



Pulse magazine

March
2024

RBFT named as one of top acute trusts for staff experience - see page 2

Welcome!

Welcome to this month's edition of Pulse. I am the most recent appointment to the Trust Board of Directors having joined as a Non-Executive Director in November 2023. I chair the Finance and Investment Committee and I am delighted to say that I have also been asked to chair our Organ Donation Committee.

We all know that these are difficult times in the NHS, but in my time so far at the trust I have been so impressed with the

'can do' spirit, teamwork and commitment to keep delivering great care and experience for our patients and their families that I have found throughout the organisation. It is a privilege to be part of it.

As ever, this month's Pulse covers a range of topics on both our patients and staff, with articles on the NHS staff survey results, Maternity Department Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating, the opening of the ICU visitors' space, the Long Service Event for staff, updates on Building Berkshire Together and how to get involved and have your say!

I hope you'll enjoy reading it as much as I have and I look forward to meeting many more of you in the coming weeks and months.

Mike O'Donovan
Non-Executive Director



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RBFT named as a top acute trust for staff experience

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust (RBFT) has once again been rated as one of the best acute trusts to work for in England, according to the results of the latest NHS Staff Survey – one of the largest workforce surveys in the world.

More than 3,800 staff took part in the 2023 survey– the organisation’s highest ever response rate. Based on the feedback of more than 60% of staff, we are among the top performing nationally for staff experience.

In every area of the [NHS People Promise](#) we have improved upon our scores from last year, and we’re among the top scoring acute trusts nationally for the following metrics:

- 90.6% of staff say ‘I feel that my role makes a difference to patients/service users’.
- 86.5% of staff say ‘Care of patients/service users is my organisation’s top priority’.
- 81.6% of staff say ‘My organisation acts on concerns raised by patients/service users’.
- 70.7% of staff say ‘The team I work in often meets to discuss the team’s effectiveness’.
- 70.3% of staff say ‘My organisation takes positive action on health and wellbeing’.
- 62.8% of staff say ‘I am able to make improvements happen in my area of work’.

Don Fairley, Chief People Officer commented: “We’re incredibly proud of our latest staff survey results – especially being ranked as the top acute trust in South East England. These results are thanks to years of investment into the engagement, wellbeing and experience of our staff - through mental health support, health checks, a GP service and a dedicated health and wellbeing centre.

“We know this work is paying off, not only through our staff survey results but our trust vacancy rate continuing to fall month on month over the past year.”

The NHS Staff Survey takes place each year to see how organisations perform against the NHS People Promise – measuring areas such as flexible working, staff engagement, morale, and staff recognition.



RBH maternity continues to be CQC rated as Good



Maternity services at the Royal Berkshire Hospital have been rated as 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in a recent inspection. It highlights the commitment by staff in maintaining a good rating, and in particular the rating for safety which has increased from 'Requires improvement' to 'Good'.

Christine Harding, Director of Midwifery said, 'We are very proud to be rated as Good and this inspection shows how our staff are passionate about continuous improvement and making the maternity experience safer and more positive for women and birthing people. Our safety rating of 'Good' is a real testament to the hard work and commitment of the whole team. The inspectors recognised the level of service we provide, ensuring birthing people can access our service when they need it, using services such as our new 24-hour Maternity Assessment Unit.'

Call 4 Concern in the news

It was a busy time recently for our Critical Care team, after the Government announced it would support the introduction of Martha's Rule.

Martha's Rule gives hospital patients and their loved ones a legal right to a second opinion. It was introduced after campaigning by the parents of Martha Mills, a 13-year-old girl who died after developing sepsis in hospital, following a pancreatic injury. A coroner had ruled that Martha would most likely have survived if doctors had moved her to intensive care earlier and had listened to her mother's concerns.

On the day of the announcement we were featured on Sky News, ITN, BBC National News, Channel 5 News, and BBC Radio Berkshire talking about our pioneering Call 4 Concern (C4C) service which was launched nearly 15 years ago to provide patients and families with a safety net. C4C is now helping to inform Martha's Rule across the NHS.



ICU welcomes long-awaited visitor area



Last month our intensive care unit (ICU) launched their brand-new visitors space and purpose built reception area.

Our ICU team look after some of our most clinically vulnerable patients, who can stay with us for days, weeks, and sometimes even months. The changes, and more that have planned, will improve the ICU environment for patients, relatives and staff.

These changes are part of a £1 million investment and have been years in the making. This welcoming new area marks the end of the first phase of improvement works. Phase two is already underway and includes a lift and stairs at the back of the department.

Help Healthwatch Reading decide their next projects

What matters to you?

Help us decide on our local health and social care projects for 2024/2025.



healthwatch
Reading

Healthwatch Reading is inviting feedback on which projects they should work on during the year ahead.

Healthwatch is an independent organisation gathering communities' needs and experiences of health and social care services. They're commissioned by local councils using funding from the Dept of Health and Social Care.

Complete their short survey online:

[Healthwatch Reading | Help us decide our projects for the coming year.](#)

Celebrating our longest serving staff



Last month, some of our Board members joined a number of our longest serving members of staff at a celebratory tea party to thank them for their years of service.

We're privileged that our long serving members of staff have chosen to spend so much of their careers with us, and this was our chance to thank them. We benefit hugely from the stability that their experience brings, both in their day-to-day work, and the knowledge that they pass on.

Our long service tea party gave us our opportunity to recognise the dedication, care and loyalty that our colleagues bring to their jobs. We were also able to thank them for the wealth of skills, expertise and experience they've built up over the years and are now sharing with the next generation.

Get flu protection until 31 March

Local NHS health teams are reminding eligible people that the free flu vaccines remain available until 31 March. Those eligible include:

- two- and three-year-olds and school-aged children (Reception to Year 11)
- children aged six months to 17 years at higher risk
- people aged 65 or over
- those with long-term health conditions
- anyone who is pregnant
- frontline healthcare staff

**YOU CAN STILL GET A
FREE FLU VACCINE**



If eligible, get yours by 31 March
More info: bit.ly/seasonalvaccines

Chief Nursing Officer at Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board Rachael Corser said: "Older people and those with underlying conditions are more likely to experience serious complications and need to be admitted to hospital.

"Flu infection during pregnancy can also have serious consequences for both mother and baby, so the message to anyone eligible for the vaccine is: please don't put your vaccination off."

Those who are eligible can receive their free flu vaccine at [participating local pharmacies](#).

Governor Article:

Tom Duncan, Staff Governor: Medical/Dental

Hi, my name is Tom Duncan and I am the Medical and Dental Staff Governor. I have been a Consultant at the trust since 2019, although I was a trainee here for 2 years back in 2007 and 2009, so I feel I have been here a while. It's a fantastic place to work, but like everywhere the trust has its challenges and its successes.

My role is to represent both sides to the Council of Governors as a staff representative and to make sure the Non-Executive Directors get a feel of what it is like to work at the coalface, so to speak. I cannot pick up on every issue that I hear about but I want to get the big messages across.

The other part of what I am here to do is to reflect back the assurance that we, as Governors, get from the Non-Executive and Executive Directors about the work going on across the trust. This role feels part union rep, part mediator.

Anaesthesia is a wonderful specialty to work in if you want to get out and about. I get to meet colleagues all over our main site, and I also get to spend some time in theatres at West Berkshire Community Hospital. Theatres are a multidisciplinary environment, and to be honest, I work much more with nurses and Operating Department Practitioners than I do with other Anaesthetists, so I get to hear a lot about concerns and successes from other staff groups. Whilst I am officially a medical and dental representative, I do not have to stay entirely in my lane and am very happy to talk to any staff, patients or visitors about any issues they would like to raise.

It is a time of unease within the medical profession. Many of the challenges for current doctors in training feel similar to what I experienced, but if I am honest, medicine now is much more complicated, patients are sicker, and the wards are much busier. It is a very different job. I want to reach out to those in training grades in particular, to let them know that their views are being heard and their concerns escalated.

It's been a real pleasure to meet the rest of the Council of Governors and hear views from colleagues, local residents and local authority representatives. The debate is lively and informative.

There are public meetings for Council of Governors and for the Trust Board, and if any staff would like information about attending any of these, please do get in touch with [Caroline Lynch](#) who is the Trust Secretary or visit the [trust website](#) for more details.

Meet your Council of Governors

Find a full list of your Council of Governors on the trust website: [Council of Governors | Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust](#).



Discounts? Did you know?

healthservice discounts

As a member of the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust you are eligible to amazing Health Service Discounts to save money on holidays, electrical goods, meals, goods, meals, days out and more!

To register, follow this link [Register | NHS Discounts | Health Service Discounts](#) and select Foundation Trust Member.

Don't forget to let us know what amazing discounts you get so we can share them!

Check out some of this month's exclusive discounts:

- [Levi's from Levis](#) – 50% off + extra 20%
- [First home | Remortgage | Moving home | Buy-to-let from](#) – free expert advice
- [Admiral Travel Insurance](#) – 10% off
- [JD Sports from JD Sports](#)– 10% off
- [Pandora from Pandora](#) – up to 50% off + extra 10% NHS
- [Hotpoint Home Appliances](#) – up to 50% off
- [easyJet holidays from easyJet Holidays](#) - £25 e-gift card

Get involved and have your say

Open Meetings

Why not come along to one of our upcoming open meetings: find the details and agendas on our trust website page:

[Open meetings | Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust](#)

- **Wednesday 27 March 2024: Board of Directors**
Seminar Room, Trust Education Centre, Royal Berkshire Hospital, 9am
- **Thursday 11 April 2024: Membership Committee**
Seminar Room, Trust Education Centre, Royal Berkshire Hospital, 5.30pm

Become a member

Sign up family and friends to become a member via our [online form](#) to receive our latest updates, shape how hospital services are delivered and be eligible to receive our NHS discounts. Get in touch with the team Foundation.trust@royalberkshire.nhs.uk