



December 2021

Dear Member

SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL OUR MEMBERS. Your support means so much to all of us in Somerset Foundation Trust and to our patients. You are both our friends and our eyes and ears in the community we serve.

Though the overall situation is much improved from last year, everyone in the country has been through a tiring year and been affected in one way or another by the Covid pandemic. The winter months are always very busy for the NHS and this year is particularly challenging for all of us in Somerset - patients, carers and colleagues alike - as we get to grips with the backlog of care arising from previous lockdowns as well as the ongoing pressures from Covid itself. The current surge in omicron infections adds to the uncertainty but the vaccine booster programme in Somerset is progressing apace.

However, shining through this gloom as a very positive beacon for the future is the amazing 'can do' approach of everyone in our Trust and among our wonderful partners throughout the third sector and social services. Your trust received national recognition as MENTAL HEALTH TRUST OF THE YEAR in the prestigious Health Service Journal awards for our Open Mental Health initiative which we and our partners have pioneered. This is designed to make it easy for individuals to access the appropriate mental health support quickly. It is a key part of our response to the increasing mental health issues arising from the Covid pandemic and the model we have created in Somerset is now being followed by health and care systems elsewhere in the country.

I hope this short briefing gives you a flavour of Open Mental Health and a few other exciting initiatives we are pursuing to help our patients.

Thank you personally and on behalf of all my colleagues for your ongoing support.

Kind regards

Colin Drummond

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Exciting Awards and Nominations for Somerset FT Colleagues and Teams

Somerset FT named Mental Health Trust of the Year!

On Thursday 18 November the Health Service Journal held its annual 'HSJ Awards' ceremony in London, where we were honoured to be awarded Mental Health Trust of the Year, having been shortlisted for the second year running.



On 2 September two of our teams were recognised on a national level at the Health Service Journal (HSJ) Value Awards. The Trust's critical care team was shortlisted in the '**post-covid sustainable transformation**' category for its '**isolated but not alone**' initiative and Somerset's Open Mental Health alliance in the '**public and preventative health service redesign initiative**' category. While the teams didn't take home a win, to reach the final was a huge achievement for everyone involved, and everyone at Somerset FT is proud of their achievements.

Emma Wicks scoops national speech and language therapy award



Huge congratulations to Emma Wicks, one of our speech and language therapists, who has won a national award for raising awareness of her profession.

Emma scooped a Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) 'Giving Voice' award for taking part in national and regional media interviews about how our speech and language therapy team helped to rehabilitate patients with COVID-19 following a period of ventilation on our critical care unit.

Emma was nominated by our chief nurse Hayley Peters, who said:

"In the very early stages of the pandemic Emma and our SLT team made a key decision to temporarily relocate part of the service from their usual base in community rehabilitation settings to the critical care unit at Musgrove Park Hospital so they could quickly access patients who needed rehabilitation following ventilation.

"Emma moved from leading our SLT neurorehabilitation pathway to working with other multi-disciplinary team (MDT) professionals to set up the new covid-19 pathway through the hospital.

"It meant that Emma and the team were able to support patients from the time they were in critical care, to their transfer to our medical rehabilitation wards, where they



recovered their voices and swallowing to the point that they no longer required speech and language therapy.

“By working within the critical care unit, Emma made a huge contribution and is ensuring a timely and safe return to a full oral diet for all the patients she worked with.”

Update on Services

Improving dietary support for patients with chronic kidney disease

Patients with kidney issues who are being cared for at Musgrove Park Hospital and Somerset’s community hospitals are now able to access additional support thanks to more joined-up working between clinicians.

Jen Thoms, whose former role was at the B-Braun kidney dialysis units in Taunton and Yeovil, which are now provided by a team from Exeter, joined the then Somerset Primary Care Trust in 2010 as a community renal dietitian.



“The community renal dietitian post is quite unusual and there aren’t many of us in the country. As a renal dietitian I give individual and practical diet advice to treat the complications associated with kidneys disease. This may include advice on following a low potassium diet, reduced phosphate diets, fluid restrictions, low salt diets and nutritional support.

“I explain to patients why it’s so important to follow these diets and how they can do that without completely changing how they eat. For example, a patient may really like spaghetti Bolognese but they are making it with loads of mushrooms or tomato puree so it’s all about getting them to adjust a few ingredients so they can continue to have the food they enjoy rather than a blanket ‘no’.”

“Quite often people can experience taste changes and have reduced appetites in the later stages of chronic kidney disease, which increases the risk of malnutrition. I give individually tailored nutritional support advice, taking into account any renal diet restriction that may also be needed. “One patient told me that before he met me it felt like he was always being told to fix his car,” she said. “But he said that when he met me it was like being given the manual! I thought that was a really nice compliment.

“I really enjoy doing my job and wouldn’t want to be anything other than a renal dietitian.”



Somerset Talking Therapies service reports highest recovery rate in England



People who use Somerset’s Talking Therapies service, experience a higher degree of recovery than anywhere else in England.

The latest figures published by NHS England for July 2021 show that Somerset NHS Foundation Trust came out as the trust with the highest recovery rates – and this has been the case for the last few months too.

Talking Therapies is part of the national improving access to psychological therapies (IAPT) initiative, which began in 2008 and has transformed the treatment of adult anxiety disorders and depression in England.

It is widely recognised as the most ambitious programme of talking therapies in the world and in the past year alone, more than one million people accessed IAPT services for help to overcome their depression and anxiety, and better manage their mental health.

The talking therapies service uses a recovery-focused supervision model that focuses on their recovery and looks at how best to sustain that successful outcome.

A patient’s recovery is measured through a series of questionnaires about mood, anxiety and depression scale. This is filled in at every session and allows the counsellor and patient to focus together on specific symptoms which in turn helps their recovery.

Alongside the excellent recovery rate waiting times have been significantly improved to a maximum of six weeks for most patients, which has led to a better all-round experience for them.

The team also work closely with colleagues in Open Mental Health – an alliance of local voluntary organisations, the NHS and social care that work in partnership to ensure that residents of Somerset get the support they need, when they need it and ensure they are cared for by the right healthcare professionals.

Psychiatric liaison service achieves excellent result in accreditation visits

The psychiatric liaison services at Musgrove Park Hospital and Yeovil District Hospital have successfully met 98 and 95 per cent of the national standards in a recent accreditation visit.

The services also both achieved an additional award for being a “sustainable service that’s fit for the future” during a visit to the hospitals by the Psychiatric Liaison Accreditation Network (PLAN) team.



The PLAN review team is made up of the Royal College of Psychiatry, a carer/patient representative and colleagues from other psychiatric liaison teams elsewhere in the country.

The review team assessed our psychiatric liaison teams against 169 standards that incorporate both best practice and Care Quality Commission standards. This includes the content of patient assessments, response rates by colleagues, communication with families and carers, the environment in which patients are assessed, and the service in general.



The Psychiatric liaison team based at Musgrove Park Hospital



The Psychiatric liaison team at Yeovil Hospital

The service at Yeovil Hospital is supported in providing this 24-hour cover, with the help of our home treatment team overnight.

Sonia Sansom, our psychiatric liaison service manager, said she was unbelievably proud of the team for achieving these excellent results.

The accreditation is for three years and the trusts will proactively review this every year to ensure we are continuing to maintain the high standards required.

Temporary overnight closure of Minehead Hospital's MIU extended for six months

The temporary overnight closure of the minor injuries unit (MIU) at Minehead Hospital has been extended for six months from 1 November until 1 May 2022. Minehead MIU remains open from 8am – 9pm seven days a week, 365 days a year.

The trust board took the difficult decision to extend the closure of the overnight service after considering the work that has been done since the closure of the overnight service began on 1 July 2021.

Dr Matt Hayman, deputy chief medical officer, said: "We first closed the Minehead MIU temporarily overnight for four months from 1 July because we have concerns about the safety of the overnight service.

"During that period, we undertook to review the service, work with partners and patient and public representatives to look at how we address our safety concerns, quantify and meet the overnight needs of the local area, and propose a way forward that is both safe and operationally robust.



“We have done a lot of work in the last four months, but we have more work to do. We have engaged with local people to understand their concerns and the impact of the temporary closure of the overnight service on them.

“Local people have described long distance and difficulty in travelling to the nearest emergency department (ED) at Musgrove Park Hospital; difficulty in accessing other NHS services; and the belief that the overnight MIU service is a “safety net” and that by attending the MIU for serious health events like heart attacks patients would have better survival outcomes.

“The opposite is true. Potentially life-saving treatment is delayed if patients attend an MIU rather than ringing 999 or going to an ED and delays in treatment can result in poorer outcomes for the patient.

“We have also looked closely to see if the temporary closure has had any impact on other NHS services. We have found no discernible impact on overnight attendances at Musgrove Park’s ED, no impact on NHS 111 or the out of hours GP services in the Minehead area and no impact on attendances at the Minehead Hospital’s MIU shortly after it opens at 8am in the morning and shortly before it closes at 9pm at night.

“We will spend the next six months working with Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group and the providers of NHS services to look at how we meet the overnight health needs of the population of Minehead in a safe and sustainable way.”



WIDER COMMUNITY NEWS

Celebrating one year of Somerset’s COVID-19 vaccination programme

It’s been 12 months since Somerset’s COVID-19 vaccination programme delivered its first vaccine – and what a truly incredible effort it has been to keep the programme running this past year.

Together with colleagues across the trust, our wider NHS colleagues, partner organisations and volunteers, the programme had delivered 1,088,348 vaccinations as of 5 December.



The programme has come a long way since those first few months and has continued to rise to every new challenge.

A huge thank you to everyone that has been involved in delivering the ongoing vaccination programme to the people of Somerset.

Living through COVID – a collection of stories from people in Somerset



A new project to collect people's experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic launched in Somerset on Monday 29 November.

The Somerset COVID-19 Archive Project is run by a partnership of the South West Heritage Trust and Open Mental Health – an alliance of local voluntary organisations, the NHS and

social care, Somerset County Council, and individuals with lived experience of mental health needs working together to ensure that people in Somerset receive the support they need, when they need it.

The archive aims to gather people's experiences of the pandemic and how it has affected their mental health. There's a particular focus on finding out the thoughts of communities that don't traditionally engage with health and social care services.

Jane Yeandle, our service director for mental health and learning disabilities, said: "We've all experienced the COVID-19 lockdowns and others have faced unemployment and in some cases the loss of loved ones.

"These extraordinary events have affected our lives and our mental health in ways we could not previously have imagined, and they continue to do so.

"The idea for this archive came from New Zealand's response to a devastating earthquake in 2011. Authorities realised that the Maori population did not typically engage with mental health services, so they created a similar archive for this large group of people to talk about their experiences and get the support they needed.

"Our archive project gives us an opportunity to gain an understanding of other people's thoughts and emotions about the pandemic, and for future generations to learn about what people went through.

"There's a lot of evidence showing that people tend not to seek help from mental health services immediately after a natural disaster or an unprecedented event such as the pandemic.

"By starting a conversation with people, the archive gives our Open Mental Health service an opportunity to reach out to underserved communities such as those in rural areas who might not traditionally use mental health services. We can also look at how to develop more targeted services to best meet their needs.



“We want to ensure that we record the stories of Somerset people and places describing these difficult times so that future generations can find out about the challenges we faced and how our communities pulled together.”

The archive is open to everyone in Somerset, including people who work for the NHS and social care.

Tom Mayberry, chief executive of the South West Heritage Trust, said: “The community archive is a very important way of capturing the voices of the pandemic and the many perspectives on these challenging times that might otherwise be lost. We’re very pleased to be working with Open Mental Health to ensure that Somerset’s unique stories of COVID-19 are preserved for this generation and for the future.”

How to contribute to the COVID-19 Archive project

Fill out a simple form on the South West Heritage website: <https://swheritage.org.uk/somerset-archives/coronavirus-community-archive/>. You can contribute to as many of the themes as you wish, by completing a separate form for each. We look forward to receiving your contribution.

If you need mental health support

If you are an adult living in Somerset and concerned about your mental health, Open Mental Health is here to help: 24 hours 7 days a week. Contact the team at Mindline Somerset on freephone 0800 138 1692 or locally on 01823 276892.

Somerset Integrated Care Board (ICB) chief executive confirmed

Following a robust national recruitment process, Jonathan Higman has been appointed as chief executive of the future Somerset Integrated Care Board (ICB), which will be established from April 2022 should parliament confirm the current plans.

Jonathan Higman became chief executive of Yeovil District Hospital (YDH) in November 2017. He has also held a number of director-level posts, including director of strategic development and director of operations at YDH. Jonathan has lived in Somerset for over 20 years’ and has experience working in a variety of roles in both hospitals and commissioning across the NHS in the South West and South East of England.

The confirmation of this appointment comes as we continue the journey to truly integrated working across health and care in Somerset. We have a real opportunity to make a positive difference to the lives of people in Somerset. This appointment takes us a step closer to formalising the arrangements which will enable the ICB to become a statutory body by April 2022.

The Health and Care Bill 2021, which contains a series of measures to formally establish Integrated Care Systems (ICS), is currently at Committee Stage in parliament receiving a detailed examination following its second reading. The Bill will



put ICSs on a firm statutory footing, as the successor organisation to the CCG, empowering them to better join up health and care, improve population health and reduce health inequalities. James Rimmer, current chief executive of Somerset CCG and ICS system leader will remain in post until the ICB comes into effect in April 2022.

Healthwatch survey – The impact of waiting for NHS surgery in Somerset

Earlier in the year, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group asked Healthwatch Somerset to help gain an understanding of how people are being affected by waiting for surgery to inform their ongoing work to improve support for patients.

Healthwatch Somerset ran an online public survey from July to September 2021 and carried out phone interviews with patients from Musgrove Park and Yeovil District hospitals who responded to an invitation to take part. A total of 72 people provided feedback about their experience of waiting for treatment

We welcomed the survey undertaken by Healthwatch as it has enabled us to learn more about our patients' experience as they wait for treatment. The sample of 500 patients provided to Healthwatch were patients waiting specifically for surgery, but we are aware that the online version of the survey was open to anybody, regardless of what they were waiting for and how long for. It is therefore to be expected that the recommendations based on the patients' feedback are fairly generic, but the feedback is still very useful. Working in partnership with patients and their families will help those waiting longest get their care as soon as possible.

This report has given a valuable insight into the impact that long waiting times can have on our patients across the county. It has shown that there is a need to improve the communication ensuring regular updates are given. It has also highlighted the mental and physical impact this can have on day-to-day activities, having to rely on family and friends and increasing the need for additional health care service support.

We know that waiting for planned care can be an anxious time for patients and this information will help us to better understand and improve healthcare services for people in Somerset. The results of the report and several key recommendations have been shared with colleagues and a number of improvements have already been made.

The full report, including the key recommendations and our joint stakeholder response can be found on the [Healthwatch website](#).

Charitable Funds Update

Love Musgrove – To read Love Musgrove's Winter Newsletter, please click [here](#).



League of Friends donations

Since the October edition of Members' Briefing the following donations have been received:

The Friends of Frome Hospital have donated £200 to Frome Hospital for the purchase of Christmas gifts for the patients on the ward on Christmas Day and presents for their volunteers.

The Friends of Wincanton Hospital have donated money to the hospital for three new televisions for the ward, the purchase of a new cooker for the occupational therapy kitchen and a small Christmas gift for every patient and staff member.

The Friends of Williton Hospital funded a night out for hospital staff with food and a band.

The Friends of Musgrove Park Hospital have purchased an ESM 3Shape E2 Desktop Scanner for the maxillofacial department and a Loqic E106 ultrasound machine for the vascular department.

Cherry tree 'Joy' planted at Frome Community Hospital



Figure 1 Melissa Book, Frome Hospital administrator, with Jamie Prouse (Selwood Academy)

On Wednesday 1 December, Year Five teacher from Selwood Academy in Frome, Jamie Prouse, and Frome Council Park Ranger Mark, planted a Japanese flowering cherry tree in the car park at Frome Community Hospital, following a donation led by Jamie and the school.

The project aimed to raise enough funds to plant four trees around the town - the one planted at the hospital has been named 'Joy' after the school's four values (Hope, Wisdom, Community, and Joy).

Jamie said: "It was wonderful to do something so worthwhile and long lasting on behalf of Selwood Academy, for staff, patients and visitors of Frome Community Hospital.

"Our school mission to 'let your light shine before others' is demonstrated in this project, and we hope the Japanese Kanzan tree will bring a lot of

'joy' to many!

"Three similar trees have been planted at Belmont Villas Care Home (Hope), Selwood Academy (Wisdom) and Victoria Park (Community), and we hope they will all grow beautifully for everyone to admire and enjoy.



“Everyone at Selwood is excited to see the trees bloom next Spring and continue the fantastic relationship we have with our community partners. We hope that this might also inspire others to do lasting good deeds in beautiful Frome.

“Thank you to everyone involved in the project, in particular to the council and local rangers Mark, Dave and Helen Viner, Melissa Book at the hospital, and Sharon Welsh at Belmont Villas.”

We look forward to seeing 'Joy' in full bloom, along with the other blossom trees in the car park at Frome Community Hospital.

GENERAL NEWS AND INFORMATION

Alzheimer’s Society Elf Day

On Friday 3 December, our dementia and delirium team invited wards and departments across the trust to join in with the Alzheimer’s Society Elf Day celebrations. This is an annual event where money is raised for the charity, as well as promoting awareness and education about dementia. Wards who took part were tasked with the challenge of creating activities that focused on 'senses at Christmas'.



Becky Furzer, our dementia and delirium specialist nurse, said: “I was blown away with the imagination and detail on some of the wards. We had taste testing menus from the kitchens, a sensory trolley with a 'guess the Christmas smell' game, including oranges, cloves and fresh mint, as well as pictures of 50s and 60s film stars and musicians.

“Patients also enjoyed sensory nature boxes which included pinecones and dried

up leaves, all giving off the aroma of pine trees. There was dancing with ribbons and jingle bells and even a spot of singing, and some elf racing to end the day too. Cake sales and raffles all raised money for the charity at the same time - so much fun and laughter was had by so many.”

A massive well done and thank you to all the colleagues who took part and truly made our patients' stay in hospital that little bit brighter, while also supporting a great cause.



Patient praise for the Trust's catering department

For the attention of the Catering Dept:

Over the years hospital meals have been the butt of many jokes and comments, can I in my own small way put that right. In October of this year I was rushed into Musgrove Hospital with a heart condition. I ended up on the Cardiac Care Unit, and my road to recovery was greatly assisted by the high quality of the meals that you provided. How on earth you cope with the numbers and variations of meals I will never know. All I can tell you is that I enjoyed every one, my only regret was that I ordered a standard size and not a large one. Once again thank you for all that you have done.

From AE – one very happy patient.

Art for Life Newsletter

To read the last newsletter from Art for Life, please click [here](#).



It is planned to have another Medicine for Members event in February 2022. Please keep an eye on your inbox for information about that in due course.

If you missed the opportunity to attend the live session of the **Update on the Merger between Somerset Foundation Trust and Yeovil District Hospital** held on 9 December. You can catch up with that presentation in the Members' Only area on the Trust's website.

Click [here](#) for the link to the page. The password is: SFT0621. *Please do not share these details with anyone who is not a member of Somerset Foundation Trust.*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Trust Board – Public Meeting

Tuesday 1 February 2022, 9.00 am – 12 noon

Council of Governors Meetings

Wednesday 9 March 2022, 14:00 – 16:00

Both meetings are to be held virtually via Microsoft Teams. If you would like to attend any of these meetings, please contact the Secretary to the Trust for the link on Ria.Zandvliet@SomersetFT.nhs.uk



FOUNDATION TRUST MEMBERSHIP

Do you have family and friends that are not foundation trust Members? Please send them the link to our website where they can find out more information and encourage them to join. <https://www.somersetft.nhs.uk/about-us/about-us/our-leadership-and-governance/current-members-and-governors/members-private-area-password-required-to-access/>

Membership is free and amongst the benefits of membership are receiving the Members' Briefing, access to Members' events, such as Medicine for Members, and standing for election as a Governor of the Trust.

Membership resources are available so if you can use A3 posters, leaflets, postcards or business cards to get the message out into the community, please contact the Membership office on members@somersetft.nhs.uk and some will be sent out to you.



We hope you have found the briefing interesting and informative and would welcome your feedback. Do let us know if there is anything else you would like to see included in future editions or that you thought wasn't interesting or helpful. Please leave your comments at members@somersetft.nhs.uk. Thank you.

Keep in touch with us
Website www.somersetft.nhs.uk
You can also find out more about what we are doing by following us and interacting with us on our social media accounts:
[Facebook.com/somersetft](https://www.facebook.com/somersetft) [Twitter - @SomersetFT](https://twitter.com/SomersetFT)

