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## QVH continues to score top marks from patients of all ages



**The findings of the latest national NHS inpatient survey show that QVH continues to achieve some of the best feedback from patients in the country. In addition, QVH is eagerly awaiting the final results of the national children's inpatient and day case survey.**

The children's survey, which is specially designed to capture the views of younger patients - with help from parents or carers where they are too young to complete it themselves - has not been carried out nationally since 2004.

Early indications show that the results for the children's survey are just as positive as for the adult survey where QVH scored significantly better than other hospital trusts on 45 of the 62 questions asked, about the same on 16 and worse than average on only one.

QVH scored particularly highly on questions about the hospital's doctors and nurses, care and treatments, and patients' experience overall. QVH achieved the top scores in the country for ten of the questions, including patients' overall experience of the hospital, the emotional support received, whether there were enough nurses on duty and cleanliness. The only worse than average score was about the choice of hospital food.

QVH chief executive Richard Tyler said: "It is very encouraging to receive such positive feedback from patients which is down to the commitment and professionalism of our staff. The feedback on hospital food is very valuable and we will be working hard to improve this."

Giving more detail about the plans to improve food, QVH director of nursing Jo Thomas said: "We have made patient satisfaction with our food one of our top priorities for 2015/16 and the board will be monitoring progress closely. We're gathering more detailed feedback from our patients about the changes they would like made to their food, paying particular attention to the views of patients with swallowing difficulties or burns."

The full results are available at [www.cqc.org.uk/provider/RPC/surveys](http://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/RPC/surveys).

## Elect new governors and vote online

As this year's governor election gets underway, members can vote online for the first time, thanks to a recent change in the legislation governing NHS foundation trusts.

Members who have already shared their email address with us will be among the first to take advantage of this development. It is quick easy for voters - no paperwork or trips to the post-box - and saves costs. QVH will re-invest those savings to help more members to vote online in the future.

This year there are three vacancies for public governors to be elected by the trust's public members. Traditional ballot papers are still very welcome. Please remember to vote online or return your ballot papers by Friday 26 June 2015.



# Big achievements for microscopic experts

**The QVH pathology team provides a vital service to the hospital and local community, managing and reviewing tissue samples from over 8,000 patients every year.**

As well as supporting the specialist work of the hospital it also accepts samples from local GPs. "We diagnose and assess a wide range of conditions, including cancer and many inflammatory conditions," explains Dr Rachael Liebmann, consultant pathologist and clinical director of the service.

In March the team capped a very successful year by winning the Chairman's Cup for Teamwork at the QVH awards. Among the achievements that led to its nomination was the announcement in November that the lab was the first in country to be awarded a new higher accreditation by the UK Accreditation Service, the national body that assesses organisations against internationally agreed scientific standards.

"It was very gratifying for the team to achieve the standard and the result of a lot of hard work," says Rachael. "It sets much tighter criteria than previous standards around the precision of results and staff skills and competencies. We're still the only lab in the country to have achieved it."

At the same time the team has streamlined its processes so that its turnaround times are among the very best in the country. National standards are for 80% of results to be reported within seven days and 90% within ten. QVH is currently reporting 97% within seven days and 98% within ten.

"The only cases we can't report within ten days are the really complex ones, such as samples containing bone. They have to go through a long process of de-calcification before they can be analysed," Rachael explains.

The 13-strong team includes three consultants, who analyse the samples microscopically; scientists, who prepare the samples and

skillfully create slides just one cell thick for review; and clerical staff who manage the process and produce and deliver the resulting reports.

While many hospitals have consolidated or outsourced pathology services in recent years, QVH has retained its lab. Crucially, it means that surgeons can send samples for review during operations. "If we're removing a cancer, we want to leave as much healthy tissue as possible, so surgeons take samples to check that the surrounding area is cancer-free," Rachael says. "If you're operating on an eye-lid, for example, every millimetre is vital. We can give surgeons the results of these samples in less than an hour so they can get the very best outcomes for our patients."

Local GPs are increasingly sending skin samples to QVH because of the high standards and fast turnarounds compared to other pathology providers. The recent improvements to the QVH service are part of the hospital's QVH2020 strategy to further develop the trust's specialist services while also enhancing what the hospital is able to offer the local community.

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*"We can give surgeons the results in less than an hour so they can get the very best outcomes for our patients."*

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Rachael, who is also Registrar of the Royal College of Pathologists, which sets national standards and training for the profession, has high ambitions for the QVH laboratory. "We'd love to create the country's first bio-bank for scar tissue, with a license to store and use tissue for research," she says. "It's a long way off, but as an ambition it would enable us to research not only new pathology techniques, but also support the specialists at QVH to remain at the forefront of developing new and better treatments for our patients."



# QVH nurse volunteers in Sierra Leone



Allan Curtis

**QVH clinical educator Allan Curtis travelled to Sierra Leone late last year with a team of UK volunteers to care for people with Ebola.**

Allan, a registered nurse who also trains nurses at QVH, spent seven weeks at the makeshift hospital built by the British military in Kerry Town. As well as providing care, he helped to develop processes and procedures and trained local staff.

"I was aware of the crisis through the news and when the call for volunteers came out I felt I had skills that could be useful," he said. "It was hot and difficult working inside protective suits and mentally tough. When we arrived around 70% of our patients were dying. But it was inspiring to work alongside like-minded people from all over the world, and by the time I left the mortality rate was down to 40%, so it was great to be able to make a difference."

Since returning to the UK, Allan has trained new volunteers from the UK and Norway who are heading out to continue the work. He will be among the 2,000 British medical and military personnel to receive a new medal authorised by the Queen to honour their work in Sierra Leone.

## QVH nurse receives Philippine presidential award



Nurse Danny Favor with his presidential medal

**QVH eye nurse Danny Favor has received an award from the president of the Philippines in recognition of his work in the community in East Grinstead. The prestigious Banaag medal is awarded to Philippine organisations and individuals working overseas who have 'displayed to the world the innate talents and drive of the Philippine people'.**

Danny and his family came to the UK in 2000 when he began an initial one year contract at QVH. They only planned to stay for two years but quickly settled in East Grinstead and decided to remain, eventually becoming British citizens.

As well as being elected as an East Grinstead town councillor for a second term in May, Danny is involved in numerous charities, particularly the local Age UK dementia respite club. He was instrumental in raising funds for construction of the 'East Grinstead Building' at a school in the Philippines devastated by a tornado and, closer to home, has recently supported repairs to Our Lady and St Peter Church in East Grinstead.

## Staff achievements recognised

**Over 200 staff celebrated their achievements at the annual QVH awards ceremony in March. The awards recognise long service and educational achievements as well as exceptional services, teamwork and service improvements.**

Consultant eye surgeon Samer Hamada won the public nominated 'patient experience' award. He was nominated by the parents of a young patient from Essex for "the wonderful care he gives us and the understanding and patience he has with our daughter". He was also nominated by the partner of a patient from Nottingham who said: "This man is incredible. He is very passionate about his patients and goes the extra mile."

The judging panel said "Mr Hamada's personal care and attention to his patients is a wonderful example of what we all aspire to." They also commended Allan Curtis (see left) and plastercast technician Mariusz Morgas who was nominated for his compassion and skill.



Eye surgeon Samer Hamada receives his award from deputy director of nursing Ali Strowman

# New chair gives her first impressions



QVH chair Beryl Hobson

**Beryl Hobson joined QVH in July 2014 as a non-executive director and chair designate. She took over the role of chair on 1 April 2015 following Peter Griffiths' retirement and has been sharing her first impressions with QVH News.**

"I have been made to feel so welcome at QVH by staff, governors and members that I felt very much at home when the time came to take over as chair.

"The trust's reputation for world-class clinical services and outstanding patient experience is what drew to me to this role. Since joining the trust I've seen first-hand why QVH enjoys this reputation. The quality of patient care, professionalism and compassion of staff and the trust's dedication to continuous improvement are all exemplary. They make me and all of our staff proud of the organisation we are part of.

"But we can never rest on our laurels. The spirit of innovation that inspired Sir Archibald

McIndoe is very much alive at QVH and we must harness it to drive us forward.

"The organisation has worked really hard to define its long-term goals clearly and succinctly and to reorganise itself so that it is poised to tackle the challenges and opportunities we face.

"Our chief executive and the board have made a number of important appointments to the trust's corporate and clinical leadership teams recently. We are all excited to be working together but today's NHS is not an easy environment in which to thrive. So we have a lot of work to do to make sure that QVH continues to do just that. With the support of our council of governors, members and staff I believe we will."

## Governors appoint a new non-executive director

**Earlier this year, governors appointed a non-executive director (NED) to the board of directors. This is one of the governors' most important statutory duties. Together with the chair and executive directors, NEDs have a duty to ensure the provision of safe and effective services. Governors hold NEDs to account for the performance of the board.**

The search for a new NED was directed on behalf of governors by the appointments committee which used the services of executive search agency Odgers Berndtson.

QVH chair Beryl Hobson reviewed the skills of the existing NEDs against the trust's key strategic objectives. This review identified expertise and experience in estates and information technology as priority criteria for the search which Odgers led across the NHS and a wide range of associated and other industries.

Eighteen applications were received and after 11 candidates had preliminary interviews with Odgers, five were invited for final interview. The interview panel comprised the chair of the appointments committee, vice-chairman of the council of governors and the governor representative supported by the chair designate and chief executive as advisors.

The panel was unanimous in its support for the recommended candidate and agreed that Ian Playford offered the best possible fit to the person criteria for the role. The

panel was also assured that, to the best of its knowledge, Ian is a "fit and proper person" to be appointed to the role. They also received exemplary references for him.

The panel met with the appointments committee on 25 March 2015 to report on the interviews and its considerations. The panel advised the appointments committee to propose to the council of governors that Ian Playford should be appointed to the role. The council approved the appointment at its meeting on 9 April having been assured that the appointments committee had complied with the law and relevant guidance, followed a robust process and found a candidate who meets the specification for the role.

On behalf of the governors, I am delighted to welcome Ian to our organisation and look forward to working with him for the benefit of members and the public.

**Anne Higgins**

Public Governor, Chair of the QVH Council of Governors' Appointments Committee

### Ian Playford



Ian's most recent role was group property director of Kingfisher PLC, overseeing the strategy, management and investment of group capital across Europe, Russia and China. He has previously held senior executive roles at Parkridge Holdings and Aviva and has worked across all sectors and disciplines in real estate business throughout Europe and Asia. Ian is also a NED for the Ministry of Justice working on the courts and tribunals service.

## New initiative supports staff with the challenges of healthcare



**Working in healthcare can be emotionally demanding and stressful. QVH staff are taking part in a new initiative offering them time and space to reflect on the challenges of their work, helping to create a more supportive environment.**

Known as 'Schwartz rounds', after the US centre that developed them, the hour-long monthly sessions are open to all staff. Each has a particular topic, such as 'The patient I'll never forget' and 'I just want to go home'. Staff share their experiences and take part in a facilitated discussion. Unlike other meetings, there is no focus on problem solving or action planning. The aim is simply for staff to have the opportunity to reflect and share experiences.

Evidence from the United States shows that by enhancing a sense of teamwork, generating greater understanding between staff and building emotional resilience, the sessions have a positive impact on patient care. The QVH initiative is part of a national pilot to evaluate their impact in the UK.

## Facial palsy research grant awarded as QVH team raises awareness of the condition



Charles Nduka, Vanessa Venables and Catriona Neville

**QVH has been awarded a prestigious research grant to develop innovative glasses to aid the treatment of facial palsy.**

Facial palsy is a weakness or paralysis of the muscles on one side of the face. It has a number of causes, including disease and injury, and the effects can be devastating. As well as problems with eating and drinking, talking and closing the eyes it can be emotionally debilitating, leading to anxiety, depression and a withdrawal from social interaction.

QVH was the first UK centre to offer a comprehensive facial palsy service in 2007 and remains the country's foremost and largest service, seeing over 150 new patients every year. The team includes facial and eye surgeons, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, psychological therapists and imaging specialists. Treatments range from surgery and injections to therapy management.

The grant to develop the glasses was awarded by the National Institute of Health Research and at £846,000 is the largest QVH has ever received. The project is a collaboration with Nottingham Trent University and technology company Sense Innovation. The glasses will use sensors to measure the progress patients are making with facial exercises, providing clinicians with valuable feedback and helping to motivate patients to adhere to exercise plans.

However, awareness of the condition remains low among the wider medical profession and a recent audit by the team found that on average new patients had waited five years from the onset of symptoms before being referred to QVH for the specialist support they required.

Facial Palsy UK was set up by QVH consultant Charles Nduka and speech therapist Vanessa Venables in 2012. This year the charity held its first national awareness week to ensure people get the help they need sooner. The QVH team spent the week with a half-face beard or half-face of make up to highlight what living with a facial difference is like, raising £2000 for Facial Palsy UK in the process.

## Doing things differently to support the NHS of the future

**NHS Horsham and Mid Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is continuing to involve local people in developing plans for improved GP and community services.**

The CCG's clinical chair and East Grinstead GP Dr Minesh Patel said: "As communities

continue to grow and people live longer with more complex conditions, our NHS must change. The 5 Communities Plan sets out a vision for the future of the NHS across Mid Sussex, Crawley and Horsham.

"In East Grinstead, our ambition is to establish more care for the frail elderly and those with more complex conditions locally, supported by services at bigger hospitals.

"We all know that our GP practices are under pressure and serve more patients than they were originally designed for. We are looking to develop new infrastructure and services jointly with QVH and other parts of the NHS in the local community."

The CCG is calling for local people to get involved at [www.5communitieswestsussex.nhs.uk](http://www.5communitieswestsussex.nhs.uk).



## Plaque to recognise generosity of QVH League of Friends



Artist's impression of the Lancaster Lounge

**A plaque is to be unveiled to recognise the generosity of the QVH League of Friends. The plaque will be in the reception area of the new operating theatres where the league has funded new anaesthetic machines.**

"Usually anaesthetic equipment is replaced on an ad hoc basis," explained Andrew Robertson, the chairman of the league. "But with rapid developments in the technology available there can be significant differences between machines. With new state-of-the-art theatres, it was a good time to support the anaesthetists with state-of-the-art equipment." The new machines are more accurate and reliable and offer future-proofing for potential new developments in anaesthesia.

Plans are also in place for a new refreshment area funded by the friends. The League of Friends Lancaster Lounge will provide a comfortable area for patients and visitors to relax and consume food and drink from the vending machines when the café and restaurant are closed. Work is expected to start in June and complete in July.

"The league was set up in 1948 to provide additional equipment and comfort for the benefit of patients and staff," said Andrew. "We can provide things for the hospital today that it might otherwise have to wait until tomorrow to be able to obtain through NHS funding."

## Local couple raise funds for special equipment to help QVH eye patients



**A local couple have raised over £4,000 to buy specialist mobile equipment that makes eye assessments much easier for children and patients who are seriously unwell or have mobility problems.**

Rob and Sylvia Tamplin raised the funds through an autumn charity ball at the Surrey National Golf Club in Caterham last year. It was attended by 120 of their friends and family with a raffle and auction.

The couple have lived in Caterham for over 45 years and have three daughters and seven grandchildren in the local area. "As a family we've used QVH so many times over the years and have always thought the care and treatment have been excellent," explained Sylvia.

The Tamplins met with Claire Charman, the QVH charity coordinator, before making their donation. "It was important for us to know what the money was being spent on," said Sylvia. "Claire was able to tell us the things that the doctors and nurses said they needed."

Claire said: "Charitable donations mean that we can do even more to rebuild lives. The Tamplins' generous donation is a fantastic example of this and we are very grateful." To find out more about the QVH Charity, please visit [www.supportqvh.org](http://www.supportqvh.org), email [supportqvh@qvh.nhs.uk](mailto:supportqvh@qvh.nhs.uk) or call Claire on 01342 414170.

## Leaving a legacy

The QVH Charity has produced a leaflet in response to requests from people who are interested in leaving a legacy in their will.

Once they know that their loved ones are looked after, many people like to leave a legacy in their will as it is one of the easiest and most effective ways of supporting a cause that is close to their heart. Legacies mean the QVH charity can do even more for the hospital's patients by pioneering new treatments, providing advanced equipment and offering the extra touches that make a good hospital great.

For more information and to download the leaflet, visit [www.supportqvh.org/how-to-donate/legacy/](http://www.supportqvh.org/how-to-donate/legacy/)



## Dates for your diary

### Meetings of the board of directors 2015

Public sessions of the meetings start at 1pm, (usually in the Cranston Suite at East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead, RH19 3LT). Please note it is important to email [info@qvh.nhs.uk](mailto:info@qvh.nhs.uk) or call 01342 414362 to request a place and confirm the venue.

- 30 July
- 24 September
- 29 October
- 26 November
- 17 December

### Meetings of the council of governors 2015/16

Public sessions of the meetings start at 3pm, (currently at The Ark, Turners Hill, West Sussex, RH10 4RA). Once again, please make sure to email [info@qvh.nhs.uk](mailto:info@qvh.nhs.uk) or call 01342 414362 to request a place and confirm the venue.

- 9 July
- 8 October
- 14 January