

Trust Update

The latest news from the RD&E which we hope will be useful to our local partners and communities.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Data from staff and patient testing, and genomic testing of COVID-positive samples, indicate that the recent increased effort to reduce the amount of transmission of COVID-19 has been notably successful. Over the past few weeks we have seen a sustained decrease in the number of Covid-related hospital admissions and this correlates to a decline in the rate of COVID-19 prevalence in Devon - see [Devon County Council's dashboard](#) for the latest figures.

Many of the changes we implemented during 2020 to keep our patients and staff safe remain in place. You can find all the latest information on our website: www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/covid-19.



COVID VACCINATION CONTINUES

The vaccination programme – the biggest in NHS history – is off to a strong start. The health service has given first doses of the vaccination to more than 17 million people across the country, including over 350,000 in Devon. At least 81% of all RD&E staff have now had the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. This really is a fantastic achievement!

We understand that people are eager to receive their vaccination but the NHS is urging people who have received a letter from the National Booking System not to contact their GP practice about a coronavirus vaccination.

Anyone who has received a letter from the National Booking System inviting them to book an appointment should use the website (www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination) or telephone 119 (7am-11pm, seven days a week) to book an appointment.



COMMON VACCINE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Experts at Public Health England (PHE) have answered some of the most common questions they are hearing about the COVID-19 vaccines, including:

- How do we make sure vaccines are safe?
- What about COVID-19 variants?
- Why is it important to keep following the rules once you have been vaccinated?
- Do the current vaccines contain pork products?

[Find the answers about these and more from PHE.](#)

There is also an easy-read information leaflet available about COVID-19 vaccinations for people with a learning disability and autistic people.

NHS NIGHTINGALE EXETER

We have discharged our most recent patient, but remain on standby to provide more care if needed. Whilst on standby, the facility will continue to support the Devon health system through hosting diagnostic testing, which will resume in early March. Between July and November 2020, the facility provided nearly 3,000 diagnostic tests.

NAMING OUR NEW INTEGRATED ORGANISATION

Following the go ahead to continue working on plans to formally join together, RD&E (Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust) and NDHT (Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust) are beginning to explore a new name for our integrated organisation.

North Devon District Hospital, the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, and our community services – including community hospitals – will continue to be known by their existing names. Whilst we are bound by rigid national NHS naming guidance, we want to understand what features our staff and the communities we serve consider important for the new name.

A group of staff and Non-Executive Directors from both NDHT and RD&E have considered their thoughts on the criteria for the name and would like your help in suggesting others.

Please let us know your thoughts by completing our [survey](#) (closes 7 March 2021).

Further details about the plans to formally join are available, see our news release: [NDHT and RD&E a stage closer to formally joining together.](#)

NDHT AND RD&E GIVEN GREEN LIGHT FOR SHARED PATIENT RECORD

National funding to rollout the EPIC electronic health record from Eastern Devon to Northern Devon as part of the continued partnership and proposed integration of NDHT and RD&E has been approved.

This is a fantastic investment for patients and the community. Having a shared patient record system is a key part of supporting the proposed joining of our trusts, which aims to provide stronger and more sustainable care for patients across Northern and Eastern Devon.

A common patient record will enable clinician sharing and virtual clinical input. For example, where services are networked across sites, a shared patient record will mean that somebody who lives in Hartland can have a medication review with a consultant in Exeter remotely, saving a long journey.

Improving the visibility of information between our teams will also help improve safety and quality through supporting our teams to work together and make decisions. This will lead to better outcomes for patients.

Adrian Harris, medical director for NDHT and RD&E said: “This is really exciting news. Having a shared patient record across NDHT and RD&E will help us to develop the way we deliver care to our patients in a way that helps to mitigate the remoteness of NDDH and rurality of Northern Devon, and makes the best use of our shared workforce.

“During the COVID pandemic, digital has supported us to stay connected to our patients in a COVID secure way when they don’t need to be seen on site. Digital technology and a shared patient record present us with a lot of opportunity to improve how we deliver care for our patients, both in our hospitals and remotely. We will provide updates as this work progresses.”

MY CARE: Patient Portal

Linked to the EPIC electronic health record is MY CARE an exciting new system being introduced at the RD&E to improve the experience for patients, staff and carers by connecting people and information.

The MY CARE Patient Portal gives you easy and secure access to key elements of your medical record (starting from the day you gain access) and more control of your health and wellbeing.



To sign up for MY CARE Patient Portal visit the [RD&E website](#) and follow the instructions.

MARIE CURIE TO OFFER SUPPORT FOR BEREAVED FAMILIES AT RD&E

A new service has been launched to offer bereaved families in Exeter and Mid Devon additional support from Marie Curie, the UK's leading end of life charity. Families of patients who die either at the RD&E or who have had care in the community from the RD&E will receive support from a specially trained, locally recruited, Marie Curie Companion who will offer a series of weekly telephone bereavement calls. The RD&E is only the second hospital in England to secure this new service, which was first introduced at Musgrove Park Hospital in Taunton last year.

For more information about local Marie Curie services or to volunteer as a Marie Curie Companion please email southwesthelper@mariecurie.org.uk or call 0800 3047 412.

MATERNITY SERVICES HIGHLY RATED

The RD&E has once again received top scores in a national survey of new mums on their experiences of maternity services. The Picker Institute developed the New Mothers' Experiences of Care Survey to help Trusts reach out to mothers to gain valuable feedback on their experiences of maternity care. The overall results for the RD&E maternity service were excellent with most categories being above or equal to the survey average.

"Our care from the beginning of pregnancy to after birth was outstanding."

DERMATOLOGY DEPARTMENT WINS AWARD

Congratulations to the Dermatology department who have been awarded the 2019/20 Excellence and Innovation in Clinical Teaching award by the University of Exeter. Dr Chris Bower said: "Whilst this rapid teaching intervention helped considerably towards the award, our Department has an excellent reputation for student teaching generally, and everyone should feel proud of the achievement."

WILDFLOWERS ARE COMING TO THE RD&E

Wildflower meadows are some of the most biodiverse habitats in all of the UK, yet we have lost over 97% of them since the 1930s. As part of our Biodiversity and Outdoor Wellbeing plan, we have just started work on our first patch of wildflowers next to Barrack Road. By increasing the diversity of plants, we will give pollinators many more opportunities to thrive, as well as bringing the wild closer to the hospital, for the benefit of staff, patients and visitors.

