A stay in hospital is about to get a little bit easier for local patients following the recent launch of a Hospital Information Booklet by the Southern Trust. The short booklet tells people about important things they need to know before they come for a stay in Craigavon Area Hospital or Daisy Hill Hospital.

Dr Gillian Rankin, Southern Trust, Director of Acute Services welcomed the new booklet saying: “I am delighted that we now have a booklet which provides patients with information they need to know before coming into hospital for a stay. The booklet begins with simple advice on preparing for a stay in our hospitals such as information on what patients should and should not bring with them into Hospital. The booklet then moves on to offer practical advice on everything from car parking, meal times, visiting times and anything else they might need to know during their stay in Hospital. I really hope that people find it useful and easy to use.

The booklet is on the Trust Website and this link will be added to letters sent to patients being admitted to Hospitals (with hard copies made available, where required). The booklet’s website address is www.southerntrust.hscni.net/pvc/index. The Hospital Information Booklet is now available on the Intranet under useful documents.

Long-serving volunteers recognised

The Trust has held a ‘Volunteer Recognition Event’ to acknowledge and celebrate the valuable contribution that its long serving volunteers make to the organisation and the wider community. The special “tea with the Chair” event provided an opportunity to thank these volunteers for their valued time and commitment. As a mark of appreciation, the volunteers were presented with a certificate and gift.

Roberta Brownlee, Chair of the Trust thanked the volunteers and said, “It is a privilege for me to acknowledge the tremendous contribution our dedicated volunteers make to the health and social care needs of people living in this area.”

Mrs Brownlee also applauded the long serving volunteers for their commitment and commended them for the selfless manner in which they give of their time and talents to enhance the quality of life of others. The Trust plans to host an annual recognition event for its volunteers.

Melanie McClements Assistant Director of Promoting Wellbeing, commended the volunteers and said, “There are over 500 Volunteers working with the Southern Trust and we greatly appreciate the work they do. Your kindness and generosity of time has touched hundreds of people and has made a real difference to their lives.”

If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering opportunities throughout the Southern Trust, please contact: Gerardette McVeigh Volunteer Co-ordinator, phone: 028 3752 0557 (Monday-Tuesday) or 028 3831 1484 (Wednesday-Friday) or email: gerardette.mcveigh@southerntrust.hscni.net and Madaleine McCrink Volunteer Co-ordinator, phone 028 3083 4270 (Tuesday-Thursday) or email: madaleine.mccrink@southerntrust.hscni.net
A Director’s take on: the best bits of the job

The best bits of the job are working with teams across the Trust to look at what and how services are currently provided, develop ideas for improvement and actually see these ideas implemented and making a difference – however big or small. As I have responsibility for capital planning and estates it is also really exciting when we are able to open a new building or upgrade some of our older facilities; heat, light and power; access to IT and a way of working that is more efficient and effective for the better. Increasingly health and social care is a complex area, requiring us to develop and sustain good working relationships with key people in the DHSSPS, HSCB, PHA, primary care, local councils and statutory bodies.

A Director’s take on: the worst bits of the job

The breadth of areas the Trust is required to provide assurance on sometimes makes it hard to focus on key priorities and make sure that the things that will really make a difference are pushed forward – basically it is sometimes hard to see the wood for the trees! With the demands of the post, it means that I have less time to get out and about and meet staff “informally” which is a good way to hear new ideas or head problems off before they escalate.

A Director’s take on: the challenges facing P&R

As a Directorate that provides support to the operational teams we are not seen as “frontline” services but direct patient services couldn’t function or develop without appropriate, safe estate facilities; heat, light and power; access to IT and a way to demonstrate that they are performing as required and working up plans for future development. The challenging economic climate makes this even more important. The directorate also acts as the key “broker” between the Trust and a range of external organisations. This environment is very dynamic requiring us to develop and sustain good working relationships with key people in the DHSSPS, HSCB, PHA, primary care, local councils and statutory bodies.

A Director’s take on: the future of P&R Services

Continuous improvement is a central theme to the future of P&R services and the services we support right across the Trust. For me this means constantly considering if we could do things better and ensuring staff have the skills and understanding of how to make the changes for the better. Increasingly health and social care is adopting technology to be more effective and efficient and this means we need to have the appropriate ICT and estate infrastructure in place to avail of these exciting opportunities. We also intend to improve our role as a good social partner, developing our estate to be more energy efficient and reduce our carbon footprint. My vision for the future for P&R services is to ensure the Trust remains as a high performer and continues to be innovative and willing to try new ways of working for the good of patients, clients and staff.

A Director’s take on: relaxing away from work

I love to spend time with my family – eating good food and the occasional glass of wine (for the health benefits of course!). I enjoy my weekly yoga classes and walking our 1 year old golden retriever Bella. I also love shopping but I have to keep away from the shoe shops as my husband already thinks I am a centipede!

Excellence Awards

Do you know an individual or team whose outstanding work on behalf of the Trust deserves recognition? Don’t keep it to yourself…help us to recognise the achievement of our staff!

There are nine award categories in the 2011 Excellence Awards:

• Raising Standards… for Excellence in Patient/Client Safety and Quality of Care
• Anything’s Possible… for Excellence in Service Creativity and Innovation
• Views into Action… for Excellence in Staff Involvement
• Working Together… for Excellence in Partnership Working
• Best Care, Best Value… for Excellence in Delivering Improved Efficiency
• Behind the Scenes… for Excellence in Non-Clinical Services
• Lifetime Achievement… for an Outstanding Individual
• Community Services… for Excellence in Volunteering
• People’s Choice… for Excellence in Making a Difference

For further information, go to the home page of the Trust intranet which contains the nomination pack and nomination forms. The closing date for nominations is 10 October 2011.

Staff recognised in Steps to Work

Wade Training Ltd recently held a Success and Recognition Event for participants of the Trust who were involved in the Steps to Work programme. The programme, funded by DEL, was a 26 week practical work experience programme, with Wade Training being the lead contractor. Based across four sites: Daisy Hill, St. Luke’s, Lurgan and Craigavon Area Hospitals; twenty participants were involved in the vocational areas of Porters, Domestics, Administrators and Catering Staff with the job criteria laid down by the Trust.

Lynda Gordon, Head of Equality Assurance Unit, SHSCT, applauded the programme’s success, highly commending and praising the participants. Lynda pointed out the importance of practical work experiences gained and the invaluable life skills that participants can carry forward in all aspects of their working life.

Kieran Fegan, District Manager, DEL; Anneley Reape, Managing Director of WADE; Lynda Gordon, Head of Equality Assurance, Southern Trust; and Alderman Stephen Moutray, Mayor of Craigavon Borough Council.
Launch of PPI Toolkit for Staff

The Trust recently launched a Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Toolkit for staff. The purpose of the Toolkit is to provide staff with information and guidance to enhance involvement and public involvement within their area of service. PPI is about giving local people a say in how services are planned, delivered and evaluated.

Speaking at the launch Roberta Brownlee, Chairman said: “The Southern Trust is committed to ensuring that everyone who needs to and wishes to be involved in the planning, development and evaluation of our services is facilitated to do so.”

Melanie McClements, Assistant Director for Promoting Wellbeing, said: “This Toolkit will help staff understand why they should be engaging with their service users, their carers and the wider public on the services they provide. It offers guidance on how to plan and evaluate involvement activity, outlines different methods of involvement and signposts staff to other sources of support and training. Personal and Public Involvement activity continues to increase across the Southern Trust and we wish to acknowledge the partnership work staff, service users and carers have undertaken and for their ongoing commitment to user involvement.”

The Toolkit will be reviewed on a regular basis so that it remains relevant and of use. The Trust’s PPI Team would welcome your comments and in particular, would be keen to hear from you if you have come across or have used other means of personal and public involvement.

Research Studies Provide New Treatments for Trust Patients

Cardiology patients in the Southern Trust area are being given access to new treatments and interventions as a result of staff involvement in a range of on-going, national, international and world-wide research studies.

One such study involves interventional cardiology services at Craigavon Area Hospital. This has enabled large numbers of patients to benefit from the latest technology in next-generation cardiology stents. One of those staff involved in this research, Dr Ian Menown, Consultant Cardiologist and Director of the Trust’s Interventional Cardiology service, explained how this research has directly helped local patients:

“Coronary artery narrowings or blockages are often treated by stretching with a balloon and then inserting a stent to help keep the artery open. Various stent types are now available enabling Cardiologists to optimise and individualise treatment for patients. On-going research studies at Craigavon have allowed local patients to obtain early access to some of the most advanced stent technologies. Most recently, our interventional cardiology team recruited the highest number of participants in the world in an international study of a class-leading stent with a bio-degradable polymer coating.”

Dr Peter Sharpe, the Trust’s Associate Medical Director of Research added: “Research activity in the Trust has shown a 400 per cent increase when compared with three years ago. Last year eighty-four research studies were undertaken in the areas of cardiology, paediatrics, cancer, stroke, critical care, nephrology, neurology, dermatology, gastroenterology, general medicine, forensic psychology, practice education/midwifery, occupational therapy, nursing, biomedical science, dietetics and practice education/facilitation.”

Dr Peter Sharpe, Associate Director of Research and Development; Mairead McAlinden, Southern Trust Chief Executive; Lee Wilson, PPI representative, R&D Research Governance Committee; Dr Ian Menown, Consultant Cardiologist; and Irene Knox, Research and Development Manager

Boost Better Breaks Pre-School Award Ceremony

The Trust recently held a Boost Better Break award event in Armagh Fire Station for pre-schools in the Southern area. The aim of the Boost Better Breaks scheme is to encourage healthier food and drink choices at break time in schools.

All pre-school facilities were invited to participate in the Boost Better Breaks competition by submitting a piece of creative art work to promote the Boost Better Breaks Scheme. Winning entries were judged by Sharon Flanagan, Early Years Specialist, and will be displayed on a calendar, which is circulated throughout the Trust’s area. Sharon said: “I liked the wide range of materials used and the photographic supporting evidence. Congratulations to all who took part.”

First place went to Portadown Integrated Primary School Nursery, second place to Downshire Nursery School in Banbridge, joint third to Meigh Playgroup in Newry and Clogher Valley Playgroup, while Rathfriland Playgroup were highly commended.

Michele Oliver, Head of Dental Services at the Southern Trust, said: “We are delighted that the Boost Better Breaks awards this year took place during National Smile Month. We would like to thank all the pre-schools who made such an effort in participating. By promoting healthier food and drink choices instead of sugary alternatives at break times we encourage children to make good decisions from an early age which will hopefully lead to a healthier future for them.”

A Pictured in the photograph are members of the Trust’s Patient and Client Experience along with members of the Trust’s PPI Team.

Pictured in 1st place receiving the Perpetual Cup and a cheque for £100 sponsored by the Dairy Council for Northern Ireland are staff and children from Portadown Integrated Primary School Portadown Nursery (front row) Michele Oliver, Head of Dental Services at the Southern Trust; Michael Drayne, Vice Chairperson, Dairy Council for Northern Ireland; Astara, Ben, Calum, Charlie and Amy. (second row) judge Sharon Flanagan, Early Years Specialist; Anita Kavanagh, Oral Health Promotion Facilitator, Anne Marie Cullen, Nursery Assistance, and Miressa McEvoy.
Róisin Murphy is a Clinical pharmacist based in Daisy Hill Hospital Stroke/Rehab and Female Medical Wards. Róisin was the top student at the end of her 2 year postgraduate Clinical Pharmacy Diploma and as a result got a scholarship to do the additional year for a MSc in Clinical Pharmacy. She has recently started training to become a pharmacist independent prescriber in the area of stroke.

How long have you been in the job? I have been qualified as a pharmacist and working in hospital pharmacy for 7 years. I have been working in Daisy Hill for 3 years and in my current role for about a year.

Describe a typical working day In the morning I am based on the Stroke and Rehab ward where I work closely with the ward pharmacy technician - William. I carry out medicines reconciliation (drug history taking) for each new patient, and with William's help, carry out One Stop Dispensing (OSD) for each inpatient. On discharge we aim to provide the patient with their discharge medications in a time efficient manner. Each patient is counselled and given a green card that clearly shows what medications they are to take, the reason why they are to take them, the frequency of administration and special precautions. William and I work closely with other members of the multidisciplinary team on this ward including, Doctors, Nurses, Health Care Assistants, Speech and Language Therapists, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Social workers and Domestic staff.

In the afternoon I provide a clinical service to Female Medical Ward. Once again, I work closely with the ward pharmacist Eileen, and the pharmacy technician Michael or Susan. I focus on completing patient discharges, answering drug related queries and carrying out medicines reconciliation for those patients who have been admitted in the late afternoon. Again, we aim to work closely with all members of the multidisciplinary team, whilst meeting patient’s needs.

How would you describe your job to other people? The role of the clinical pharmacist is to provide a service to patients and all health care personnel who are involved in the prescribing and administration of drugs. Our main priority is the management of the medicines that patients are prescribed and receive. In addition, the role of the pharmacist now involves greater interaction with patients to include their views on their medicines and education with respect to drugs and treatment options.

What's the best bit of your job? Working as a clinical pharmacist is a sociable job. It allows for interaction with patients and other ward staff. I have been very fortunate to develop great friendships whilst working at Daisy Hill. In addition, through providing a clinical service, the impact of pharmaceutical interventions can be viewed at first hand, and the patient becomes so much more than just another name on a medicine bottle.

What's the worst bit of your job? I think the most frustrating part of working in any clinical environment is not achieving all that I wish to in any given day. Interruptions form a large part of any working day, thus skills such as prioritisation of workload and keeping a cool head are key for providing a clinical pharmacy service.

Associate Medical Director Profile – Dr Sharpe

Dr Peter Sharpe, the Trust’s Associate Medical Director for Research and Development took up post in July 2008. A Consultant Chemical Pathologist at Craigavon Area Hospital, Dr Sharpe’s Associate Medical Director role gives him lead responsibility for Research and Development in the Trust.

Dr Sharpe explains: “The Southern Trust has a very good record of research activity having shown a four hundred per cent increase since the Research and Development Office was established in the Trust in 2008. Research and Development in health and social care helps to ensure continual progression in treatments, identify service improvements and most importantly, gives better outcomes for patients and clients. In many instances Clinical Trials and Research Studies enable large numbers of Trust patients to benefit from the latest treatments and technologies. It is my role to work with all staff disciplines to promote and enhance research activity; to ensure adherence to research governance requirements and to raise the profile of Research and Development at Senior Management Team and Trust Board level. The commitment of the Chief Executive and Medical Director has been key to the priority which Research and Development has been accorded. A further role is that of contributing to the strategic development of research at regional level through the Strategic Advisory Group for Research and Development.”

Since September, 2009 all research applications have been received through the on-line web-based Integrated Research Application System (IRAS) which automatically links applicants to all the regulatory and ethical approvals required for each particular study.

Dr Sharpe advises that much emphasis has been placed on the length of time taken to provide research governance approval for studies. In this respect a metrics was developed by the Research Manager’s Forum and the figures for the Trust for the approval of research applications within 30 days were very favourable compared to other Trusts for the quarters during 2010/2011 which were 70%, 84%, 100% and 85%. There have been many specific achievements amongst the research studies carried out in the Trust and the following are two examples:

• Dr Ian Mowen, Consultant Cardiologist was the Principal Investigator for the e-Biomatrix Study and recruited the highest number of participants in the world for the international study of a new-generation cardiology stent which allowed large numbers of Trust patients to benefit from this latest technology.

• For the LoTS Care – Stroke system of care Trial, Mrs Mary McParland, Clinical Research Nurse (Stroke) achieved the highest recruitment in the United Kingdom.

Dr Sharpe adds: “The HSC Trust Research Fund of £50,000 allocated to the Trust by the HSC Research and Development Division for the past four years has provided funding to support many small research projects. Over the years the number of applicants has increased from 6 in 2008/09 to 21 in 2010/11. Applications are presently being sought for 2011/2012. One application awarded such funding, the RADAR Clinical Trial, also received significant funding from Randox Laboratories, which enabled the employment of a Cardiology Research Fellow who is exploring the use of novel biomarkers in the earlier diagnosis of acute coronary syndrome.”