



TrustTalk

Winter 2024



**Nominations for
Values Awards
2024 are open!
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**Meet our Freedom to
Speak Up Champions
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**Special centre page pullout
on Black History Month and
South Asian Heritage Month**

Welcome to Trust Talk

Welcome to a new edition of Trust Talk, full of great news stories from across the Trust over the last few months. Trust Talk is a lovely way to celebrate some of our achievements in print and to share them with staff, service users, carers and others who are interested in what we do at BSMHFT.

Firstly, a warm welcome to those staff who have joined us recently, we hope you're settling in well into Team BSMHFT and finding your feet. A special welcome to new Non-Executive Directors Sue Bedward and Thomas Kearney and well done to Bal Claire and Imran Waheed who have been appointed as Deputy Chair and Deputy Medical Director respectively.

South Asian Heritage Month and Black History Month are big events in our Team BSMHFT calendar. They are a great way of not only celebrating the diversity that we are so proud of here but they also give us a chance to get to know some of our colleagues in a way that perhaps we don't always get to do.

A huge thank you to those who took the time to nominate and those who then shared their own personal stories with us, which you can read via the centre page pullout.

There has been a great response also to the stories shared as part of men's mental health month. We know that men notoriously struggle to open up when it comes to how they're feeling so it was great to see a few of those at Team BSMHFT who were willing to talk about their own mental health battles and how they manage to stay mentally well. You can get a recap on those stories on page 13.

This edition, there's also a focus on our Rough Sleepers team and an insight into their vital work to support the mental health of those who find themselves on the streets of Birmingham. It's usually through these dark winter months that homelessness is more at the forefront of our minds but the work of this team carries on every month of the year. You can read about this on page 16.

Finally, just to say a big thank you to those who continue to make Team BSMHFT the place it is to

work and be cared for. Many of us are working hard to eradicate bullying, harassment and racism and improve what we do when it comes to ensuring safe, quality care, something that will continue into 2024 and beyond. Please continue to speak up if something doesn't feel right to you around the behaviour of your colleagues, whether that's towards each other or the care that we provide to our service users/patients.

Similarly, we'd like you to tell us when an individual or team is going that extra mile. One way you can do that is to submit nominations for this year's Values Awards. Nominations are open until midnight, Sunday 25 February.

Let's always remember our values – Compassionate, Inclusive, Committed.

Best wishes,

David Tomlinson
Executive Director of Finance

Monica Shafaq
Non-Executive Director



Contact us

To contact our Trust with any general enquiries:

☎ 0121 301 0000 (our switchboard)

Trust headquarters address:

✉ Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
Uffculme Centre
52 Queensbridge Rd
Birmingham
B13 8QY

Birmingham and Solihull Urgent Mental Health Helpline, in partnership with Birmingham Mind

If urgent mental health help is needed you can ring the numbers below for advice and support

☎ 0121 262 3555

☎ 0800 915 9292

This line is available 24 hours, seven days a week



Keep up with us online

🌐 bsmhft.nhs.uk
📘 facebook.com/NHSbsmhft
🐦 twitter.com/bsmhft
📷 [@bsmhft_nhs](https://www.instagram.com/bsmhft_nhs)

New appointments at BSMHFT

Bal Claire appointed as Deputy Chair



We're delighted to share that Bal Claire has been appointed as our Deputy Chair. Bal has been with the Trust as a Non-Executive

Director since January 2023 and is the Managing Director of his Management Consultancy company, MyQonsult, supporting organisations across a broad range of industry sectors to drive strategic growth.

Chair of the global warehouse logistics consultancy – Swi-tch, Bal is also an Associate at the international consultancy firm Alumni Services and an Independent Member of the Governing Council at the University of Warwick.

Previously Bal had a hugely successful career at BT. Starting as an apprentice he worked his way through to senior director roles leading large-scale strategic business transformation. His path from apprenticeship to Senior Executive has taught him the value of good coaching and mentorship in helping people fulfil their potential. He is a huge advocate of apprenticeships and the strategic value of vocational skills to the UK economy. Bal brings great knowledge, experience and expertise to BSMHFT.

Speaking about his new role, Bal said: "I'm delighted to be appointed as Deputy Chair with Team BSMHFT at this important time in the organisation's development. I'm passionate about delivering amazing service user experience and helping everyone in the organisation fulfil their potential, which in turn will help ensure our success."

Non-Executive Director Sue Bedward joins the team

A very warm welcome to new Non-Executive Director (NED) Sue Bedward.

Sue is the Founder and Director of Midlands Business Leadership (MBL) Academy and brings a huge wealth of knowledge and experience in enterprise leadership and management and organisational development. More than 20 years of her career were in the NHS and another 15 running her own business.

Over the years, she has coached and mentored, business owners, executives and managers across public and private sector services. Sue is also a Certified Insights Discovery Practitioner, 360 Feedback

Facilitator, a CiPD qualified trainer and a Member of the Chartered Management Institute. A member of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for ethnic minority business owners, Sue is passionate about driving forward the inclusive business support agenda to ensure it reflects and supports the needs of Black, Asian and ethnic minority business owners. Her other work includes board development, strategic business planning and governance.

Sue prides herself on integrity, equity, fairness and respect and will bring a huge amount to the Board and Team BSMHFT.



Welcoming new Non-Executive Director Thomas Kearney

A warm welcome to our other new Non-Executive Director, Thomas Kearney. Thomas has worked



extensively as a clinician in both acute and community care across physical and mental health, specialising in neurology trauma and acute mental health.

In his career, Thomas has held a number of senior positions in the NHS including the role of Deputy Chief Operating Officer of a large integrated mental health and community trust, Deputy Chief Allied Health Professions Officer for NHS England and Deputy Director of Medical Workforce for England. Currently he is the Director of Performance for South West England.

Since 2007, Thomas has been involved with National Association of Psychiatric Intensive Care and Low Secure Units and became an executive member in 2011. His areas of special interest are in service improvement and change management to enable increased efficiency, quality and performance within mental health and acute services.

Meet our Freedom to Speak Up Champions

Our Freedom to Speak Up Guardians, Emma Randle and Lucy Thomas, have an important and unique role in our Trust. They support colleagues to have a voice, offering an independent, alternative and confidential space to share concerns about patient safety, quality of care and any other challenges they face at work.

Freedom to Speak Up Guardians originated from Sir Robert Francis' national enquiry in 2015 which found that patients had died and been harmed in Mid Staffordshire because concerns raised by NHS staff were ignored and minimised. The enquiry concluded that staff in NHS settings needed Guardians who operated independently not forming part of the Trust leadership or HR teams. Guardians are passionate about improvement and support the Trust to focus on the opportunity

to learn when things go wrong.

To help us to create a culture of openness and transparency, our Freedom to Speak Up Guardians have recruited nine Freedom to Speak Up Champions, to support them in their work and to be a role model in speaking up in their local areas. They will soon be joined by four more staff who are currently undertaking training to become champions.

The nine champions provide a listening ear locally, bridging any barriers which prevent colleagues from speaking up. Like the Guardians, they are impartial, maintain confidentiality and signpost colleagues to appropriate support. You can read about our champions below.

We are proud of the work of our Freedom to Speak Up team and recognise that listening and responding to the concerns of our staff leads to improvements in patient safety and experience at work.



All staff can access Freedom to Speak Up as an alternative route to raising concerns. Get in touch with one of our champions or contact our Freedom to Speak Up Guardians by emailing bsmhft.speakup@nhs.net

Alternatively you can leave a message on their 24 hour voicemail service [0121 301 3940](tel:01213013940). Find out more [@bsmhft.nhs.uk](https://bsmhft.nhs.uk) or scan the QR code.



Introducing our new Freedom to Speak Up Champions

Michael King, Forensic Social Worker Manager

Michael believes that a supported workforce delivers higher standards of care. He wants to contribute to promoting a 'listening' NHS where concerns are acted upon and a positive culture where people can speak without fear.



Lisa Draper, AVERTS Core Skills Trainers

Lisa is incredibly reassured to know that Freedom to Speak Up is embedded in BSMHFT. With first-hand experience, she recognises that staff need to be heard and supported and wants staff to know that everyone has the right and the freedom to speak up.



Alyson Harwood, Service Manager for Youth First

Alyson wanted to become a champion because she values our workforce. She fully appreciates the need for BSMHFT to have a safe route for staff to speak up, be listened to and acknowledged and to ensure that they see their concern is acted upon.



Junaid Mahmood, eLearning Developer and Supervisor

Junaid is passionate about challenging injustice both professionally and in his personal life. He wants BSMHFT to be a place where everyone can voice their concerns without fear or repercussion and this is why he chose to be a Freedom to Speak up Champion.



Tracie Murphy, Clinical Practitioner, Solihull Integrated Addictions Service (SIAS)

Tracie became a champion after experiencing the power of 'being heard'. She wants to encourage the provision of positive listening spaces where difficult concerns are aired, and colleagues are signposted quickly and safely.



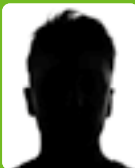
Malcolm Payne, Community Psychiatric Nurse for the Forensic Intensive Recovery Support team (FIRST)

Malcolm is passionate about Freedom to Speak Up as he experienced bullying in a previous career. He feels privileged to be working for a Trust that takes patient safety and staff welfare seriously.



Dr Kallol Sain, Consultant Psychiatrist

Kallol is passionate about supporting his medical colleagues to deliver safe, high-quality care. He understands the unique barriers that the medical workforce faces when raising concerns and is committed to offering a safe listening space to his colleagues.



Tracy McCaul, Hospital Appointments Coordinator/ Reception Supervisor

Tracy's aim is to empower members of staff to speak up about any issues, whether it be patient care or staff related. No issue is too small. She feels champions are here to listen, empower and support from the first conversation to final feedback.



Viba Pavan Kumar, Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Lead for Psychological Services in South Birmingham Integrated Community Care and Recovery Service

Viba aims to help create a safe space for colleagues to feel able to raise concerns. She recognises the role of speaking up and bringing positive change and wants to support colleagues who need an opportunity to articulate their concerns.



National Guardian

Freedom to Speak Up



The National Guardian's Office leads, trains and supports a network of Freedom to Speak Up Guardians in England and provides support and challenge to the healthcare system in England on speaking up.

There are over 1,000 Freedom to Speak Up Guardians in the NHS and independent sector organisations, national bodies and elsewhere.

25,382 cases were raised with Freedom to Speak Up Guardians between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

nationalguardian.org.uk

Annual physical health check – have you had yours yet?



Having annual physical health checks with your GP means that underlying health issues can be detected and treated. A few simple tests can make a big difference to your overall health and wellbeing and will help to pick up any health problems early, so you can access the support you need to stay well.

NHS England has a national ambition to improve and increase the uptake of annual physical health checks for people living with a severe mental illness (SMI), especially those diagnosed with schizophrenia, psychosis, or bipolar disorder.

We are working hard with our partners across Birmingham and Solihull to increase the number of people attending their annual health checks.

If you or someone who know is aged 18 or over and has been diagnosed with a severe mental illness, you will be invited to a physical health check every year at your GP surgery.



A helpful video explaining what happens at an annual physical health check, from start to finish, can be found on our website. We have included Bangla, Pahari, Polish, Punjabi and Urdu subtitles should you wish to share this with someone whose first language is not English.

You can also hear from people living with a severe mental illness who explain how simple their physical health check was for them and why it is so important that you have yours.

Simply scan the QR code to access the videos.



Team of the Month latest winners



Our Team of the Month award is one of the ways in which we recognise our fantastic teams. With more than 4,000 staff working across over 40 sites, we are immensely proud of the 160+ teams that support thousands of local people who need our mental health expertise.

Whatever the role each team plays, *Team of the Month* recognises those who bring alive our values of Compassionate, Inclusive and Committed every day while they are at work. We are delighted to share the June, July, August, September, October, and November's winners of our *Team of the Month* award – take a look at our worthy winners:

June Team of the Month:

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Medium Secure Unit (MSU)

They help young people be the best version of themselves, ensuring the restrictions they face don't impact their opportunities.



July Team of the Month:

Mary Seacole Ward 1

For their commitment and support to service users, involving the multidisciplinary team in their care and working to improve staff wellbeing.



August Team of the Month:

Occupational Therapists – Tamarind

Providing excellent personalised care to patients and creating pathways to help them meet their needs and achieve their goals.



September Team of the Month:

Rosemary Ward

Putting smiles on the faces of their patients, caring for their mental and physical wellbeing and meeting their individual needs.



October Team of the Month:

The Programme Management Office and the Communications team

Working tirelessly to deliver a new Trust website in half the expected time, whilst continuing with business as usual activities.



November Team of the Month:

Endeavour Court

Endeavour Court had to deal with an exceptionally challenging 24 hours which included several medical emergencies. The staff dealt with these emergency situations with extreme professionalism and skill, remaining calm and showing incredible care and compassion to their unwell patients. The incidents were managed exceptionally, despite challenging and stressful shifts. The team demonstrated their commitment to their patients, colleagues and their service and gratefully welcomed staff who came to help them from other units. Endeavour Court deserve to be recognised for their commitment to patient safety and each other and the compassion they showed in this difficult 24-hour period.

Nominate your Team of the Month

If you're a member of staff, service user, carer, family member or one of our health partners, we'd love you to nominate the team that you feel has had a positive impact on you.

Just complete the short nomination form explaining why your chosen team should be worthy winners of the *Team of the Month*

crown. This is available on the staff intranet Connect or via our website www.bsmhft.nhs.uk (see QR code).

Nominations for Team of the Month close on the 15th day of each month. Any nominations received in the second half of the month will be included in the following month's awards.

SCAN QR CODE



New Deputy Medical Director for Team BSMHFT



Congratulations to Consultant Psychiatrist, Dr Imran Waheed, who has been appointed as our new Deputy Medical Director.

Brummie born, Dr Waheed has an impressive career history. After studying Medicine at the University of Birmingham, he began Psychiatry training at the Queen Elizabeth Psychiatric Hospital in 2001.

A colleague at BSMHFT for over two decades, Dr Waheed has worked in various locations, supporting thousands of vulnerable residents across his home city. From working

in Assertive Outreach, Community Mental Health teams, Home Treatment teams, Inpatient Services, Liaison Psychiatry and a 12-year period at the Zinnia Centre, it's safe to say Dr Waheed has built up an impressive résumé with us!

Working currently as part of the Psychiatric Liaison team, Dr Waheed is also a Staff Governor and Vice-Chair for the Medical Advisory Committee.

For a lot of his consultant career, he has worked in the most culturally diverse areas of inner-city Birmingham and works to engage these communities with mental health services.

He has helped to write and also appeared in the first-ever Urdu language video on psychosis and was also instrumental in the initial development of a service for refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria.

Outside of work, Dr Waheed is a proud father to four boys, loves to travel and... although he's a Brummie, he's an avid Liverpool FC fan!

SIAS featured on BBC Radio 4

A special programme giving a rare insight into the work of our Solihull Integrated Addiction Services (SIAS) centre, aired on BBC Radio 4.

The programme formed part of the Inside Health series. It features Mark who is one of our Experts by Experience. The 50-year-old opened up to BBC's health and science correspondent James Gallagher about the substances he has used throughout his life, reflecting on the devastating impact they have had both for himself and his family.

From starting off smoking cannabis to then using class A drugs like cocaine and heroin, Mark reflects on his journey to recovery by saying:

"I am now in recovery... It's beautiful to be on the other side of the fence, every day is a good day now."

Mark was able to turn his life around with the support from our SIAS team and is currently working for the service, transporting service users.

It's not unusual for other harmful

substances to be detected in street drugs.

Simon Glover, Programme Lead at SIAS shared the steps that the team is taking to alert our 1,200 service users to the potential dangers and risks. Simon said:

"You never know what's on the market, it's always cut with other substances... even rat poison. As soon as we know that there is something unusual, something dangerous that has been mixed, we have campaigns on social media, and we talk to our service users about the risks."

Later in the programme, James speaks with toxicologists at Birmingham Heartlands Hospital and a senior lecturer in Pharmacology and Toxicology at King's College London who expands further on the dangers of class A drugs and new and emerging street drugs such as Xylazine, an animal sedative.

You can listen to the full interview on BBC Sounds by scanning the QR code.

SIAS is a partnership of organisations, including



Simon Glover and Mark

BSMHFT which work closely together to support people in Solihull who are struggling with alcohol, drug, or gambling addiction. SIAS' mission is to provide an outcome-focused, high-quality, person-centred, and integrated prevention, early intervention, treatment and recovery service, addressing the needs of adults, young people, families and organisations affected by addiction.

If you or a loved one needs support, please visit

www.sias-solihull.org.uk or

call 0121 301 4141



Measles, it's more than just a rash, it's a serious illness

Think measles
A blotchy rash

We are aware of a growing number of measles cases in Birmingham and Solihull. Measles is more than 'just a rash', it is a serious illness that can lead to complications, especially in vulnerable, immunocompromised, or pregnant patients. It is also highly infectious.

Having the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine is the best way to prevent it. Check with your local GP to see if you and your loved ones are up to date with this vaccine.

Once infected, it takes two to four days before the rash appears along with a stuffy nose, cough, conjunctivitis and a fever. The rash generally starts behind the ears, spreads to the face, and then expands. It begins as small red spots with bluish-white centres inside the mouth and a red-brown blotchy rash appears after several days.

Ask for an urgent GP appointment or get help from NHS 111 if:

- you think you or your child may have measles
- you've been in close contact with someone who has measles and you've not had measles before or you've not had two doses of the MMR vaccine
- you've been in close contact with someone who has measles and you're pregnant
- you have a weakened immune system and think you have measles or have been in close contact with someone with measles.

To avoid spreading measles, avoid close contact for at least four days from when the rash first appears. Do not share cutlery, cups, towels, clothes or bedding.

More information about measles and how to prevent it can be found on the NHS website www.nhs.uk.



Nominations now open for our Values Awards 2024

Nominations for the Values Awards 2024 are now open!

This is your opportunity to recognise some of our incredible individuals and teams across Team BSMHFT.

Held annually, the awards spotlight those who go over and above for our patients, service users and their families and who put our values of Compassionate, Inclusive and Committed at the heart of everything they do.

This year there are 10 award categories including the welcome return of the Service User and Carer Choice Award and brand-new Charity Champion award for a colleague who has been busy organising events or fundraising for our charity, Caring Minds.

Whether it's someone who always shows

compassion in the care they give, or a team that is willing to go out of their way to improve the experience of our service users and carers, we're looking forward to receiving your nominations.

Chief Executive Roisin Fallon-Williams who will co-host this year's awards with Chair, Phil Gayle, said:

"It goes without saying that I am really looking forward to this year's Values Awards ceremony. Each year it gets harder and harder to select our winners and I cannot wait to be overwhelmed as I read all the wonderful nominations that come through."

"The entire evening captures the team spirit of our organisation as we celebrate the achievements of individuals and teams within BSMHFT. The awards are more than just an

evening, they are symbolic of our true NHS champions that help to improve the mental wellbeing of our community," Phil added.

Last year over 200 nominations were received. Closing date for entries, received electronically or by post, is midnight on **Sunday 25 February 2024**. Scan the QR code for more information. The Values Awards 2024 ceremony will be held at **Villa Park in Birmingham on Friday 21 June**.



Annual Doctor of the Year Awards 2023



The BSMHFT annual Doctor of the Year Awards recognise the great work of both our doctors and postgraduate doctors in training. Colleagues gathered virtually and in person to mark the 2023 awards, with many of our doctors taking time out of their busy schedules to attend the ceremonies.

Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist and Associate Medical Director (Medical Education), Dr Ruth Scally, hosted the event and awards were presented by Chief Executive, Roisin Fallon-Williams, Medical Director, Fabida Aria, Deputy Chief Executive, Patrick Nyarumbu MBE, and Deputy Medical Director for Quality and Safety and Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist, Dr Nat Rowe.

There were some brilliant nominations and the judges found it incredibly difficult to choose the winners in each category. Their final choices were of doctors who embody our Trust Values of Committed, Compassionate and Inclusive. Our winning trainers were recognised for working hard to



Fabida Aria, Alina Braicu (Trainee of the year), Ruth Scally, Deborah Davis Postgraduate Medical Education Manager. Back – John Travers, Mustak Mirza (both governors)

support their trainees, helping them to become the best clinicians they can be. The trainees who took home awards ensured they never missed an opportunity to learn, advancing their experience and knowledge wherever possible.



Deborah Davis, Fabida Aria, Mona Salim (SAS doctor of the year), me. Back – Mustak Mirza, John Travers, Mahmood Saeed (consultant at Juniper)



Dr Isa Shafi and family

Huge congratulations to all of our 2023 winners:

- ★ Trainer of the Year – **Dr Isa Shafi**
- ★ Trainee of the Year – **Dr Alina Braicu**
- ★ Staff and Associate Specialist (SAS) Doctor of the Year – **Dr Mona Salim**
- ★ Foundation Doctor of the Year – **Dr Tun Tha and Dr Jasmine Hundal**
- ★ Core Trainee/GP Trainee of the Year – **Dr Agnieszka Tulwin, Dr Kanayo Onyeka (Highly commended)**
- ★ Higher Trainee (Specialist Trainee) of the Year – **Dr Nurul Yahya**
- ★ Poster of the Year – **Dr William Heatley, Dr Marayan Patel, Dr Juliet Raphael, Dr Supriya Dastiday and Dr Sara Ormerod for their entry focussing Lithium Toxicity: What happens next?**

Watch back the latest Trust Board meeting

In the most recent Trust Board held in December 2023, emphasis was placed on building relationships with stakeholders, enhancing transparency through data sharing, and addressing challenges within the health system collaboratively.

To watch any of the Trust Board meetings or see future dates of meetings, please scan the QR code.



Successful Research and Development showcase

Over 100 staff attended our eagerly anticipated Research and Development (R&D) event.

The Uffculme Centre was booked to capacity with staff, Experts by Experience and speakers from Birmingham and Aston universities in attendance.

Guest speakers – including service user researchers, consultant psychologists, Experts by Experience and colleagues from local universities shared details of the journey so far and future plans for mental health research and development, both at BSMHFT and across the region.

The day was also an opportunity to talk about the relevance of spiritual health in recovery, the latest research into Difficult to Treat Depression (DTD) and recommendations for working with women from ethnically diverse communities who experience perinatal illness.

Over the last few years, our R&D team has worked hard to build an impressive portfolio of research studies as well as develop strong collaborations both inside and outside the Trust to enhance the mental health care of our service users and patients.

Emma Patterson, Head of Research and Development at BSMHFT said:

“The team put on this brilliant event to highlight the far-reaching impact of research – both in terms of service improvement



Pictured at the event are members of BSMHFT's Research and Development team.

and mental health recovery. The day was truly inspiring with some great feedback from attendees.”

Thank you to those who attended the event which was a real opportunity find out about the work of the team and how they are supporting

the future of mental health research for the communities we serve. A huge thank you also to those involved in organising this energising and interesting event – hopefully the start of many more research showcases to come!



NHS talking therapies can help.



Double celebration at the 2023 RCPsych Awards

Huge congratulations to Dr Fabida Aria, who was awarded Psychiatrist of the Year and Dr Ishtiaq Ahmad, who was awarded Specialty Doctor/ Associate Specialist of the Year at 2023's Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych) Awards.

The RCPsych Awards celebrate the nation's best and brightest teams and individuals in this field at a prestigious annual awards ceremony in London.

An inspiring role model to many, Dr Fabida Aria won the Psychiatrist of the Year accolade for her exceptional passion in her roles as a Consultant Psychiatrist and Executive Medical Director.

Dr Aria is an outstanding psychiatrist, clinician, leader and manager. She has overcome huge challenges to rise to the top of her profession."

Professor Sir Stephen Powis
Director of NHS England

Fabida was presented with her prestigious award by Professor Sir Stephen Powis, National Medical Director of NHS England. The judges said:

"Dr Aria is an outstanding psychiatrist, clinician, leader and manager. She has overcome huge challenges to rise to the top of her profession.

"She is respected, admired and trusted by patients and colleagues. Her leadership has led to huge improvements in patient care. She is a deserved winner of the Psychiatrist of the Year award."

An Associate Specialist in Old Age Psychiatry for the past 27 years, and a Speciality and Specialist (SAS) Clinical Tutor for the past 13 years at the Trust, Ishtiaq dedicates his life to improving both his patients' and colleagues' experiences in the Trust.

Dr Alex George presented Dr Ishtiaq Ahmad with his award. Judges said:

"Being an exceptional clinician, educator and leader and a role model for many colleagues. He has been a tireless patient advocate for mental health patients, including for physical health outcomes.

"He is a much-loved SAS Tutor, supporting the career development of colleagues. He introduced a buddy system for early career SAS psychiatrists and improved service development and research opportunities for all."

Well done to Fabida and Ishtiaq!



First Patient Council is launched

A Patient Council for our inpatient wards has been launched, with the aim of helping us to improve the patient experience.

The first hour-long meeting involving patients and staff from across 16 of our acute inpatient wards gave attendees the opportunity to share their positive experiences and ideas for improvement.

During the session, the group discussed a range of topics such as dietary requirements, what activities patients they would like to do and their physical environment. Activity workers, psychologists, matrons, occupational therapists, nurses and Experts by Experience also took part giving opportunity for networking.

Each piece of feedback was noted and will be used as a basis to formulate future ward improvements. It gave patients a huge confidence boost with many commenting they felt a huge sense of pride to represent their ward.

Ian Tighe, one of the Experts by Experience who attended the first Patient Council, said:

"Having the patients give real time feedback was very refreshing. I'm sure they will report back to their peers what a positive experience it was to appear on Teams and be listened to with action points given at the end, so they know their words were not spoken in vain. The Patient Council is a wonderful experience and it's great to have that connection."



Meriden Family Programme celebrates 25 years

Congratulations to the Meriden Family Programme team who celebrated their 25th anniversary recently.

Meriden Family Programme is a training and organisational development programme promoting the development of family-sensitive mental health services and is the largest of its kind in the world. It takes its name from the village of Meriden in Solihull which claims to be the centre or 'Heart of England', reflecting the view that families should be placed at the heart of mental health care.

The team marked their anniversary by hosting a well-received virtual conference attended by over 100 delegates from across the world. Speakers from Japan, Iraq, Uganda, Australia and New Zealand shared their involvement in delivering family interventions therapy and two carers spoke powerfully about the impact that Behavioural Family Therapy has had on their lives and the lives of their families.

Find out more about Meriden by visiting www.meridenfamilyprogramme.com or scan the QR code.





“I just bottled it all up”

NHS talking therapies can help.



Managing feelings of loneliness

A survey of public health released by NHS Digital in May last year revealed that more than one in five people in England (22%) reported feeling lonely at least some of the time.

There can be many reasons for our loneliness – and sometimes there is no obvious cause and it's just how we feel. Everyone's experiences of loneliness are different and we should never blame ourselves for feeling lonely. The longer we feel lonely, the more we are at risk of mental health problems like anxiety and depression. Although it may be difficult it's important to try and address these feelings of isolation.

Here are some tips to help you do this:

Keep in touch with people

Regular chats with friends and family can help to combat loneliness. Just talking to someone can really help when you feel alone.

Creating a group chat on an app such as WhatsApp, can help us feel more connected.



Join a group

Being part of a group is a great way to meet new people. Look for groups to join in person or online that focus on things you like or activities you would like to try.

Do things you enjoy

Having lots of friends and family doesn't mean you won't feel lonely. Sometimes, improving our relationships with ourselves, as well as others, can help us feel less lonely. Filling your time doing things you like might be a way to stop you from focusing on your loneliness and improve your wellbeing.

Share your feelings

Talking more openly about how loneliness affects you can really help. Hearing a familiar voice or seeing a friendly face can make you feel less isolated.

Don't compare yourself to others

Some people only share the good things happening to them, especially on social media, so comparing yourself to others can make you feel lonelier.

Help and support

Further advice on managing loneliness can be found on these websites:

Age UK

ageuk.org.uk
0800 678 1602

Mind

[Mind.org.uk](https://mind.org.uk)

Mental Health Foundation

www.mentalhealth.org.uk



How to stay well this winter

The cold weather during the winter months can be bad for health, especially for those aged 65 or older, and people with long-term conditions such as heart or kidney disease, asthma or diabetes. But there are lots of things you can do to stay well this winter.

Protecting yourself from winter viruses

The risk from viruses like flu is greater during winter. If you're in an at risk group and you haven't had your flu vaccination, it is still available. Take a look at www.nhs.uk to book a vaccine at a local pharmacy or speak to your GP.

Hand washing

Highly contagious infections like flu and norovirus, also known as the 'winter vomiting bug' spread during winter. Washing your hands with soap and water is one of the easiest ways to protect yourself and others from catching these viruses.

Keeping warm

Keeping warm over the winter months can help to prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems such as heart attacks, pneumonia and depression.



Heating our homes can be expensive and we've put together some tips to help you prepare for a cold snap and keep your home warm and dry. Visit our website bsmhft.nhs.uk and search 'Keep well in winter' or scan the QR code.



Warm Welcome Spaces are available in Birmingham and Solihull and these offer a place for you to be warm and socialise with others. Visit Warmwelcome.uk/find-a-space to find a warm space near you.

If you're struggling with energy bills, contact the **Citizens Advice consumer helpline 0808 223 1133 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm** and ask to talk to an energy adviser. Calls from mobiles and landlines are free.

Stay Active

There is strong evidence that people who are inactive have an increased risk of depression, dementia, heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. Regular exercise can help improve your physical and mental health. Take a look at www.nhs.uk/keepactive which includes many activities that you can do at home.

Check your medicine cabinet

Ask your pharmacist what medicines should be in your cabinet to help you this winter. Many over-the-counter medicines are available to relieve symptoms of common winter illnesses such as colds, sinusitis or earache. To help manage winter illness symptoms, keep warm, rest, drink plenty of fluids, have at least one hot meal a day to keep your energy levels up.

Looking after your mental health

Birmingham and Solihull Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub

Team BSMHFT staff can access the Birmingham and Solihull Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub.

They will accept self-referrals by phone **0121 301 1470** (leave a voicemail with details) or by email: bsm-tr.referrals@nhs.net

Birmingham Healthy Minds

If you need support to manage anxiety or depression and are aged 16 and over and registered with a Birmingham GP, our talking therapies service, Birmingham Healthy Minds can help you.

Email: bsmhft.bhm@nhs.net

Text: 'BHM' to 60777

Tel: **0121 301 2525 9am-4.30pm Mon-Fri**

You can also complete the online self-referral form www.birminghamhealthyminds.org If you are from outside of this area, details of how to find your nearest service are on our website: birminghamhealthyminds.org

Every Mind Matters

Useful resources are also available on the NHS Every Mind Matters website.

www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters

Urgent help

If you're based in Birmingham and urgent help is needed, call **0121 262 3555** or

0800 915 9292 for advice and support, provided by Mind. This line is available 24 hours, seven days a week and can be used whether you are known to our services or not.

Please scan the QR code for more information.



Celebrating our diverse workforce at Team BSMHFT!



During South Asian Heritage Month, we celebrated our 715 colleagues of South Asian heritage. Each week we shared a series of special features, identifying our unsung heroes who live our Trust Values and demonstrate behaviours that help to improve the experience of our service users and colleagues. In total, 23 staff superstars were featured and you can read more about their achievements and what they love most about their heritage via the QR code.



Lakhvir Rellon, Head of Community Engagement



Steve Forsyth, Interim Chief Nurse



Prabhjot Virk, Art Psychotherapist



Navreet Cholia, Counselling Psychologist



Aliya Osmani, Clinical Services Manager



Bicrant Krishnankutty, Detox Nurse for our Substance Misuse Recovery team



Aiysha Khalil, Trainee Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner



Jazz Janagle, Mental Health Co-Production Lead for Experts by Experience



Shirvinder Bharj, CPN at our Central Home Treatment team



Asia Ali, Peer Support Worker for our Maternal Mental Health service



Dr Anis Ahmed, Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist



Tripta Sidhu, Senior Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner at Birmingham Healthy Minds



Abbda 'Abby' Khanim, Administrator



Shiny Noble, Health Care Assistant



Manpreet 'Priya' Dhanjal, Lead Occupational Therapist



Kerana Thambu, Ward Manager of Lobelia Ward at the Tamarind Centre



Jas Kaur, Associate Director for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Organisational Development



Dr Nazam Alam, Prison GP for our Healthcare and Birmingham Recovery team at HMP Birmingham



Naveed Akhtar, Support Time and Recovery Worker in our Assertive Outreach Community team



Sultana Begum, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, West Birmingham Perinatal Community Mental Health team



Dr Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy, Consultant Psychiatrist and Clinical Director for Urgent Care, Newbridge House, Inpatient Unit



Renu Bhopal-Padhiar, Adult Community Mental Health Transformation Programme Lead (BSOL)

Zobia Khalil, Assistant Psychologist

Jasmin Benjamin-Raj, Clinical Inequalities Lead, Interim Team Manager for Liaison and Diversion

October marked the annual celebration of Black History Month (BHM), where the history, culture, achievements and contributions of Black people are acknowledged across the UK. We wanted to celebrate our 1,585 colleagues of Black heritage by shining a spotlight on those who are compassionate, inclusive and committed in everything they do. During the month, colleagues took the time to tell us what BHM means to them and why they choose to celebrate it! Read more by scanning the QR code.



Yvonne Donald,
Hospitality and Events
Manager



Zara Bailey-Maxwell, Children
and Adolescent Mental Health
Services (CAMHS) practitioner



Fiona Lewis,
Principal Clinical Psychologist



Nathaniel Thomas,
Occupational Therapy Assistant



Dr Loretta Davis,
Clinical Psychologist



Donnerly Brotherson-Sahota,
Ward Administrator



Esther Kiilu, Advanced
Clinical Practitioner



Zalika Geohaghon, Senior
Infection Prevention and
Control Nurse



Stephen Simpson,
Healthcare Assistant



Craig Phillips,
Substance Misuse Clinician



Winston Weir,
Non-Executive Director



Aluya Ikhenia,
Matron



Toni Murray,
Nurse



Rebecca Donald, Retired Nursing Assistant, **Pauline Connell,**
Lead Perinatal Cognitive Behavioural Therapist, **Yvonne
Donald,** Hospitality and Events Manager, **Ann Marie Donald,**
Medical Secretary



Delroy Mason,
Spiritual Care team
Chaplain



Pearl Green,
Personal Assistant and
Team Manager



Rohon Webber,
Clinical Inequalities Lead



Kenysh Charles,
Art Psychotherapist



Sharon-Nira King,
Advanced Nurse Practitioner



Judy Lewis,
Team Administrator



Debora Anderson, **Carol McIntosh,** **Debbie Graham,** **Doreen
Garikayi,** **Rachel Hospedales,** **Fay Gopie,** **Godfrey Hull,** **Janis
Foster,** Nursing Team Vetiver Suite/ Neuropsychiatry

RACISM

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION NOT THE PROBLEM

At Team BSMHFT, we have zero tolerance towards any forms of racism and are working towards becoming an anti-racist organisation. We should all feel safe and confident to be ourselves at work and have the same opportunities for training, development and progression.

Staff will continue to be held accountable for any discriminative behaviours or actions towards other colleagues, our service users, patients and carers. As part of our anti racism campaign, many of us are continuing to wear their pin badges, pledging our support for standing up to racism.



Read more about our Anti Racist campaign and our pledge to be a No Hate Zone, by scanning the QR code.

If you are a member of staff and would like to take the pledge, simply email bsmhft.anti-racism.strategy@nhs.net or search 'equality, diversity and inclusion' on Connect.



**TAKE THE PLEDGE
WEAR THE BADGE
MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

bsmhft.anti-racism.strategy@nhs.net

 **compassionate**  **inclusive**  **committed**

Men's mental health. Let's talk about it.

Mental health problems do not discriminate, they can affect anyone, regardless of gender. At any one time 12.5% of men report having a mental health condition, such as depression or anxiety disorder compared to about 20% of women. In addition, 76% of suicides in England and Wales are men, the biggest killer of men under the age of 45.

During Men's Mental Health Month five Team BSMHFT men shared their own personal stories to encourage other men to talk. Tim Hamilton, Patrick Nyarumbu MBE, Steve Forsyth, Jon Robinson and Dr David King each opened up about their struggles, how they look after themselves and why being vulnerable is a strength, not a weakness.

Struggling with feelings of depression, excessive worry, social anxiety, post-

"Men aren't invincible" says Patrick Nyarumbu MBE, Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director for Strategy, People and Partnerships.



Opening up about his emotions is something that Patrick admits is work in progress. He said:

"Although at times I still find it difficult to be vulnerable enough to talk about my own feelings, I have a good support network of men that I can connect with. We encourage each other to talk about our mental wellbeing to ensure we are there for each other."

traumatic stress or obsessions and compulsions? NHS Talking Therapies can help. The service is effective, confidential and free. Your GP can refer you or refer yourself at www.nhs.uk/talk

You can read Tim, Patrick, Steve, Jon and David's full stories via the QR code.



"Describing what therapy did for me, I'd say it switched the lights on. It brought me closer to the real me," says Dr David King.



Dr King is a Senior Counselling Psychologist and shared his thoughts on stereotypical expectations of masculinity, explaining how damaging this can be, particularly in relation to mental health.

On a more personal note, David also shared his journey towards good mental health and how therapy played a huge part in helping him cope with life's challenges.

Despite establishing an impressive career communicating for a living, even Tim Hamilton, Associate Director of Communications, admits that he too can find it difficult to have open conversations when he is going through a tough time.



Tim said: "Like most people, I have had some difficult times in my life and, like most men I have bottled things up or locked them in boxes in my head until I am ready to open them..."

"I grew up in a family where saying 'I love you' was the norm and as I grow older, I realise this has helped me to become someone who can express my emotions and be honest with myself about how I am feeling."

We believe that the 1,661 men who make up Team BSMHFT should feel able to talk about their health and wellbeing in a safe, non-judgemental and supportive space. Our Men's Staff Network offers male colleagues the opportunity to get together (virtually or in person) and talk about specific male health issues, both physical and mental.

If you are a male staff member and would like to join, please email bsmhft.mens.staff.network@nhs.net

"One of the hardest parts was the inability to express my struggles," says Jon Robinson.



Jon is our People Partner for Older Adults and Specialities and bravely opened up about his mental health journey, sharing how he managed to navigate through some of the darkest moments in his life, filled with grief and anxiety.

He encourages all men to break the silence when it comes to talking about their mental health, and we couldn't agree more!

Breaking down barriers and talking about men's mental health is a topic that Steve Forsyth, Interim Chief Nurse, is particularly passionate about. Steve explains how important it is to surround yourself with positive people, be that a friend, family member or partner.



"As much as men can try to mask how they feel, put up a front, or build up those brick walls, you can't do that forever. It's exhausting! There is nothing stronger than admitting you need help."

Perinatal team celebrates 10 years of Peer Support

Our Perinatal Mental Health service recently celebrated a decade of its Peer Support Workers.

Peer Support Workers, staff members and service users all gathered to celebrate 10 years of supporting the mental health of mothers and improving care.

During that time, the Perinatal Mental Health Service has undergone a massive transformation, with four new teams and over 150 staff now working in the service, all thanks to the commitment of our Peer Support Workers and the Friends of the Mother and Baby Unit (MBU).

At the birthday event, attendees heard from Experts by Experience, who shared personal stories about their journey to recovery and how this has helped to shape them into the strong, resilient women they are today. The service has seen women go on to complete qualifications, find work and mentor others as well as representing lived experience for perinatal



service developments regionally and nationally. They were also supported by their third sector partners; Action on Postpartum Psychosis, Acacia and Approachable Parenting.

Dr Giles Berrisford, Consultant Perinatal Psychiatrist and NHS England's National Specialty Advisor in Perinatal Mental Health, said: "We are so proud of what has been achieved and extremely optimistic about the future."

Our Perinatal Mental Health service provides a safe, high quality, family friendly, mental health

service – including assessment, treatment and care for women suffering from psychiatric disorders associated with pregnancy and childbirth.

Scan the QR code to find out more about the service or visit www.bsmhft.nhs.uk/our-services/specialist-services/perinatal-mental-health-service/



Mel is an NHS safeguarding star

Mel Homer, our Head of Safeguarding, has received a Safeguarding Star Award for being a committed member of the Birmingham and Solihull partnership team.



Nominated by the Midlands Safeguarding team, the award is in recognition of Mel's commitment to protecting the health, wellbeing, and human rights of local citizens, enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

Mel proactively supports the region with events, forums, and networks whenever possible and at times flexes her own personal plans and annual leave to enable her to do this. Her dedication to the Midlands and colleagues is incredible, as is her commitment and leadership to safeguarding.

In honour of this award, Mel was sent an NHS Safeguarding Star badge that is now pride of place on her BSMHFT lanyard.



Five minutes with...

A Clinical Psychologist in our veterans service



Growing up in military bases across the world, Suzanne Whittall was exposed to a unique subculture of military life. In this special edition of Five Minutes With, Suzanne takes us on her journey of being labelled an 'army brat' and how this inspired her to become a Clinical Psychologist supporting veterans, reservists and their families with their mental health.

Hi Suzanne, please could you start by telling us a little bit about yourself and what you do at Team BSMHFT?

I am a Clinical Psychologist working in the treatment pathway of OpCourage. OpCourage is the NHS service designed to support veterans, reservists and their families with mental health issues. Within my role, I aid in the assessment and treatment of veterans and their carers often through joint working with our partnership organisations like Walking with the Wounded, local NHS services such as talking therapies and community mental health teams and veteran support organisations like Royal British Legion and SSAFA – the armed forces charity. I provide support to organisations working with veterans through training, consultation and attending veteran outreaches. I am also part of Veterans Voices, our service's co-production group designed to support veterans who are involved in service development.

Why did you decide to pursue a career in mental health specifically?

I grew up as an 'army brat' on military bases across the world. When I was 11 years old, I saw a drama on the BBC called Warriors based on British soldiers serving in Bosnia in 1993 on a peacekeeping tour, showing not only the ethical dilemmas faced by the soldiers but also the after-effects including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Coming from a military family, whilst I grew up knowing and respecting the role of the Armed Forces, I had been protected from the after effects of this, but this drama opened my eyes to a side of the military I had never really considered. I began to ask more questions and my parents spoke about the toll this had taken on the mental health of their friends and family members. I heard about my great uncle coming back from World War II with 'shell shock' and no one really knowing what to do or how to support him. Equally my dad would speak about his colleagues struggles and their suicide attempts. Coming from a family where the capacity to serve and protect your country was so important, I wanted to be able to help and support our Armed Forces community particularly being drawn to supporting them with the toll this took on their mental health.



How many veterans are there in Birmingham and Solihull?

This is quite a tricky question. In the 2021 census they reported 17,771 veterans in Birmingham and 5,851 veterans in Solihull. However, not all veterans would identify themselves or inform services that they are a veteran. The Royal British Legion launched a campaign to encourage NHS services to ask the question as whether a service user is a veteran as services were not regularly asking or recording the answer. BSMHFT now has the capacity to record this on our systems and encourage all staff to ask that important question.

Has there ever been a stand-out moment in your career that has made you pause and reflect?

There are so many moments in my career that I am proud of, like being able to do mental health and suicide prevention training with the RAF and I am always looking out for ways we can create proactive intervention. However, one thing that always stands out to me was being able to complete a piece of work with a veteran with a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA). The NMA has memorials for conflicts, operations and the different elements of the Armed Forces. It is an incredibly moving place to visit, and at the heart of it a memorial made of walls containing the names of Armed Forces Personnel who have given their lives in service of the UK since World War II. Visiting the NMA was a culmination of our work, and it was incredibly moving, providing the veteran with the opportunity to say goodbye to a friend he had lost.

I would always advise those struggling to reach out for support. There are many places veterans can access support, from emotional support lines like Combat Stress **0800 138 1619** and OpCourage **0300 323 0139**, to your GP or peer support through local veteran outreaches like the Veterans Contact Point in Coventry, the Tri-Service Centre in Stafford or the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital in Shropshire.

There are so many organisations and sources of support available for veterans, sometimes they just need signposting in the right direction through resources like the Veterans Gateway or if you approach a veteran organisation (e.g. Royal British Legion, SSAFA or Walking with Wounded) they will often signpost you in the right direction if they think others services would be helpful. If you are trying to support a loved one, the Ripple Pond has some great resources and advice.

Tell us something that people might not know about you

People may not know that I have a black belt in kickboxing. I have always enjoyed this as a way of managing stress and grounding me after work. You have to be truly present to prevent yourself or others from getting hurt whilst training, so it has always been a great way of grounding.



Describe yourself in three words: Optimistic, persistent, and flexible.

Happy 10th Birthday to our CAMEO team!

A big happy birthday to our CAMEO team, that celebrated its 10th anniversary in November. Based at HMP Foston Hall, the multi-disciplinary service was set up in 2013 and is a partnership between Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), our Trust and ANAWIM Women's Centre.

CAMEO is a two-year treatment service designed for female offenders who have complex needs arising from pervasive psychological difficulties and who have a high risk of reoffending. The women treated by CAMEO have at least two years remaining on their sentence and their release into the community is complicated by personality difficulties. The name of the service was developed by the women in the prison and stands for: Coping with complex needs; Aiming for better understanding of self through; Motivation to change; Engaging with others and Optimism for the future.

Service users, prison staff, ANAWIM staff and members of the CAMEO team along with other Trust colleagues attended the celebration event, which was held in the main house of HMP Foston Hall. Opening the event was the prison's Governor, Michelle Quirke, who welcomed guests and spoke about the pride of

service users and the self-confidence they gain during the two year treatment programme.

Our Lead Psychologist for Secure Care and Offender Health, Lauren Richards, has been involved with the service since its inception a decade ago. She spoke about the compassion, courage, hard work and resilience of the women who complete the programme and Clinical Lead Ros Campbell shared her pride in leading this life-changing service. At the event, service users were presented with certificates of achievement and some who are part of the gospel choir performed songs to guests.

One service user also shared her story of hope, following her treatment journey with CAMEO. Art and textiles created by service users were also displayed around the main room as well as details of the four stages of the treatment journey. The programme offers a range of treatment interventions, group and 1:1 which each woman will participate in, depending on their tailored treatment plan.

A massive thank you to the CAMEO team for the Compassion, Inclusivity and Commitment that you all bring to Team BSMHFT and for helping to transform so many lives.



A Day in the life of an FY1 Doctor in Older Adult Psychiatry

This edition of Trust Talk, we welcome guest writer and doctor in training, Ammad Butt, who shares a day in the life of a FY1 Doctor.

"My alarm rudely interrupts my sleep at around 7.30am. Since starting as a Foundation Year 1 (FY1) Doctor in August, I have slowly managed to adjust to the sleeping pattern that is needed for a full-time job which has been a learning experience in itself as someone who is innately not a morning person. Thankfully, one of the benefits of working in psychiatry as an FY1, is you work a plain simple 9-5 (what a way to make a living!), with no on-calls and night shifts. After a quick shower and coffee, I either walk or cycle to the hospital to try fit in some daily exercise before getting to work.

I start my shift by going to the office and looking at the doctor's diary for any ongoing tasks which need completing. This usually involves assessing patients for any physical health issues which I am the first port of call for as an FY1. With the ward being older adult psychiatry, I have had to become a master of managing constipation and urinary tract infections. I also quickly check the handover group chat and then I organise the tasks on a scrap piece of paper, prioritising the most important to the least and start getting through the tasks in that order.

By the time it reaches midday most of the big tasks will be out of the way, and I start the more administrative side of the job – sorting documentation, writing discharge summaries, referrals and printing off request forms. From an outside perspective, people do not often realise that this is at times largely what being a junior doctor involves. Whilst many might find these tasks mundane, I find it brings nice balance to the job, calming the waters of what can often be a stressful day.

At 1pm I have lunch with my colleagues where we share any stresses with each other and chat about whatever is going on in our lives currently. This is an important part of working in the NHS – maintaining a sense of humour and a perspective that it is not always serious situations and helping support each other with any difficulties. Working in a small hospital has given me a very close network of friends which I enjoy – the atmosphere is great and there is a family-feel to the place. My lunch itself is something I usually have prepared the night before – a small pasta dish or salad, which I wash down with another coffee.

After lunch, I finish off any more of the administrative tasks, review any outstanding medication issues and write up the notes before the weekly Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting. This system we have at our ward allows for issues to be resolved in MDTs in a succinct way. In the afternoon I get the opportunity to speak to patients' families and help them with any queries they may have which I find rewarding. If there is any free time, I tend to organise my portfolio and work on related activities such as audit opportunities.

As the workday draws to a close, I watch the clock countdown and try finish anything off whilst preparing for what tasks will need completing tomorrow. With every passing minute I hope there won't be a new admission to keep me finishing late...but inevitably there is. And because we want to do everything we can for our patients, I contact my senior and we review the patient together – working with the ward staff to sort any documentation and anything which needs completing immediately. This ensures the transition for the patient to the ward is as smooth as possible and that the on-call and night team has the right information to manage any potential issues. Finally, after



prescribing the new patient's medication, I log off my computer and head home.

My 5-9 after my 9-5 is great. After graduating from medical school, you finally get to enjoy your free time rather than perpetually studying; you can make of it what you will. Personally, I spend my evenings writing, reading, cooking, and getting an early night in before the next day.

Working in psychiatry as an FY1 is a great way to start as a doctor, you are eased in but also made to manage difficult situations without feeling like you have been thrown in the deep end. I also appreciate the time I have gotten to spend doing hobbies outside of work – something which when I rotate, will become more difficult to maintain with the on-calls and night shift rotas.

With the current atmosphere of working the NHS being what it is, I have been pleasantly surprised about working as a doctor – there is always support available when you need it here, which I never expected. And that epitomises what is great about the NHS – it is Britain's largest family."

Think Family to improve the lives of those we care for

Clinicians across the Trust are being encouraged to 'Think Family' to help improve the lives of our service users, their children and families.

National reviews have shown that some children and adults who live with or have contact with individuals who suffer from mental illness, are at a greater risk of suffering significant harm. Their needs can be overlooked unless they receive the right support at the right time.

In November 2023, our Safeguarding team launched a refresh of our Think Family approach. Using the Trust's Think Family Standard, clinical teams are being reminded to place this at the heart of excellent clinical practice.

As part of our care, staff ask questions about our services users' families to understand the context of each service user's life. This is to ensure we understand key relationships, concerns, and needs. We will then respond to any concerns or needs, by offering the relevant mental health support, advice, or signpost/refer to other agencies.

Mel Homer, Head of Safeguarding at BSMHFT said: "Think Family ensures that we work in partnership with our patients and service users and their families in the delivery of their care. We also work as part of a much wider support network of agencies and avenues of support to meet the needs of the whole family.

"Think Family is about understanding what really matters to service users and their families. It's not just a mental health diagnosis. We need to have an understanding that everyone will have a unique set of needs which align with their social, cultural backgrounds."

As a Trust we are committed to this approach, to improve the outcomes for families.

Helping the homeless – with our Rough Sleepers Mental Health team

Studies have reported a higher prevalence of mental health problems in the homeless population compared to the general population. This includes major depression, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

There are many factors that can lead a person to sleeping rough, lack of affordable housing, substance misuse, mental ill-health, domestic violence or losing your job are just a few examples.

Our Rough Sleepers team – based at the Homeless Health Exchange (HEX) on William Booth Lane – exists to support the mental health and wellbeing needs of this vulnerable, marginalised group of people in Birmingham.

Made up of four Community Psychiatric Nurses, Gemma McGeown, Mark Woods, Caroline Maclaren and Elliott Gillings, and two Psychological Therapists, Inderjit Pandha and Monika Borchadt the team work closely with our partners to support those with mental health problems who are rough sleeping and work together to get them in to accommodation and off the streets.

A typical day for colleagues Gemma, Mark, Caroline and Elliott begins at 6.30am, where in rain, hail, sunshine or snow, they walk approximately 10-15 miles to locate rough sleepers across the city centre. Approaching people, the team will offer help with housing, food or drink, healthcare, substance use and mental health support.

Gemma said:

“Some of the rough sleepers we speak to will engage well, however, others do take a little more time, so we will try and build up trust and relationships with them. We have regular meetings with our partners to ensure we are all working in sync to get the very best outcomes for



Mark Woods and Gemma McGeown

our service users.”

A lot of the time, it can be difficult to locate rough sleepers, which is why the team rely on their combined 63 years of experience as well as a handy app called ‘StreetLink’ that is free to download on all smartphones. StreetLink exists to help end rough sleeping by enabling members of the public to help send an alert to our services, pinpointing where someone in need is located.

Once located the team works with the individual to assess their mental and physical



We have regular meetings with our partners to ensure we are all working in sync to get the very best outcomes for our service users.”

Gemma McGeown
Community Psychiatric Nurse

Mark Woods, Gemma McGeown and Elliott Gillings.

needs and, where necessary, link them up with consultants Dr Hossain or Dr Ekanayake who always offer their assistance.

Learn more about StreetLink by visiting thestreetlink.org.uk or download the free app available on any smartphone.

Support with Cost of Living

The rising costs of food, power and heating continue to impact many people in our region. Healthwatch Birmingham and Healthwatch Solihull have put together a list of useful links and organisations that can help, if you're struggling or worried about this.

Visit Healthwatch Birmingham:



Or for more information

☎ 0800 652 5278

✉ info@healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk

Visit Healthwatch Solihull:



Or for more information

☎ 0808 196 3912

✉ enquiries@healthwatchsolihull.org.uk

For staff who are struggling, there are resources available on our Health and Wellbeing pages on Connect, via the QR code opposite.



Home Treatment Team reduces DNAs by 50%

A big well done and thank you to staff from our Sutton Home Treatment team (HTT) who have managed to reduce the number of missed appointments in their service by 50%. Missed appointments are a universal problem across healthcare and at BSMHFT, but particularly in our Psychiatry service.

When appointments are missed, this means that treatment and reviews are delayed, having a negative impact on the recovery of the service user. Whether someone attends or not, each appointment costs the Trust approximately £216.

Analysis carried out by Sutton HTT over a nine-week period in 2023 showed that 68 of 266 appointments (26% of the total scheduled) were missed, often referred to as ‘Did Not Attend’ or DNA. The team – based at our Northcroft site - decided to do something about it and along with our Quality Improvement (QI) colleagues, they got to work on reducing the number of DNAs.

They found that by giving service users different options for their appointments has made a huge difference. These options include being seen at home or at Northcroft, face to face or by phone and either morning or afternoon.



By simply providing choice, the DNA reduced by half, from 26% to 13%.

Not only are more service users attending their

appointments, staff are now spending less time and resources contacting those that DNA, giving them more time to spend on clinical care.

Spiritual care for our service users

Spirituality means different things to different people. It describes how we make sense of our lives, find purpose and hope. For some, it involves a recognised religious faith, for others, it is a more individual spiritual belief. For many it involves finding a deep sense of connection with self and others, and a powerful awareness of something greater, outside oneself, (the transcendent).

As a Trust, we aim to provide inclusive care that meets the needs of our diverse population. Our Spiritual Care team does a great job of supporting our patients, service users, staff and carers and engaging with our local communities.

The team is inclusive, multi-faith and multi-cultural consisting of a priestess, priests, pastors, imams, and spiritual care practitioners, from a variety of faith traditions including Christian, Muslim and Paganism. Traditionally known as chaplains, the team has a wide range of professional expertise in other fields that informs and facilitates spiritual care work.

Day-to-day, their work involves visiting our inpatient wards offering spiritual, pastoral, religious care and sacraments to all, including some of our most unwell patients. The team's family support coordinator also works closely with the Patient Safety team, helping families



The Spiritual Care team

who are bereaved by suspected suicide.

Aside from patient care, the team supports colleagues with a variety of services, such as conducting memorials for staff who have sadly passed away and writing condolence letters to their families. They are also key to helping us recognise and understand the importance of religious festivals and deliver training and teaching.

Sharon Watkins, our Head of Spiritual Care, said:

"Spirituality is unique to you and is closely linked to the way in which you understand your core values, meaning and

Spirituality is unique to you and is closely linked to the way in which you understand your core values, meaning and purpose. This may include a faith or belief, culture, traditions, and the things that lift your spirits such as art, music, poetry and nature."

Sharon Watkins
Head of Spiritual Care



purpose. This may include a faith or belief, culture, traditions, and the things that lift your spirits such as art, music, poetry and nature."

One service user who benefitted from the spiritual care of the team, said that they had learned so much from the mindful

moments, kindness, conversation and wise words that will stay with them long after leaving hospital.

For more information about the Spiritual Care team email:

✉ BSMHFT.spiritualcare@nhs.net

The introduction of the Infection Prevention Control (IPC) Dashboard

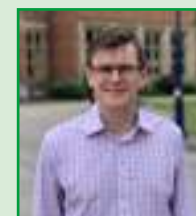
As a Trust, we have introduced a new tool called the Infection Prevention Control (IPC) Dashboard to keep track of how well things are going at our different sites. The IPC Dashboard was introduced to make it easier for internal oversight, encompassing environmental monthly IPC audits and reporting hand hygiene assessments. Every month, each site gives itself a score, and we put all these scores together. The Dashboard helps us figure out which places might need more help. We use colours like red, amber, or green to show how well each place is doing – red means there's a bit of a problem, amber means there could be an issue, and green means everything is good.

But it's not just about us – this tool also helps us talk to other people outside our Trust, like those who are interested in how well we're doing. We want to make sure every site is ready to take good care of the people who need it. By using this Dashboard, we can quickly help the places that need it most and use our resources wisely. We must remember, taking care of infection prevention is a job for all of us together, not just one person.



Dr Ed Day awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours list

Congratulations to Dr Ed Day, Consultant Psychiatrist in our Solihull Integrated Addictions Service (SIAS), who was recognised in the New Year Honours list. Awarded an MBE for services to vulnerable people, Dr Day combines clinical work with SIAS - where BSMHFT is one of the lead partners - with research and teaching at the University of Birmingham.



He is also the UK Government's National Recovery Champion which is a national leadership role focusing on key aspects of recovery from drug misuse.

Dr Day, Ed, who joined SIAS in 2015, said:

"It has been an honour and a privilege to work with committed, passionate staff for 20 years, and especially rewarding to walk the journey to recovery alongside hundreds of clients of the service. I am proud to say that a significant number of them are now colleagues, working as part of a recovery-orientated system of care in Solihull."

We're delighted that Dr Day's commitment to and compassion for those living with addictions has been recognised.



Did you know that we now have an official BSMHFT Instagram account?

Many of us will be familiar with this popular social media site, but for those who aren't, Instagram is a free social media app that is used by roughly 30.6million people across the UK - that's 46% of the population.

With that amount of reach, we thought it was time to put BSMHFT on the virtual Instagram map and share out helpful tips, advice and support for all things mental health and wellbeing.

If you are on Instagram, why not give us a follow @bsmhft_nhs.

Pair wipe the floor at cleaning awards

Well done to Zalika Geohaghon (Senior Infection Prevention and Control Nurse) and Sue Ladkin, (Summerhill Services Limited (SSL) Training and Quality Compliance Manager) who have 'wiped the floor' with the competition, to scoop an Association of Healthcare Cleaning Professionals (AHP) Initiative Award.

Presented at the awards ceremony, the award was in recognition of the development and delivery of a series of Clinical Cleaning Roadshows, following the introduction of the new NHS National Standards for Healthcare Cleaning 2021.

Zalika and Sue set up the roadshows and visited every Trust site, to ensure clinical teams were aware of the new standards. Each roadshow demonstrated all aspects of cleaning, explaining directly to clinical colleagues what the new standards meant for them and reinforcing the Trust's cleaning policy.

Thank you Zalika and Sue for your commitment to cleaning!



Zalika Geohaghon and Sue Ladkin

Sharing feedback through the Friends and Family Test

The NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT) is a quick and anonymous way of sharing your views after you or someone close to you has received care and treatment from our services. This feedback is valuable as it helps us to understand what we're doing well and where we need to improve.

We've received many positive comments through the NHS FFT over the last few months and here are just a few of them:

"The Christmas event was well organised and fabulous entertainment. It was a great opportunity to be able to share the time with our loved one, along with their peers and staff members. The staff are always friendly and willing to listen." **Adriatic Ward (Ardenleigh)**

"I have been twice with my mother for her appointments. The staff from those at the front desk through to the clinicians have been excellent." **Dementia Service**

"I have came a long way from where I was thanks to the help of SIAS. Thank you for all your help!" **Solihull Integrated Addiction Service (SIAS)**

"The therapist I spoke with was very friendly, understanding and positive." **Birmingham Healthy Minds**

"A welcoming entrance and staff look happy to work here and are very friendly. I do not feel anxious coming. Staff make the world a happier place and seem to genuinely care about the service and the patients who attend." **Community Mental Health Team, Erdington and Kingstanding**

"A safe place to support a mother through a difficult period with compassion and love – great service. Staff were amazing and helped my family loads. Thank you." **Chamomile Mother and Baby Unit**



It's quick and easy to complete the FFT and there are four ways to give your feedback:

✓ Visit fftsurvey.bsmhft.nhs.uk or scan the QR code below and fill out the FFT



- ✓ Digital tablets are available at Trust sites – ask one of our staff if you'd like to use one
- ✓ Pick up an FFT card from one of our sites and post it back to us for free
- ✓ Scan the FFT QR codes available at some of our sites to give your feedback

Caring Minds



Enhancing a person's visit to BSMHFT can make all the difference to their wellbeing, recovery and overall experience of our services. Caring Minds is our charity and supports the Trust's vision of improving mental health wellbeing, by providing added extras that are over and above what the NHS can provide.

If you would like to raise money for Caring Minds or find out more about the work of the charity, please email: bsmhft.fundraising@nhs.net

Alternatively you can make a small donation today, by visiting Caring Minds' JustGiving page: www.justgiving.com/caring-minds

Scan here to donate



£40,000 donation for Caring Minds

A huge donation of £40,000 has been given to Caring Minds, courtesy of the Equitix Foundation.

Raised through Equitix's annual fundraising event, Caring Minds was one of a few charities to receive a share of the £120,000 raised on the night.

The Equitix Foundation was established with the vision of creating a lasting entity that can positively impact charities connected to the assets and communities that Equitix serves.



Money raised at the Psychological Professional event

Caring Minds and many BSMHFT colleagues attended the Psychological Professions event at Birmingham City Football Club. The theme of the day was 'Shaping Change: People at the Heart of the Matter.' Caring Minds was the chosen charity for the event, with £330 being raised for the charity from a raffle collection on the day.

The latest lucky lottery winners

More lucky staff members have each won £250. Thanks to the Caring Minds lottery, a total of £9,427 has been raised in 2023. Below are some of our recent winners, congratulations to all!

- 📅 July: Julie Linforth (Secretary at Reaside Clinic)
- 📅 September: Abigail Bellenger (Family and Carer Lead for FIRST)
- 📅 November: Louise Bradbury (Recovery Practitioner)
- 📅 December: Dr Ezinne Ijeoma Onuba (Consultant Psychiatrist)

Funding for Ardenleigh's Art Exhibition

An art exhibition held recently at our Ardenleigh inpatient mental health hospital, was funded by Caring Minds. Around 140 colourful art pieces were collected as part of the exhibition, many of which are now on display along the corridors at the 30-bedded Erdington site.

Organised by Senior Art Psychotherapist, Deborah Tomlin-Taylor, Caring Minds funded the resources needed to create a professional gallery styled space, materials needed to create the artwork and the catering for the grand opening of the exhibition.

Black History Month celebrations at Tamarind

Caring Minds donated to fund the Black History Month celebrations at Tamarind. This money helped to provide meaningful therapeutic activities for our patients, family, friends, carers and colleagues.

The event involved traditional music, drums, dancing and delicious authentic food available for all to enjoy. Hazel Ngoro, Clinical Nurse Manager and Dawn Sutherland, Advanced Nurse Practitioner at Tamarind were delighted with the success of the event.

Photographed far right: Louise John, Dawn Sutherland, Hazel Ngoro and Jasmine Martin.



Green Gym opening soon at Juniper



Caring Minds and Birmingham Community Health Care charities came together recently to fund the new Green Gym on the Moseley Hall Site.

Contributing £8,500, the gym provides an outdoor safe space for staff and service users to access gym equipment, working towards fitness goals, and enhancing their physical and mental wellbeing.

Pictured opposite: Sarah Binks (Charity Manager at Birmingham Community Health Care Charity), Jabar Mohammed (Lead Governor, and Head of Digital Operations for BCHC), Louise John (Caring Minds Charity Manager) and Izzy Knowles (Councillor Moseley Ward).

Watch this space for news about charities coming together for something very special in Birmingham in 2024!

Making BSMHFT a greener Trust

We have been working with our colleagues and partners at Summerhill Services Limited (SSL), to create a greener more sustainable BSMHFT.

SSL is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Trust, delivering our Estates and Facilities Services. Together we are aiming to reach Carbon Net Zero. This means we are striving to achieve a balance between the carbon we emit into the atmosphere, and the carbon we remove from it.

This balance – or net zero – will happen when the amount of carbon we add to the atmosphere is no more than the amount removed. We are committed to incorporating environmental and sustainability principles into our business processes, goals, and values.

We have already made some good progress towards our goal including introducing food waste recycling, moving all of our electricity supply to net zero carbon and replacing many fleet vehicles with hybrid/fully electric vehicles.

In addition, LED lighting has been used



for many years now which is better for the environment. We also use lighting activated by movement which only comes on when needed. Plus, staff have adopted more green behaviours including turning lights off when they are not in use.

SSL recently carried out energy saving night surveys across Trust sites and the positive results revealed lighting controls were functioning correctly at all sites, regulating energy loss.



SSL is pleased to be able to share energy saving and cost cutting hints and tips, reminding all of us that making small changes can make a big difference both at home and at work. These greener ways to live can benefit our environment and our finances and help us stay cosy and warm this winter:

- Close blinds/curtains at night and even in the daytime if rooms are not being used as they mitigate the cold
- Reduce draughts – even using an old towel under a door can help
- Turning down the overall heating temperature by just one degree could save between 5% and 10% off your energy bill
- Service/clean radiators – if the water that lives in pipes and radiators is clean and free of sludge, heating systems will work more efficiently
- Make use of thermostatic radiator valves.
- Don't block radiators – a sofa in front of a radiator restricts heat flow across the room!
- Ensure central heating is programmed correctly and not left to do its own thing – consider zoning your heating to certain areas dependent upon occupancy
- Heat the rooms that you use most to at least 18°C if you can, particularly if you have a

pre-existing medical condition

- 💡 Insulation is key. Many experts believe that reflective foil placed behind radiators can increase the impact of heating
- 💡 Wearing several layers of clothing will keep us warmer than one thicker layer
- 💡 Putting a device on standby does not mean it's off. Switch it off at the plug when not in use
- 💡 Most ovens take less than 10 minutes to reach temperature – don't put them on too early
- 💡 Turn lights off when not in use and consider using money and energy saving LED light bulbs
- 💡 Use the eco modes available on many washing machines and try to use only when there is enough for a full load.

If you're struggling with the cost of living and energy prices helpful information is available via both Birmingham City Council and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council websites.

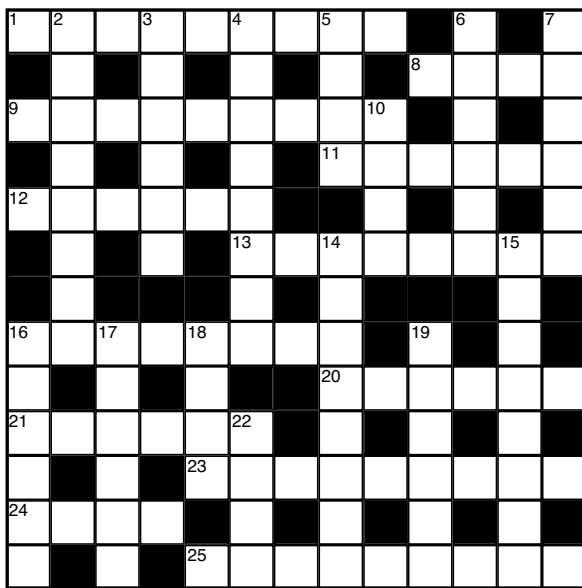
Solihull Metropolitan Borough
www.solihull.gov.uk/here2help

Birmingham City Council
www.birmingham.gov.uk/livingsupport

Quiz Challenge

1. What is the North American name for a wild reindeer?
2. Which aristocratic title ranks between an earl and a baron?
3. Who directed the films Gran Torino, Unforgiven, American Sniper and Cry Macho?
4. Which Arthur Miller play shares its name with a famous snooker venue in Sheffield?
5. The traditional form of tartan trousers worn by Scots are called what?
6. Orikane is a form of origami which uses which type of paper?
7. What is the collective noun for a group of toads?
8. What S is the name of a currency and a word meaning exemplary?
9. Which tragic hero in Greek mythology accidentally ends up killing his father and marrying his mother?
10. In November 2023, which former UK prime minister joined the House of Lords?

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Not in form? (9)
8. A month, nothing more, in Ireland (4)
9. Light-fingered number in carousel going round (9)
11. Briefly state one's game (6)
12. Aldershot winger's internal pain (6)
13. Refill the glasses with Her Grace in disarray (8)
16. This could be the result of athletes doing their level best (4,4)
20. Of aromatic plants used to cure Rex Black inside (6)
21. Armour is held awkwardly (6)
23. On the side of Scottish river first without delay (9)
24. Prisoner with nothing to eat returns to cell (4)
25. Bring in another reduction (9)

DOWN

2. Would such a hot spell raise the temperature of the sea? (4,4)
3. Father to make notes, we hear, while walking (6)
4. Underwear as worn by Heather Lake? (8)
5. Close bar (4)
6. Large headline found on flag (6)
7. Disarrange us, let nothing be out of place (6)
10. Henry prepared to go above third son (4)
14. Trace the faulty tube (8)
15. Very large dance and caper (8)
16. Intend to make preliminary sketches (6)
17. Loan is arranged for a girl (6)
18. Head of house gives Alfred 50% (4)
19. Heard the family had made some tea (6)
22. Soft feathers on the ground (4)

FIVE ALIVE

EV	IA	VR	TI	DH
NI		AE		RU
DS	RO	IL	VE	ER
IE		UG		LA
TD	HU	NE	EI	RS

Here are two miniature five-square crosswords using the same grid – but the letters have been mixed up. You have to work out which letters belong to which crossword.

EQUALISER

	9		5	
5	○	4	○	2
	6		7	
4	○	6	○	8
	1		4	

Place the four signs (add, subtract, multiply, divide) one in each circle so that the total of each across and down line is the same.

Perform the first calculation in each line first and ignore the mathematical law which says you should always perform division and multiplication before addition and subtraction.

CROSS CODE

1	4	23	23	18	9		1	21	15	3	10	2
19		18		14				15		14		13
18	14	1	2	21	12		11	3	17	14	2	7
15		6		6	3	12	2	7		4		2
12	6	2	25	2	1		3	13	17	3	11	1
1		7	18	1	19		6	2	2	13		12
			14						3			
26		10	2	1	12		21	3	15	12		5
15	2	3	7	2	15		3	1	1	4	15	2
2		10		12	2	2	12	6		14		1
2	16	4	18	12	11		1	8	24	18	2	12
22		13		13				15		14		2
2	13	2	24	2	14		26	2	20	20	2	7

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

1	2 E	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 R	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23 F	24	25	26

Each number in our Cross Code grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. You have three letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares.

As you get the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and control grid. Check off the alphabetical list of letters as you identify them.



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