Since the pandemic started, all of the internal and external work that I had booked in was cancelled and so I offered my services as a nurse to help my colleagues on the frontline. I did politely request any community work in the Sunderland area, as this is my 'comfort zone'.

To my surprise, I was informed that Embleton Ward (a male acute admission ward in Northumberland) were struggling with staff off due to the virus. I was so nervous and anxious about going to the ward but as a nurse, I put on my uniform – well... I breathed in and squeezed myself into my uniform (I have put some weight on since the last time I wore them) and off I went to Northumberland!

The ward staff were warm and welcoming. I received a great introduction to the ward as soon as I arrived and they have been consistently helpful, happily answering my questions and pointing me in the right direction. It really is like riding a bike, you never forget and it does all come flooding back to you. Even my "hospital corners" were on point! (I was very proud of my bed-making efforts). The thing that has challenged me the most was the fact that the medication is no longer kept in a trolley – it is now in what I can only describe as a huge, robotic, vendor machine which is operated by fingerprints! But the Pharmacy staff were brilliant and showed me how to work the robot and the staff are happy to help if I get stuck.

The patients have even been fab in helping me to find different things and keeping me right in the daily routine of the ward. I did think that I would be more of a hindrance than a help but when I did feel like a spare part, I sat with the patients to get to know them a bit more. I actually got some positive feedback from a patient who found it beneficial that a staff member spent some time interacting with the patients as they have not been able to of late due to being busy with the pandemic.



After two weeks, I am very excited to tell you that my uniforms are not so tight anymore, and my fitbit has not needed to vibrate on my wrist and tell me to keep moving – the steps I am doing up and down the wards are proving great for my health!

Many of the staff from Embleton ward were recently able to return to work from self-isolation, which meant my support was not required anymore and it was time to move on to another area where I was needed. I was quite emotional after only seven days of working on the ward, as they had made me feel welcome and part of the team in such a short time. They even got me a lovely 'Thank You' card and presents when I left. I will never forget their kindness and will definitely make sure I visit when everything is back to normal.

My next placement was at Hopewood Park, which I was pleased about as it is much closer to home and meant less travelling. What I wasn't expecting was... nightshifts! I haven't worked nightshifts for the past 12 years (apart from when I had my children, and that felt like nightshift and dayshift rolled into one). I had thought that the long days I had been working on Embleton ward were going to be the death of me. How was I ever going to stay awake for the whole night!?

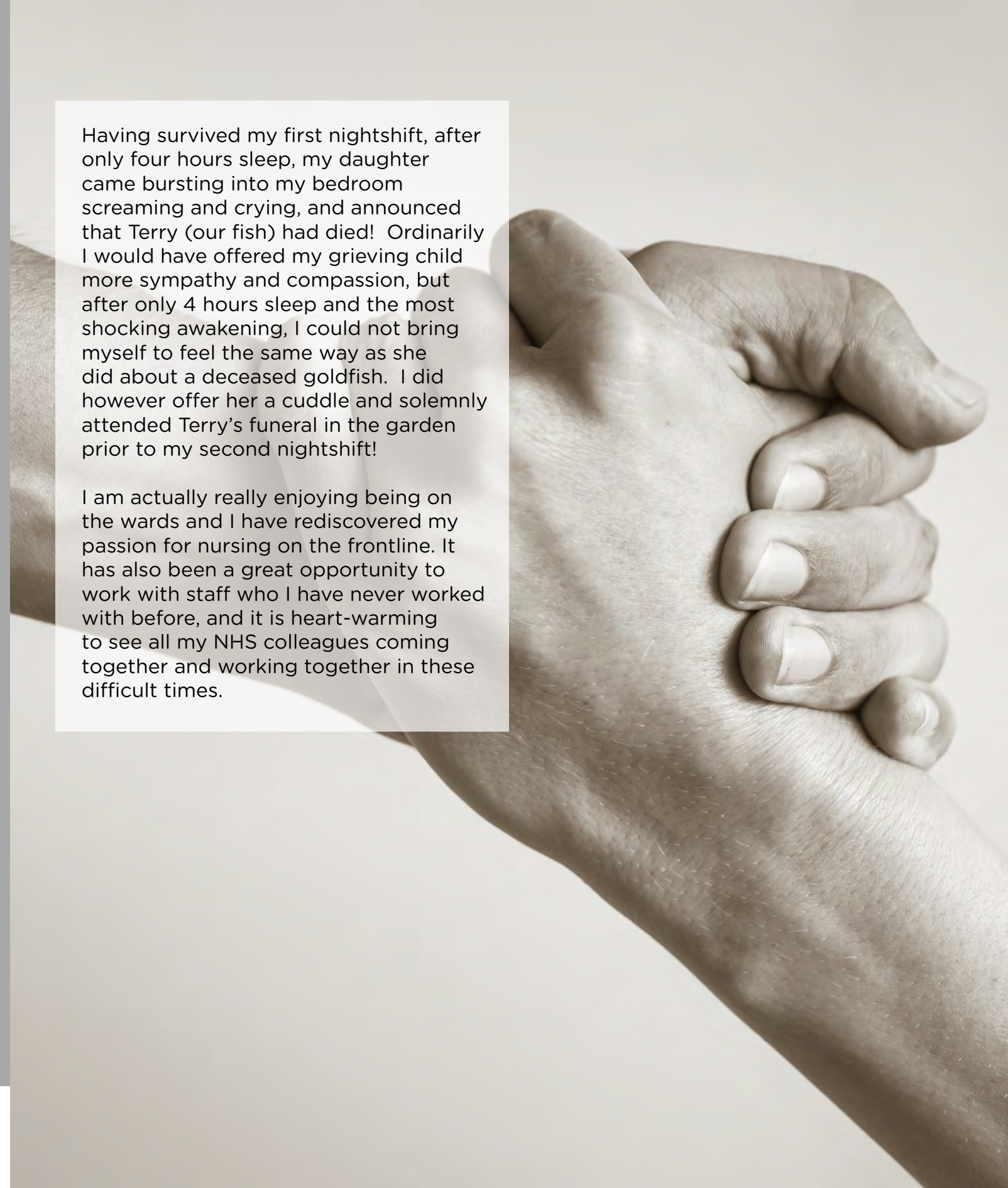
Before my first shift, I made sure I had a nap before I left the house and went armed with sugary drinks and caffeine. I met Mark (the Night Coordinator), who really is the nicest person you could ever wish to meet. He explained what was expected of me and made me feel relaxed, even actually look forward to the night ahead. He showed me around the site and introduced me to the wards. It was clear that Mark is a very well-liked manager as everyone we came across appeared happy to see him, and he made time to chat to them all and ask if he could do anything to help.

On the ward I was assigned to, I met Becca, a very young but very competent Band 5 Staff Nurse. I thought I had reason to be nervous and anxious but when I saw her just take charge of a new admission to the ward (who had suspected COVID-19) I was in awe! Although young, she is very feisty and knows her job inside out.

Despite having to dress up in extensive PPE to attend to the patient with suspected COVID-19, and it being really difficult to offer any non-verbal reassurance with our faces covered by masks, I felt the whole team worked well to comfort the patient who was new to the ward.

Having survived my first nightshift, after only four hours sleep, my daughter came bursting into my bedroom screaming and crying, and announced that Terry (our fish) had died! Ordinarily I would have offered my grieving child more sympathy and compassion, but after only 4 hours sleep and the most shocking awakening, I could not bring myself to feel the same way as she did about a deceased goldfish. I did however offer her a cuddle and solemnly attended Terry's funeral in the garden prior to my second nightshift!

I am actually really enjoying being on the wards and I have rediscovered my passion for nursing on the frontline. It has also been a great opportunity to work with staff who I have never worked with before, and it is heart-warming to see all my NHS colleagues coming together and working together in these difficult times.







## Kim's story

Kim Carter was working as a clinical nurse lead on an inpatient ward when she was told she was going to be redeployed to help with the COVID-19 effort.

"When I was told I was going to be moved I couldn't believe it, I felt totally gutted" Kim admitted.

Kim started on the older adults Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team (CRHT) in the beginning of May, feeling nervous and anxious. She was one of six members of staff asked to join the newly formed team.

All CRHTs nationally were asked to form to become 'universal' crisis teams as a result of the pandemic.

Nurse consultant Helen House said: "We were really excited to get the Older Adults team up and running but we were also nervous because of the challenge of having to set it up in such a short timescale. Staff had to come in, learn the ropes and be 'crisis ready' in two weeks."

Helen greeted Kim on her first day and helped put her at ease. Kim added: "I explained my anxieties to Helen and the fact that although I wasn't happy to be redeployed, I would ensure this didn't affect my professionalism."

Kim spent her first day shadowing clinicians to gain a better understanding of the team and its role. The team offers assessment and home treatment for people experiencing a mental health crisis, as an alternative to hospital admission.

From day one, Kim says she was made to feel like part of the team, able to share her knowledge of working in inpatient services. Following the success of her redeployment, Kim has now secured a permanent role as a crisis clinician in the team.

"I'm really excited to be part of a team which I know is very much needed to support patients and prevent hospital admissions," Kim said.

"I'm looking forward to supporting those who would normally have been admitted to hospital because there were no services available to prevent this. I feel like I'll really be able to make a difference."

Kim feels her new role will be significantly different to where she used to work, which was an inpatient ward providing assessment and treatment to older people with mental health problems arising from disorders such as depression, anxiety or psychosis.

Her role in the crisis team will involve working more collaboratively with service users and their families and carers. "In my old role I did a lot of audits but often felt that my skills and time would be better suited to supporting service users and families more directly. A lot of admissions are due to the deterioration of someone's mental health but also the strain and stress this can place on those around them. My whole ethos is about person-centred nursing and supporting families."

Helen added: "When I met Kim on her first day she was visibly anxious and hesitant about going in. The next day she was back with a massive smile on her face and by the end of the first week she was asking support for interview techniques as she wanted to apply for a permanent role within the team."

"She told me she had felt a renewed love for nursing and it was clear Kim's heart and energy was very much driven by her desire to support the most vulnerable people. We are delighted to have Kim on board and thrilled that we get to keep her!"



## Matthew's story

Peer supporter and registered nurse apprentice Matthew Fairclough was redeployed to the new Universal Crisis Older Adult Team (UCOAT) based at St George's Park.

This has been a completely new experience for Matthew, as peer supporters don't usually work in to crisis teams. He has been able to use his new skills as an apprentice nurse to help, not just within UCOAT but also working with Psychiatric Liaison at Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital (NSECH) when required.

"While COVID-19 is having a major impact on services within the Trust, I have been able to step into more of a nursing role," Matthew explained. "I'm still an apprentice which limits what I can do but it has not stopped me from being able to practice these new skills." Matthew says the Trust has been extremely responsive in the face of coronavirus. "We are all concerned about our clients. For some of them, the visits they get from the community team can be the only contact they have with another person all week.

"The community teams are facing these challenges as positively and proactively as possible while still ensuring support is available." Matthew said: "I love my job and I'm very passionate about the peer supporter role, so much so I'm often asked why I decided to undertake the nursing degree.

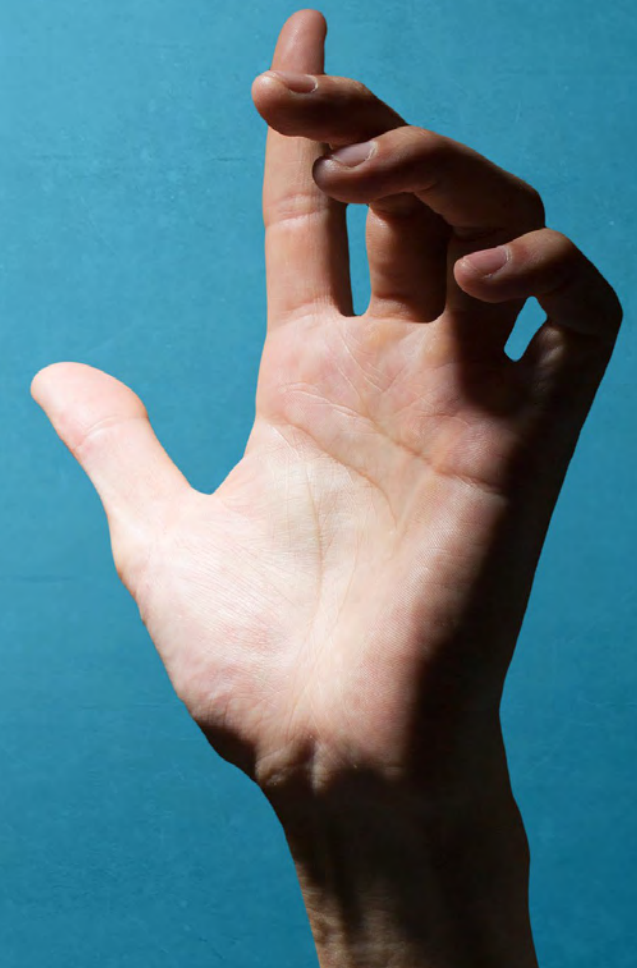
"There can be some misunderstanding around the peer supporter role. I always aim to use my voice for the better of my clients and felt my voice would carry more weight and recognition if I had a professional qualification. The degree is a great opportunity for career progression while still being involved with patients."

Matthew admits it can be difficult juggling the roles of peer supporter and student nurse. The degree involves splitting his time between course work and placements. He says he's able to manage those to his team who give him support and guidance that is "second to none."

For Matthew, the most important thing is to give meaning to someone's recovery journey. He hopes that his career progression shows service users what they can achieve.

"My clients understand I'm undertaking my own recovery journey and hope that it shows there's no limits to what someone can do.

"A diagnosis doesn't define myself or anyone else. I want to be able to offer hope of what can be achieved regardless of diagnosis."





## Kate's story

Kate Chartres, a Mental Health Nurse Consultant working in Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust's Psychiatric Liaison Team at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle, has shared her experiences of shielding during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## A positive outlook

Kate was diagnosed with breast cancer in November 2019, and was still undergoing chemotherapy when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the UK.

This meant she was in the 'extremely clinically vulnerable' category, as the treatment suppressed her immune system making the potential consequences of catching the virus much more severe, and started shielding in March.

Looking back on the past five months, Kate says shielding was "much better than expected." She describes herself as a 'social butterfly,' energised by being around other people – usually a big part of her job – so she was nervous at the prospect of suddenly being stuck at home.

Kate went into shielding with a positive outlook, and thinks this has been key to how well she has coped. "You get more of what you focus on," she says, "so if you focus on the positives that's what grows. I chose to focus on the positive."

The uncertainty of everything has been difficult at times, but Kate has taken a pragmatic approach and focussed on what she can practically do to look after herself, like wearing a mask on hospital visits even

before official guidance was brought in. Kate has recommended the website [www.wellbeingandcoping.net](http://www.wellbeingandcoping.net) to friends and patients, which guides you through making a 'wellbeing plan'. [www.Stayingsafe.net](http://www.Stayingsafe.net) is another useful site which people can use to make a 'safety plan,' to use if they find themselves struggling with thoughts of self-harm or suicide.

## Practicing what we preach

Being a mental health nurse, Kate felt it was important to 'practice what she preaches'. She made sure she had a clear routine and structure to her days, always getting washed and dressed (even just into fresh PJs) and eating regular, healthy meals.

Regular exercise is often recommended to combat the side-effects of chemotherapy, so the limitations of shielding were difficult; but rather

than feeling defeated, Kate found alternatives that she could do at home, especially yoga.

Kate often teaches mindfulness to patients, and describes it as "being in the moment and focussing on right now; if you're in the moment, you can't be distressed about a future that hasn't happened yet or be upset about a past event. It's about re-focussing your attention to the moment and concentrating on one thing at a time." She suggests simple breathing exercises, counting flowers in the garden, or even mindfully dancing to your favourite tune!

The key to mindfulness, Kate says, is on focussing on what you're doing at that moment: "When you get distracting thoughts – which everybody does – like 'this is stupid,' or 'I feel a bit odd doing this,' you just allow them to float by like clouds and focus back on the thing that you're doing." Kate recommends the apps Headspace and Calm for those who want a bit of help getting started with mindfulness.

Some have used lockdown to start new hobbies or reawaken old ones, such as painting and gardening. Kate has spent much more time in her garden and has grown plants from

seeds for the first time, after a friend told her how restorative nurturing them could feel.



## Time to slow down and take stock

Lockdown has also had the unexpected benefit, for some, of being an opportunity to find new motivation to look after our wellbeing. Kate explains that for the last decade she had often been working 60 hour weeks, but the time off due to her treatment and shielding has forced her to take stock. “The experience of being isolated from friends and family while going through chemotherapy has been life-changing in many ways. It’s given me an opportunity to really think about what’s important in my life, to slow down, and consider how I can look after myself and maintain a healthy work-life balance.”

Kate’s manager and the rest of her team were in regular contact with her, but after her chemotherapy treatment ended she was thrilled at the prospect of going back to work at the start of July to see them all properly. The Trust’s Occupational Health service has supported Kate’s return to work after her immune system had recovered from the effects of chemotherapy, but as a precaution she will not be able to go in A&E or see COVID-positive patients for a while.

## Returning to the ‘big wide world’

Anxious about returning to the ‘big wide world’ after shielding for months, Kate soon realised that social media had given her an extreme view of how things were. “I thought everywhere would be full of people running wild, disregarding guidance, spreading the virus and putting people at risk,” she said, “but the truth of it is, most people are generally being very sensible.”

“I’m still being cautious, as there remains a real risk that my immune system might not cope well if faced with COVID-19. But I’m focussing on the highlights of having more freedom now – daily walks on the beautiful North East coastline, getting out on my bike (albeit very, very slowly!) and this summer’s first paddle in the sea.”

Kate is adamant that now she is returning to work, her experiences in lockdown will change how she looks after herself. “I’m taking proper breaks, going for walks at lunchtime – it’s so important to actually follow all the wellbeing advice that we give to others, and look after ourselves properly too,” she says. “Although I’ve had some very difficult life experiences over the past year, I believe they have helped me to grow and actually become a better nurse, because I understand so many things much better now.”





# Embracing change

COVID-19 has changed how we live and work in many ways this year, but it certainly hasn't stopped our staff from delivering outstanding care against all the odds. In many cases, it's helped us change things for the better. We have developed innovative new ways of working at a pace we never thought possible, and taken stock in our personal lives as well.

At every level 'team CNTW' have risen to the challenge: from apprentices pivoting to work and study from home as well as packing scrubs to send to front-line staff, to teams like the Newcastle and Gateshead Children and Young Peoples' Learning Disability and Positive Behaviour Support service, who acted quickly and innovatively to replace group-based work (the usual first line of intervention) with a new Initial Behaviour Assessment Package that can be delivered over the phone or via virtual consultation. (This package is based primarily on Positive Behaviour Support principles, but also incorporates an important focus on parents' wellbeing.)

Grappling with remote working has been a huge learning curve for many of us. (One staff member, Debbie Ash, even turned her campervan into a home office - shared with her dogs and chickens! - so that she could have a dedicated work space to leave at the end of the day.)

Thankfully, the incredible efforts of our Informatics team put us in a strong position from the start. As a Global Digital Exemplar we had already invested a lot in technology to support our staff, and when the pandemic arrived the team rolled out Microsoft Teams across the organisation at lightning speed, accompanied by comprehensive support. Our huge geographical footprint means that being able to connect and collaborate is vital, and technology has enabled that.

The resulting reduction in unnecessary travel - freeing up valuable clinical time and reducing our carbon footprint - is something we hope we'll see the positive effects of long after the current pandemic.





# Embracing change: Creating the discharge team

There are many ways in which teams have had to adapt to new ways of working during the pandemic. The creation of a new Discharge Team at Walkergate Park is one innovative example, going from concept to reality in just a week.

In normal circumstances a person who needed it would flow through the different services in the North East’s well-established neuro rehab pathway on their journey back into the community.

As the threat of the pandemic grew it soon became clear that Walkergate Park would be unable to safely discharge people because of new measures and a solution needed to be found.

Usually ward staff and therapists would carry out home visits to assess the suitability of a property – ordering and fitting grab rails, making adaptations and arranging handovers with families and care teams to ensure a smooth transition. However due to the risk of staff bringing COVID-19 on to the ward another solution had to be found.

It wasn’t long before a plan was designed to ensure ward-based staff remained on the wards to look after inpatients and a new Discharge Team was created to plan and follow up the community aspects of the proposed discharge. The Discharge Team was made using staff from community services whose workload had decreased due to cancelled appointments.

Neil Brownlee, Long Term Conditions Lead said: “The impact of moderate to severe brain injury on individuals and their families can be catastrophic. The road ahead can involve lengthy periods of neuro rehab in hospital and community settings. “We needed to ensure that the pandemic caused as little disruption as possible to what is already an extremely turbulent time in people’s lives.”

The new team took responsibility for a person’s transition into the community, with technology playing a key role. Staff were able to make contact with patients and families, and meetings over Teams allowed them to reflect on patient care.

The team remained operational for 10 weeks, supporting 20 people to return to their homes or some kind of supported living or residential care in that time.



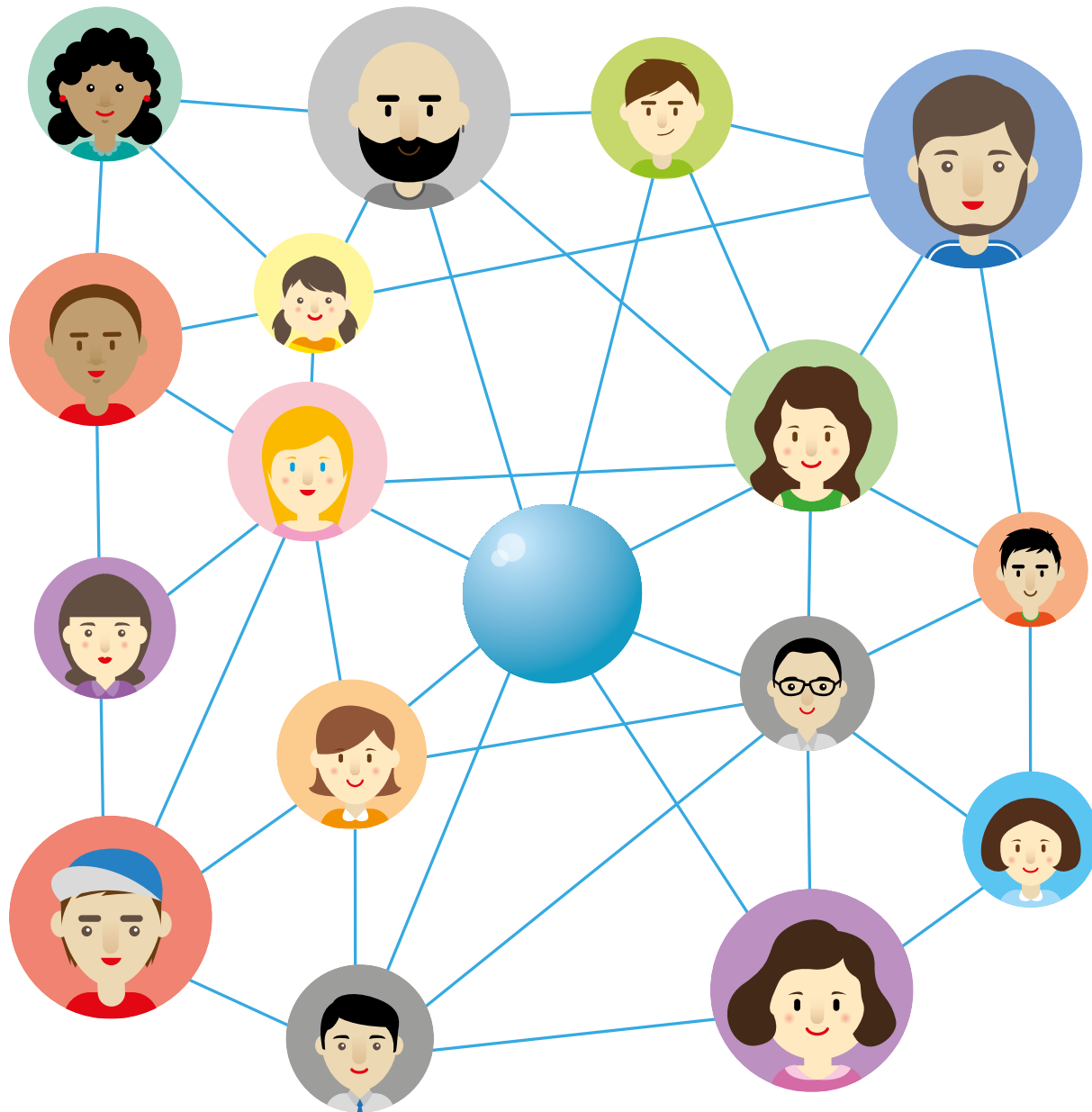
Neil added: “It was a privilege to support and supervise a great team of professionals who came together in such challenging circumstances. We have learned so much from this experience; it has enabled us to work more efficiently and work more collaboratively between community and inpatient teams.”

The pandemic has presented major challenges to the provision of health and social care. Staff have been reflecting on the Discharge Team’s impact and how learnings can be taken forward.

Walkergate Park Centre for Neurorehabilitation and Neuropsychiatry is a service for people with a disability caused by injury or disease affecting the brain, spinal cord or muscles. One of the most advanced centres of its kind, the goal is to maximise people’s potential for independence.



# Embracing change: Using technology



Castleside Unit at the Campus of Ageing and Vitality in Newcastle has been helping patients talk to loved ones, thanks donations of **new technology**.

The ward has been unable to admit visitors due to COVID-19 restrictions, meaning that many patients have gone months without seeing their families in real life. The Trust have distributed iPads in response to the pandemic, with priority given to wards who had expressed an interest in their use of technology to support patient care.

Laura Gibbons, advanced practitioner on the ward, said: “The pilot has come with its challenges as we’re working with people with dementia, but overall the experience has been **extremely positive**.

“It’s been a pleasure to see families connect, there’s been some really special moments. One patient celebrated her birthday and being able to see her family’s faces, albeit not in real life, meant so much to her. It’s not just our patients who benefit, you can see how much the families get from it as well.”

Castleside is an inpatient unit for older people with health problems arising from disorders such as dementia. The service now offers the iPads as a communications option to all families when their loved one comes on to the ward.

The daughter of one patient said: “For me and my sister, being able to speak to Dad on the phone every day was fantastic but the video calls have been what can only be described as a lifeline. Being able to see Dad as well as hear his voice has brought us reassurance and joy.

“Seeing him smile, being able to share stories and fully engage with him has been invaluable at a time when visits aren’t allowed. I don’t live nearby so video calling helps remove the distance and helps me feel close to Dad.

“I can’t thank the team enough and would recommend this for anyone as families will cherish this time. Thank you so much for all it has meant in these uncertain times.”

Another family member said: “I wanted to express how much I appreciated the use of video call technology whilst my dad has been in hospital. I had been used to visiting once or twice a week so it was very upsetting not being able to visit at all. “Being able to video call dad and see him in the flesh was **wonderful**. It has been a lifeline for me and my family. Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to have that time and I hope that it’s used in the future to bring other families together.”

The ward has also been able to use the iPads for other purposes since their delivery in May, including simulated presence therapy, an emotion-orientated intervention for people with dementia.

Staff worked with a family member to record a scripted video message telling their loved one they missed them and recalling fond memories which the patient can watch back. This is something that the ward hasn’t been able to do before because the technology wasn’t available.





“As Microsoft Teams proved to be such a success in the response to COVID-19, the Trust decided to provide every inpatient ward with an iPad to support clinical care and give the patients a much-needed boost in tough times.

“Patients’ wellbeing is very important to the Trust. Having access to iPads and MS Teams has allowed patients to speak to loved ones, seek help from care providers and generally feel connected. The quick response in sending out iPads to those in need and the readiness of staff and patients alike to use them, has been a lifeline in these strange times.”



# Supporting others

As part of the Trust's efforts to help staff cope during the COVID-19 pandemic, a new **confidential helpline** was set up to provide anonymous access to a **psychological support**.

Due to positive feedback received it was decided that the support offer would be extended to include health and care staff, local authority, education, prison and emergency care service staff as part of a whole system offer.

Therapists offer a listening ear and signpost to further support if necessary.

The helpline is one of a number of ways staff can access support. The Trust's [YouTube channel](#) also post regular wellbeing livecasts covering a different theme each week.

Topics have included:

- The Covid dilemmas
- Relationships and sustaining connections
- Sleep well and carry on
- BAME conversations
- Burnout and healthy habits
- Worry and uncertainty
- Acceptance
- Changes and transitions
- Mentalising the pandemic

There is also psychological first aid training, which includes **trauma-informed psychological wellness training** programme incorporating **moral distress or injury** and **BAME (black, Asian and minority ethnic)** issues, and support to implement facilitated reflective team sessions for staff.



TOGETHER  
WE WILL GET THROUGH THIS





# Emotional support for care home staff

**WORK**

Realising that staff working in care homes were under increasing amounts of worry, stress, and anxiety during COVID-19, staff from our older peoples' service were on hand to help.

As the COVID-19 pandemic began to take its toll on care homes earlier this year, the CHESS team recognised that the care home staff they worked closely with needed some extra emotional support. CHESS quickly set up 'sharing sessions' for any care home who wanted them; a place for staff to safely offload their feelings.

The 'sharing sessions' have been well-received. They are confidential, providing staff with a safe place to share how they are feeling and talk through some of their anxieties.

Each session is facilitated by a member of the CHESS team who has an established relationship with that care home.

David Storm, Associate Director for Access and Community in North Cumbria said "The Covid pandemic has had a huge impact on care homes in our area. There was an urgent need for our CHESS team to be proactive in supporting not only care home residents, but also their staff.

Teams have been dealing with multiple bereavements while trying to manage the impact of the pandemic, particularly the effect restrictions have had on many residents' behaviour.

We're proud to say that in these difficult times, we have worked closely as a community with organisations in health, social care and the third sector to support vulnerable people."

**BALANCE**

Staff worked closely with care homes in north Cumbria, finding new ways to help their colleagues offload their worries and feel supported.

The Care Home Education Support Service (or CHESS) was developed in 2005 and is part of the North Cumbria Older Adults Community Mental Health Team at CNTW. Their original aim was to reduce the number of people from care homes admitted to hospital for avoidable reasons. They do this by working closely with care home staff to improve their understanding of, and ability to support, people with dementia or mental health needs.

**LIFE**



# Teams find new ways to help pupils with worries

A successful mental health team is finding new ways to support children and teachers with the challenges of COVID-19.

The RISE team, which normally works with children in local schools, quickly rose to the challenge of lockdown, offering a whole range of new options for children needing their support. Instead of assemblies, group work and one-to-ones in school, the team switched to telephone and online consultations, as well as keeping in touch with parents and schools to monitor the young people's changing needs. A new series of 'Wellbeing Wednesday' videos and other resources are also helping families with children who may have worries during the outbreak.

And with more children now back in school, the team is looking further ahead.

Fiona Goldsmith, the RISE team's clinical lead, said: "It's always important to help children with their wellbeing, but it's even more important in these changing times. We're here to help anyone with worries, but a lot of our focus now is on prevention.

"By working with schools, we can help children who are likely to be vulnerable, rather than waiting until they are back in school to manage any difficulties. Adapting to lockdown was a challenge, but returning to school will also cause anxiety for some children.

"We have always focused on the whole school, and this is more important than ever, as many teachers and school staff are also experiencing anxiety. So a big part of our work is to support staff through all the changes, help them to be resilient, and be there for their pupils."

The RISE project was set up last year, after Newcastle Gateshead was one of only 25 areas chosen to provide extra help in schools through the national Trailblazer programme.

Since then RISE has trained 12 local people as education mental health practitioners, and helped over 600 children in 54 schools in Newcastle and Gateshead.

The team helps young people with a range of issues like difficult relationships, loneliness, school work pressures and coping with change.

Linking with school counsellors, nurses, educational psychologists and voluntary organisations, its focus is on supporting pupils with mild to moderate mental health issues, as well as helping pupils with more severe needs to get the right support.

Emma Youd, one of the team's Education Mental Health Practitioners, adds: "School is always a mix of positive and challenging experiences, but during the pandemic it's more important than ever to help them build up resilience and coping strategies.

"It's important for children who are not in school, the pupils who have been attending through the pandemic and for everyone as they eventually return to what's likely to be a very different school environment.

"Our support is focused very much on the needs of the children, families and schools, helping with concerns like anxiety, self-esteem or low mood."

RISE is supported by Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group and Northumbria University, as well as Newcastle and Gateshead councils. The team aims to expand and support a wider range of schools in the future.

You can find out more about RISE, including a list of schools currently supported by the team, at [www.rise-ne.co.uk](http://www.rise-ne.co.uk)

If you or a member of your family need support with anxiety or mental health worries, you can contact the team at [NGRise@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:NGRise@cntw.nhs.uk)



# Making a difference

## Staff across the Trust have used their initiative to embrace change during the pandemic.

**Occupational therapist** Dolores O'Doherty came up with the lockdown photography competition in a bid to make breaks for staff and inpatients more interesting.

After finding that patients were getting sick of walking the same routes during lockdown and staff were spending their breaks indoors, Dolores wanted to do something that would change that.

The competition, which was open to staff and patients on inpatient wards, encouraged them to use their imagination and take photos within the grounds.

The wards held their own internal competitions, with the winners being sent on to The Biscuit Factory to judge overall.

The photographs are being exhibited at The Biscuit Factory, one of Newcastle's leading cultural venues, from 5-20 September.





Service users in the Trust's secure care services were encouraged to get creative for an Easter poetry competition, jointly organised by our education department and the Recovery College. Topics of the poems ranged from chocolate eggs and the Easter bunny to how Coronavirus had impacted the holiday.

The two winning poems were chosen based on their originality and creativity. Thanks to the competition's success, the education team and Recovery College are going to make them more regular.

Despite the pandemic, **children and young people at Ferndene** continued their **Duke of Edinburgh award**. The award is made up of four sections;

physical, skills, volunteering and an expedition. While some parts of the award had to be put on hold, there were other elements participants were still able to do such as song writing, volunteering in the on-site tuck shop and helping with the Ferndene Woods Project, which involves planting trees and building homes for animals.

The young people even created their own practice expeditions, putting up a tent in the garden and cooking outdoors. Activities coordinator Bridget Lawson said: "The award is such a **positive experience** and gives young people something to focus on. We look at what's best for each individual and can adapt things to their needs so they can still have the full Duke of Edinburgh experience."



**Exercise therapists** from across the Trust made exercise videos encouraging staff and patients to stay active. With gyms closed and many people having to self-isolate, home exercise videos became increasingly popular.

Staff from Hopewood Park made videos for walking routes around the site as well as taking part in the Foundation of Light's 30 Day Challenge, while staff at Bamburgh Clinic made videos in the clinic's courtyard and a bedroom to demonstrate exercises to do in an inpatient environment.

Exercise therapist Chris Quinn said: "Our ethos is '**Movement is Medicine**' and we are strong advocates for tailored exercise to assist in the recovery and ongoing wellbeing of service users."

The videos can be found on our [CNTW YouTube](#) channel.



# Hope and rainbows

THANK YOU  
TO OUR HEROES!



In June we sent thank you letters to the **children of staff** to show our appreciation for their support. Addressed to the children themselves, the letter explained that the Trust were facing a big **challenge** but with their support and the hard work of their parent or loved one we would be able to get through it. Penned by Chief Executive John Lawlor and Acting Executive Director of Workforce and Organisational Development Lynne Shaw, the letter thanked children for their love, jokes and smiles.

Cheryl Carr, Specialist Occupational Therapist, said: “My daughters were delighted to receive their letter, it stimulated a discussion around my role and the importance of the NHS. It was a lovely touch for the Trust to take the time to acknowledge our children. The letters are a good **keepsake** for the future for my children to reflect on this historical time.”

The letters also included a rainbow for children to colour in which have been sent back to the Trust and are going to be used for staff recognition cards and displayed on banners at the Trust sites.







# Finding new ways to support campaigns

**Our organisation proudly supports a huge range of annual awareness days, weeks and campaigns about all sorts of issues which affect our patients and staff. Usually, these will see staff getting out and about, manning information stalls and holding events to get people engaged.**

**But this year, things had to be done very differently...**

In the middle of the national lockdown people’s “government-approved” walks near their home were often the highlight of their day! So we got behind National Walking Month, held every year throughout May, to promote the mental health boost that even a short walk can offer. It was a great opportunity to promote the signposted walking routes round each of our main sites, which were launched in January.

**Mental Health Awareness Week (18-24 May)** focussed on the theme of ‘kindness’, and alongside all the many ‘random acts of kindness’ which uplifted us all during lockdown, we shared some ideas online to help people be kind to themselves as well. We were also proud to support the distribution of a handy booklet produced by charity Every Life Matters in partnership with the North East and North Cumbria Suicide Prevention Network. Over 1.3 million households across the North East and North Cumbria received the booklet through their letterbox, getting vital wellbeing advice right into people’s homes at a time when many needed it most.

**During Carers’ Week (8-14 June),** our Patient and Carer Involvement Team made sure that people knew that although in-person gatherings were paused, they could still make their voice heard. The team’s ‘Involvement Bank’ was launched, where service users and their carers can register to hear about opportunities to share their views and influence how the Trust works.

**Learning Disability Week (15-21 June)** focussed on the importance of friendships during lockdown, and our services found amazing new ways to help service users connect with their friends despite lockdown restrictions. Occupational Therapists in the Newcastle Community Learning Disability Team developed a friendship-themed resource pack, and many teams helped patients to set up video chats, or to send cards and small gifts.







### Virtual Pride Events

The Trust's LGBT+ Network and other staff would usually represent CNTW at Pride events across the North East and Cumbria to celebrate and promote their work in equality and diversity, to showcase the NHS as an inclusive employer, and to stand in solidarity with all those who can't bring their full selves to work yet.

This year, virtual Pride events became the norm. We joined in with NHS England and NHS Improvement's 'NHS Virtual Pride' on Friday 26th June, and CNTW staff also contributed a video on mental wellbeing advice to Northern Pride Online, an event which attracted a staggering 137,000 views.





# Working closely with other organisations

During the pandemic we have seen the importance of working together. The Trust has worked closely with other organisations as well as supporting national campaigns.

We supported and shared information from [Every Mind Matters](#), which provides expert advice and tips to look after mental health and wellbeing. Every Mind Matters launched new advice specifically focussed on looking after mental wellbeing during the pandemic.

New data showed over 4 in 5 British people are worried about the effect of coronavirus on their lives, with nearly half reporting high levels of anxiety. The resources included a COVID-19 Mind Plan and specific content for individuals and loved ones. New research also revealed that more in four in 10 adults are experiencing trouble sleeping during COVID-19 and Every Mind Matters issued guidance on better sleep. The resources can be found [here](#).

We worked with Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) to ensure people across the region were supported to access mental health services. The pandemic led to fewer people accessing the NHS for a range of conditions, including mental health problems. We worked together to urge people to seek support if they needed it and letting current service users know that they were able to access our services as usual.

Our two Trusts also released mental health clinicians to ease the pressure facing emergency services. Staff supported NHS 111 and ambulance service colleagues in delivering a mental health support service, diverting mental health calls away from NHS 111 operators and freeing up their time to respond to calls. Gail Kay, project director at CNTW, said: “It has never been more important for us to come together as healthcare providers to support each other and ensure people requiring support to manage their mental health and wellbeing receive the best possible response.”

We also endorsed the [Every Life Matters booklet](#) created by the North East and North Cumbria Suicide Prevention Network and regional partners. Over 1.3 million households across the North East and North Cumbria received the booklet, offering advice to those struggling to cope with the pandemic. The booklet included self-help information and advice for managing mental health and wellbeing, as well as advice on how to support others.

We launched the Staff Psychological Centre (SPC), a new support service for Trust staff. The centre offers a range of specialist psychological assessments, formulations and interventions including CBT, trauma and mindfulness. The centre was set up by staff working closely with workforce to create a psychologically safe, open and supportive environment. Staff from the service have also been involved in a number of initiatives relating to the pandemic, including developing a BAME cultural awareness questionnaire to be used for risk assessments.







**Throughout the pandemic, people showed their thanks and appreciation to the NHS which was heart-warming to see.**

**The whole country has embraced the NHS and we have felt supported every step of the way.**

**Never before have we all come together like this and the praise and recognition of the NHS is thoroughly deserved.**



# Thank you! NHS

## Donations from businesses

Over the last few months we have been inundated with donations from a variety of businesses, both big and small. From clothing from well-known brands to toiletries from local, independent businesses, we have been blown away by the kindness and generosity of strangers. We have received so many items, including chocolates, art supplies, and crafts and games for service users, and we appreciate each and every donation we have been given.

## Rainbows

Rainbows became synonymous with the NHS during the pandemic, becoming a symbol of hope and reminding everyone that better days are coming.

Houses, shops and businesses were adorned with rainbows and thank yous, and our Trust sites were no different. Pictures of rainbows appeared everywhere showing our support for each other and the wider NHS.





# National Covid-19 charity appeal

Our charity, the Shine fund recently received £50,000 from NHS Charities Together's national COVID-19 appeal, taking the total the Trust has received from the appeal to a staggering £134,000.

This appeal has seen amazing public support, raising a total of over £130,000,000 so far which has been distributed to NHS organisations across the country. The appeal got a particular boost when Captain Sir Tom Moore captured the nation's hearts by walking laps of his garden to raise money in the run-up to his 100th birthday in April.

The money received from this fund was vital in the early stages of lockdown, as it allowed us to purchase tablet computers and other equipment to enable inpatients to stay connected with friends and family while visiting was suspended. We were also able to loan some tablets to service users in the community who didn't have equipment to use for video calls, allowing them to continue maintaining their appointments with clinicians virtually.

TVs, DVD players, music players and games consoles were purchased to help patients stay entertained while lockdown restricted the usual range of activities on offer for them.

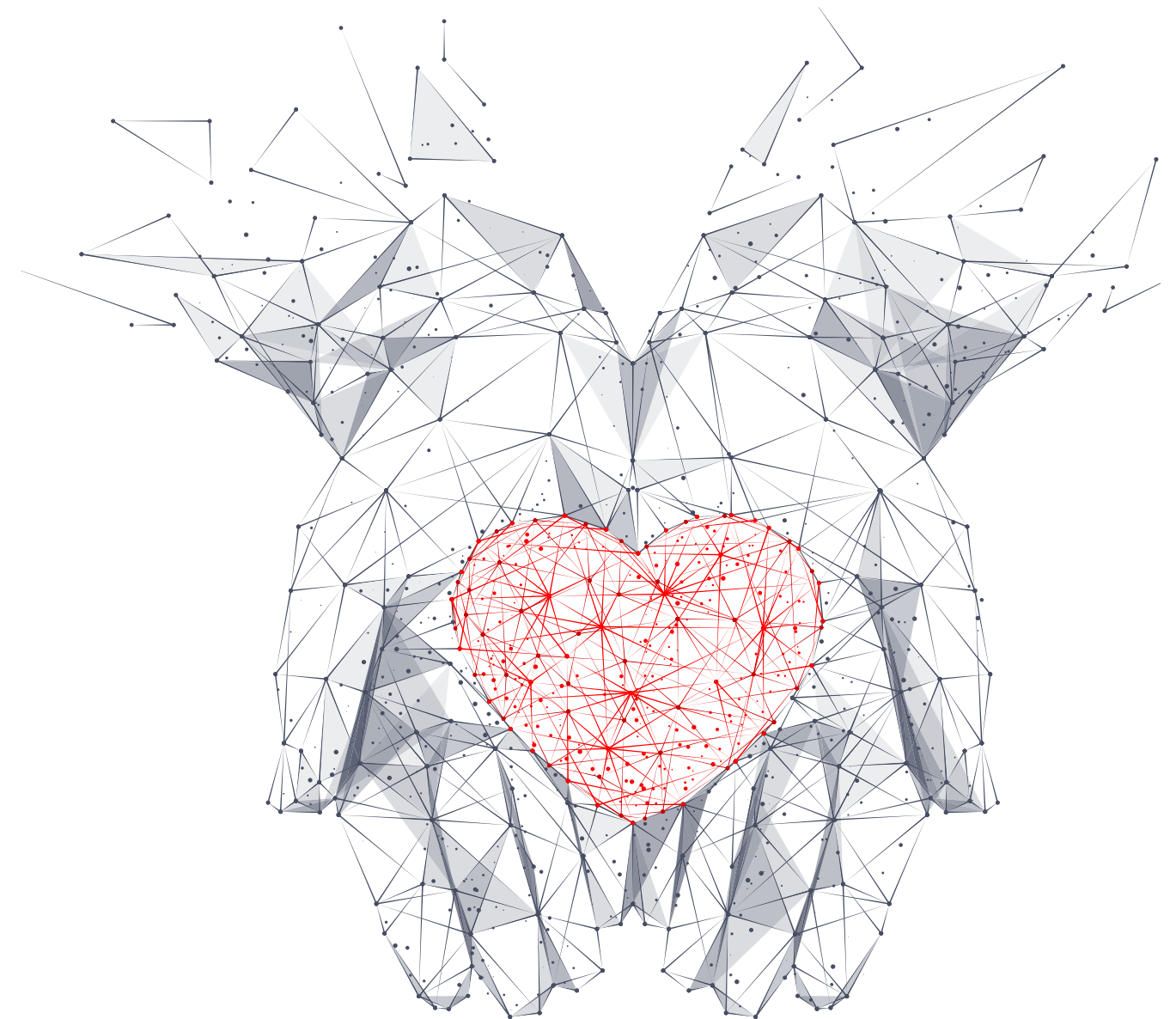
When a Trustwide photography competition was launched (with the winners set to be exhibited at galleries across our four localities), we were able to purchase cameras to help more patients and staff take part.

The funds also helped us to provide many sundries to enhance teams' ability to offer therapeutic activities. The 'wobble rooms', where staff could take a break and cope with the challenges of working through the conditions COVID-19 brought about, were well-stocked with refreshments, tissues and other small items to help people relax. Craft items and jigsaws were purchased for the Trust's Occupational Therapy teams and this enabled the teams to have items to undertake increased activities on wards.

A staggering 19,000 items were also purchased and sent out as part of 'wellbeing packs' distributed to inpatients and community patients across the Trust. These packs included puzzles and colouring books, pencils, essential toiletries, chocolates and other treats, and tea, coffee and milk, all intended to lift the spirits of patients and make life a little easier as they faced lockdown.

Ailsa Miller, Patients Finance and Cashiers Manager at CNTW who oversees The SHINE Fund, said: "We'd like to say a huge 'thank you' to everyone who has kindly supported

The SHINE Fund and the NHS Charities Together COVID-19 appeal this year. Your generosity has made a huge difference in helping us to support our patients and service users through this difficult time."





# Supporting SHINE

**Local people have been finding creative ways to support our charity, the SHINE fund, which uses donations to provide the ‘little extras’ that make a big difference to people’s recovery.**

Inspired by Captain Tom’s fundraising achievements, local artist Andy Parkin created a striking acrylic artwork of the war hero walking laps of his garden, which was sold for more than £800 with proceeds benefitting The SHINE Fund.

Andy began painting several years ago after being diagnosed with bipolar disorder, when he spent some time receiving treatment on one of CNTW’s wards.

It was here that one of our staff supporting him suggested that he try drawing as a way to express his feelings.



In June, the family of Jean Brown donated £5,000 in their mother’s memory to the dementia wards at Monkwearmouth where she received treatment. They said, “We wanted to donate money to Monkwearmouth Hospital because the care mam received there was just incredible. We always knew when we left the hospital after visiting each day that she was in safe hands, being extremely well looked after. The teams were amazing to our family.”

The rugby community across Cumbria came together to raise over £30,000 in support of the Yewdale mental health ward at West Cumberland Hospital. On Saturday 11th July, socially distanced teams tackled five fells north of Keswick. Over 125 walkers took part, including players from 17 amateur and professional rugby clubs, members of the local Referees Society, the national Rugby Football League, NHS staff, and charity State of Mind. The challenge was organised by Ryan Dodgson and Gary Hewer, who said: “The work the staff do on Yewdale Ward is tremendous, so we are really pleased to raise heaps of money for this great service.”



During the COVID-19 ‘lockdown’ many of us have realised just how important even the smallest bit of outdoor space can be for our mental health and wellbeing, so all the money raised will be used to kick-start a project the ward have been dreaming of - to transform their courtyard into a bright, colourful, therapeutic space for patients and carers to enjoy.



# LIVE on the drive

Local singer Ellie Mae McHenry raised an incredible £1,282.50 through her 'live on the drive' concert.

Ellie Mae had been performing an uplifting song for neighbours in Morpeth every Thursday following the 8pm 'Clap for Carers.' She decided to build on this and perform a virtual concert livestreamed via her Facebook page to raise money for the Trust. Ellie Mae's dad, Keith McHenry, works as a Clinical Manager at St George's Park, and Ellie Mae is studying to pursue a career in psychology, so the work of the Trust's mental health teams is close to the family's heart.

If you would like to know more about the SHINE Charity or to make a donation visit [www.cntw.nhs.uk/SHINE](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/SHINE)







**BLACK LIVES MATTER**



# Global Transformation: Black Lives Matter

In May of this year George Floyd, a 46 year old black American man passed away while being arrested by Minneapolis police officers. His death sparked hundreds of protests around the world and globalised the struggle against racism.

Solidarity marches and gatherings took place on a worldwide scale with one message, Black Lives Matter.

We stand together with our black staff, minority ethnic staff, volunteers, service users and our community against racism and hate crime.

We are proud of the diversity of our workforce, who we are here to support. We do not tolerate racism and hate and we will stand together to put an end to racism and promote equality. We will continue to listen and learn from our black and ethnic minority staff.

We are committed to creating a fair and diverse workplace and our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff network, established in March 2016, actively engages and contributes towards ensuring equality, acceptance and inclusion in our organisation.

Our staff networks provide a safe space for staff to come together to share experiences and receive support. It is a platform for sharing ideas and experiences, building relationships and promoting race equality. We seek to engage with and listen to all of our staff, regardless of their ethnicity, and at this pivotal moment across the globe particularly so with our BAME colleagues.

Rajesh Nadkarni, Executive sponsor of the BAME staff network, said: "We will not tolerate racism and hate crime. Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust is a place where we want all staff to feel safe, protected to and listened to. We are proud of our diverse workforce who make a difference to the lives of the communities we serve, each and every day. We stand with you. We are here for you."

We are all in this together. We support you and are here for you. Black lives matter.

**A message from our Chair of the Board and Non-Executive Director for Equality and Diversity Ken Jarrold CBE, Chief Executive John Lawlor, our Executive Medical Director Rajesh Nadkarni, and our Acting Executive Director of Workforce Lynne Shaw**

# A statement from our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Staff Network:

"For many of us the recent events of the unlawful killing of George Floyd have sparked anxiety, anger and hurt. These feelings have ignited protests across the world for the Black Lives Matter Movement against the injustices, racism and everyday discriminations faced by BAME people.

Many of us BAME people have experienced racism and discrimination in different walks of our life. The inequalities have only further been magnified by the disproportionate deaths of BAME people during COVID-19 pandemic.

The BAME Network is standing together with our BAME colleagues, patients and communities. We have zero tolerance towards racism, race inequalities, injustices and all forms of discrimination.

We will be focusing on amplifying the voices of BAME staff and creating safe spaces for staff to express their lived experiences, supporting them to feel empowered to challenge any racial or systemic discrimination.

We are calling on our white colleagues to ask your BAME colleagues how they are feeling in these challenging times, and consider how you can be supportive to them. We need our white colleagues and allies to step into this space with us, if a lasting positive change is to be made."





# Looking ahead

In July we surveyed staff, service users and carers on their experiences of COVID-19, which offered some valuable insights to shape our planning for the future. One thing that was clear is that working more flexibly is here to stay for the foreseeable future, with a 'mixed model' of virtual and face-to-face contact to suit everyone's individual needs and keep our sites 'COVID-secure' by allowing for physical distancing.

We found that while some service users definitely feel face-to-face contact suits them better, many found huge benefits to using telephone and online platforms. COVID has shown us that going forward we can (and must) offer a wider range of options to work with people in the way that is best for them.

The option to have some contacts remotely will also reduce the amount of travel from place to place, giving clinicians more time to spend on therapeutic activity with service users. (The mileage saved during the pandemic has also reduced our carbon footprint by the equivalent of planting 118 trees.)

Staff agree with this; more than a third surveyed want to keep the option of working flexibly from home in the future, but half felt that this must be balanced with a return to safely offering face-to-face contact where service users want it, and most feel we must continue using a wider variety of ways to engage and communicate with patients.

As the longer-term psychological effects of the pandemic become apparent, we will undoubtedly need to respond to a growing need for services like Improving Access to Psychological Therapies and our crisis teams. Increasing capacity and finding new ways to support people using what we've learned during this pandemic will be vital to ensure we can treat as many people as possible, without them languishing on waiting lists.

The pandemic has in many ways provided us with an unmissable opportunity to transform the way we deliver our services to better meet the needs of our local populations, and one of our key ambitions is to examine whether we can move to providing more services seven days a week. This will be done in close consultation with service users and staff to establish where there is a need and demand for this – but we recognise that in many cases, our services operate on a 9-to-5, Monday-to-Friday schedule which simply doesn't fit our service users' needs. And moving to this model won't require staff to work for seven days a week; in fact, it could offer many staff greater flexibility in the days and hours they work.

The newly-published NHS People Plan 2020-21 sets out what all NHS organisations will need to do over the next year to manage and support our workforce effectively, and it starts with a fundamental focus on physical and mental wellbeing. There is a lot which we have learned about this during the pandemic which we can continue with, such as the virtual 'wobble rooms' and 'Team Time' offered by our Schwartz Rounds facilitators to help people express and work through their feelings.

The plan also emphasises the importance of a culture of belonging, creating a workplace which helps people do the best they can and tackles discrimination and bullying. The growth of our various Staff Networks during the pandemic has been incredibly positive in this regard, especially the renewed energy of our BAME Staff Network and their involvement in open and honest discussions across the organisation in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement.





# Tribute to Steven Pearson

Steven Pearson, a community practitioner within our North of Tyne Street Triage Team, sadly passed away on Monday 13 April after testing positive for COVID-19.

Steven was survived by his wife Anne, and their two daughters, Rebecca, 26 and Bethany, 20.

He dedicated his life to mental health and served the Trust for over 30 years.

Steven joined the street triage team in 2014 and was chosen for this role because of his character, experience and knowledge of mental health nursing.

Steven's line manager Claire Witten paid this tribute: "Our team is a team of nurses and police officers delivering urgent mental health care across the CNTW locality, and Steven became known as a highly respected member of the team with a larger than life personality. A committed member of the team, he loved his job and the team, always making us laugh and he was renowned for his wicked sense of humour. Steven's life was his family and he would tell us about his plans for holidays with his wife Anne and the girls, he loved Bali and was planning to travel there again this year. His family were his life and Steven was always vocal about this when at work, he lived for his family and his work."

Never one to complain, Steven worked tirelessly when on duty, always going out of his way to give the best possible care to those in mental health crisis.

Claire adds: "He became known within Northumbria Police as a valued member of the team, often called upon for advice by officers due to his vast knowledge of mental health care. A kind and caring nurse who carried on until the end, despite not feeling well, we came to learn over the past few days, but a reflection of his compassion and determination to look after others in need. The team are truly devastated to lose a colleague and a friend. We know our team will never be the same again without him and we will miss him dearly."

Steven's colleagues at Northumbria Police also paid tribute. Chief Constable Winton Keenen said: "Steven was an established and hugely well respected member of the extended Northumbria Police family and our thoughts, sympathies and very best wishes go to his wife Anne, daughters Rebecca and Bethany, his family and friends at this saddest of times."

John Lawlor spoke personally to Steven's wife, Anne, to pass on condolences from the Trust. Anne is also a member of our CNTW family and works at St George's Park. John said he was struck by Anne's incredible bravery as she tried her best to support her daughters. Anne is a very special, warm and brave lady.

Despite her grief, Anne had an important message for us all, which is the importance of following the guidance and staying at home where possible, or if this isn't possible, ensuring that we adhere to social distancing.

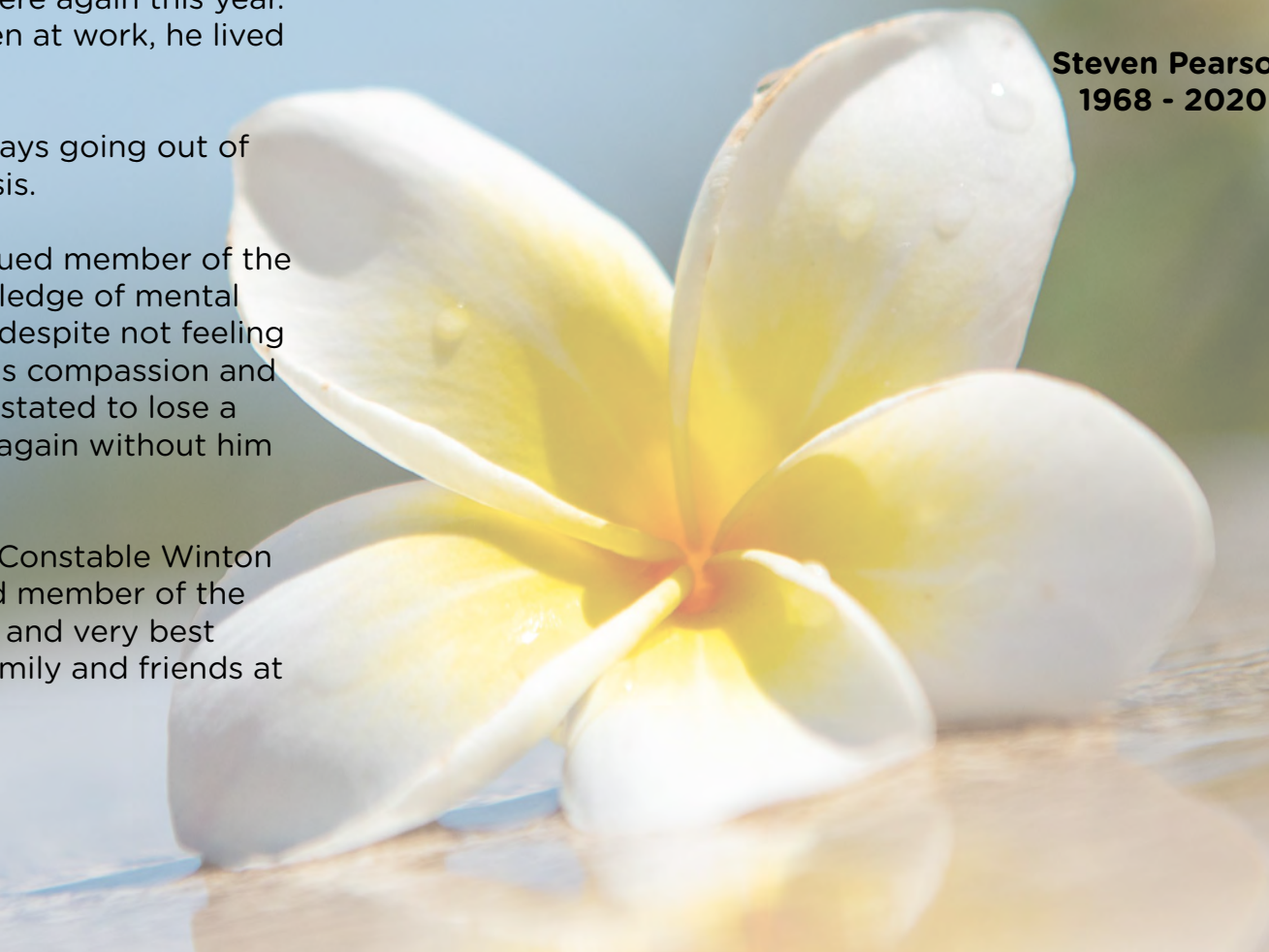
Steven's youngest daughter Bethany was also featured on BBC news after an interview about her father. Bethany is a remarkable young lady and you can watch her emotional interview [here](#).

During these incredibly difficult times for the Pearson family, and those who knew and loved Steven in our CNTW family, we hope that you may take some solace that when you think of Steven, you think of the pride he took in his work and the difference that he made to others, each and every day.

Steven, you were the best of us.

**This publication is dedicated to Steven Pearson, who dedicated his life to mental health services.**

**Steven Pearson  
1968 - 2020**





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