

# *the* GIST

News from Guy's and St Thomas' Issue 4 | 2012

## One amazing summer

JUBILEE BABIES AND  
OTHER FANTASTIC EVENTS

## Saving lives with simulation

**PUMP IT UP**  
BLOOD PRESSURE  
FACTS





## Welcome

...to the fourth issue of *The Gist*.

Read on to find out about how we use life-like manikins to provide state-of-the-art training to our staff and students.

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are upon us and our main feature in this issue looks at how our staff are getting involved in the events, as well as giving you advice on planning your journey to hospital during this busy period.

Our interview with Chief Nurse Eileen Sills reveals what she enjoys most about her job, and how we can all improve patient care.

Towards the end of the magazine you'll be able to read about the Get into the NHS scheme – a Prince's Trust initiative which helps young, unemployed people gain work experience in the health service.

**Ron Kerr**  
Chief Executive  
Guy's and St Thomas'  
NHS Foundation Trust



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## Meet the team

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**Pick up your copy:** *The GiST* magazine is for our patients, local people, staff, members and supporters of Guy's and St Thomas'.

## TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

If you have any comments about the magazine or suggestions for future articles, please contact the communications department, St Thomas' Hospital, Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7EH, or email [press@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:press@gstt.nhs.uk)

Visit us online at: [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk)



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## Touchless technology in the operating theatre

Touchless technology – familiar to players of Kinect video games – is helping to improve surgery for vascular patients.

During vascular surgery, x-rays are taken which appear on screens to allow surgeons to view the anatomy of the patient and help guide them during the operation. The pioneering touchless system, which uses technology from Microsoft Kinect for Windows, enables surgeons to view, control and manipulate

images during an operation without touching a mouse or a keyboard.

Re-scrubbing after touching a mouse or keyboard wastes time and surgeons often need other people in the theatre to use the equipment for them – which can be impractical or imprecise.

Surgeons are able to view and manipulate – rotate, pan and zoom – the images through arm movements and voice control.

"Until recently I was

shouting out across the operating theatre to tell someone to go up, down, left and right," said vascular surgeon Mr Tom Carrell. "But with Kinect, I'm able to get the position that I want quickly and without having to handle non-sterile things like a keyboard or mouse."

Surgeons helped develop the system in conjunction with our university partner King's College London, as well as Microsoft Research and Lancaster University.

## Celebrating 150 years of health visiting

Health visitors and nurses celebrated 150 years of health visiting in June, as part of National Nurses' Day.

We employ over 100 health visitors – specially trained nurses and midwives who offer advice and support to look after the health and well being of families with children under five in Lambeth and Southwark. Last year,

the team clocked up over 170,000 contacts with parents and carers.

Health visitors help families get access to health and welfare services so that their children develop and reach their full potential.

Irene Addo, who manages a team of 17 health visitors covering Peckham and Camberwell, said: "Our role is

to help build up the confidence of our clients so they can take control of their lives, asking for advice when they need it."

"We don't just work with parents but also aunts, uncles and grandparents. Health visiting makes a difference to the lives of the whole family."

**Find out more**

Visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

## IN THE NEWS

A round-up of where the Trust has been featured in the past few months.

### IVF and DNA disorders

Professor Frances Flint, clinical geneticist at Guy's, was interviewed by BBC and ITV News and Radio 4's *Today* programme about a report from the Nuffield Council on Bioethics on new IVF techniques that will help women with mitochondrial DNA disorders have healthy children.

### Call for London's twins



*London Tonight* (ITV), the *Evening Standard*, *South London Press* and *Southwark News* reported on our drive to recruit the capital's twins for research to investigate the effect of city living on our genes. Find out more on page six.

### Jubilee babies

Angellica Bell paid a visit to St Thomas' maternity unit for BBC News, interviewing new mothers who had given birth over the Jubilee weekend.

### Vascular surgery

*New Scientist* and BBC Online reported on new touchless technology, which uses Microsoft Kinect for Windows and is bringing about improvements in vascular surgery (see above, left). Our surgeons are pioneering the system.



# Non-Exec gets second term

Local resident Diane Summers has been reappointed for a second term as a Non-Executive Director. The move was recommended by the Nominations Committee and agreed by the Council of Governors.

Sir Hugh Taylor said: "I'm delighted Diane has been reappointed. We have benefited hugely from her professional expertise and her local knowledge has been invaluable, and she has taken an active role on the Board and its committees."

Diane is a trustee of The Guinness Partnership, a major social housing provider, and is an independent advisor to the BBC Trust.

## TOP TWEETS

-  **@Matthew\_J\_W**  
Thanks to the Fetal Cardio 'Polar Bear' team for seeing to the bump so quickly and thoroughly, made such a difference
-  **@MsKinLondon**  
HUGE thank you to Physio dept at Guy's, in particular Paul and Jenny. Looks like my dancing days aren't quite over yet! #DodgyKnees
-  **@littlebigwoman**  
I met Karen, one of the best asthma nurses ever at St. Thomas' NHS at its best!
-  **Follow @GSTTnhs**  
for Trust news, events, service and patient information, and jobs.



## You said, we did

Staff survey results for 2011 show that staff satisfaction is continuing to improve, with 77 per cent of staff saying they would recommend Guy's and St Thomas' as a place to work, up from 73 per cent in 2010 and 71 per cent in 2009.

The staff survey results provide the information needed to make changes to improve the working lives of staff. We will continue to use the results from our surveys to improve the working lives of staff, and in turn improve the quality of the service we deliver.

- In 2010, staff said**
- That only 69 per cent of staff had an appraisal
  - We could improve our commitment to work-life balance.
- In response, we**
- Reviewed and simplified the appraisal process to encourage meaningful appraisals, supported by a personal development plan
  - Developed a work-life balance policy, which supports staff to take up flexible working
  - Enhanced our staff well-being programme which includes a range of initiatives from Weight Watchers at work, to help getting active
  - Updated and communicated the Trust's zero tolerance policy on bullying and harassment.

## New unit built with young patients in mind

The children's neurosciences unit is being reunited as staff from the Newcomen Centre at Guy's move to join their colleagues in a purpose-built unit at St Thomas'.

50 staff from several specialties will come together to create a centre of excellence that will be the largest children's neurosciences service in Europe. It will also be closer to the staff and services in the Evelina Children's Hospital.



"Staff and designers worked with patients, families and experts to create the perfect environment for the children, many of whom have autistic spectrum disorders or physical disabilities," said speech and language therapist Helen Cockerill.

"Patients with autism can be distracted, or become anxious in over-stimulating environments. There's a wind theme throughout, and calming colours and a 'cocoon pod' in the waiting area will help our young patients relax.

"Sliding walls can hide equipment and other distractions, and there are hoists to help move children with disabilities. State-of-the-art video equipment will record assessments so these can be shared with parents and other health professionals."

## A special welcome for patients

A pack to help patients feel at ease during their stay at hospital, and enable them to find out more about their care, has been launched.

Welcome packs will be given to all adult inpatients admitted for over 24 hours. The packs contain information about a patient's stay in hospital, as well as useful things such as ear plugs, hand wipes, a toothbrush and non-slip socks to make their stay more comfortable.

Chief Nurse Eileen Sills said: "We know that being admitted to hospital can be a daunting and frightening experience.

"We hope the new welcome pack will alleviate some of the fears of hospital and encourage greater dialogue between patients and the staff caring for them."



Patient Thomas Jones being shown the new 'excellent' welcome pack by staff nurse Alicia Molina

Patient Thomas Jones from Westminster said: "The packs are a really good idea, in fact excellent. They are well presented, and the information reflects the reality of what actually happens on the wards. It has made my stay more comfortable."

Staff Nurse Alicia Molina said: "It can be difficult for some patients to sleep when there is noise, so we hope the eye masks and ear plugs will help."

## Outpatient centre will improve care

A new outpatient centre has opened at St Thomas' in Gassiot House. It provides medical and general outpatient clinics and uses the latest technology to improve the experience for patients, including digital check-in, where patients scan their letters, and a new call forward system to tell patients when the doctor is ready to see them.

The centre also offers a modern reception and café, 32 consulting rooms, an improved blood testing area and a facility where patients can have other tests carried out before they see a doctor.

Our patients and governors have been closely involved in the centre's development. They have worked hard to champion improvements to booking processes and telephone systems to make the experience of patients better.

We have had some very positive feedback already and the centre is a credit to everyone involved. It will greatly enhance the environment for our staff and patients.



## 'Don't burn', warns star

Sunburn is no joke, says comedian Sean Lock.

"If you've been burnt, then it's vital to get dodgy moles checked as soon as possible."

The tv star, whose skin cancer was treated at Guy's Hospital, spoke out during Sun Awareness Week (30 April – 6 May). The St John's Institute for Dermatology at Guy's and St Thomas' is the UK's largest skin cancer referral centre. Working in the UK's best equipped skin imaging unit, staff can undertake world-class research.

Patients from our melanoma discussion group ran an event with dermatology staff to raise awareness about sun protection and alerting your doctor if moles change.

## NEW ROLE FOR FORMER CHAIRMAN

Patricia Moberly, former Chairman of Guy's and St Thomas', has been appointed to the Committee on Standards in Public Life by the Prime Minister.

The committee is an independent body giving advice to the Government on all issues relating to standards in public life. Patricia was Chairman of the Trust from 1999 to 2011. Her new appointment is for five years.



# Calling all London twins

Our Department of Twin Research is looking for 500 pairs of London-based twins (identical and non-identical) to help investigate how an urban environment affects our genes.



the UK – now we're targeting Londoners as they are a large and varied population within a single urban environment.

"Twins are a unique resource," says Professor Tim Spector,

the department's director. "The TwinsUK Bioresource is the UK's largest adult twins registry, and benefits from the unique collaboration between volunteers, King's College London, and Guy's and St Thomas'. This new recruitment drive is especially exciting as it will show how city living affects our genes."

**Identical, but different** Identical twins Lucy and Catie Gunning have different health issues. Lucy had ME (chronic fatigue syndrome) for seven years, whilst Catie was unaffected. Catie is asthmatic, but Lucy isn't.

"I thought it was weird that we could have the same genes but different medical issues, so I'm interested in any research that can explain why," said Lucy.

"We're also interested how city living affects our genes as I've been in London for nearly three years and Lucy for seven," said Catie.

Since 1992, we have built up a research database of 12,000 twins across

## Find out more

Interested? Twins can call **020 7188 5555** or email [twinsuk@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:twinsuk@kcl.ac.uk)

# Saving lives with simulation

Opened in 2010, the Simulation and Interactive Learning (SaIL) Centre is a state-of-the-art facility where healthcare professionals face challenging situations. We see what happens when real people encounter the medical manikins.

Staff and students from across local health organisations, including GPs, are put through their paces in the Simulation and Interactive Learning (SaIL) centre where they come face-to-face with manikins (life-size dolls) which are able to bleed, cry, speak and have a beating heart.

The centre provides simulated (staged) scenarios to help staff work as a team to solve clinical problems in real time. There are seven adult and children manikins and the centre is even due to get one that can give birth!

The centre can be set up as a ward or operating theatre or consulting room to make it as realistic as possible. Not only do the manikins have movable arms and legs, every detail such as blood pressure and heartbeat can be changed during the scenario. Trainees can give injections and medicine, an intravenous drip or even use a defibrillator to

manage a cardiac arrest.

Peter Jaye, an emergency medicine consultant, and director of simulation, says: "Our focus is to improve patient safety. By training teams in these realistic environments, we are better able to prepare our staff for working in the sometimes stressful circumstances they face."

However, courses are not only designed to challenge medical knowledge, explains Isabel de Abreu, service delivery manager. "Their main focus is on understanding human factors such as communication, delegation, prioritisation and team work."

"Everyone is encouraged to develop greater understanding and appreciation of their colleagues' roles and abilities and to learn to communicate in ways that improve patient safety."

The courses are designed specifically for each group to



**"Patient safety must be maintained so it is important to simulate real situations so that lessons can be learnt and improvements can be made"**



Above and right – one of the outreach events showing Year 10 pupils from Lambeth Academy

give them scenarios that they might come across in real life. "We don't just throw them in at the deep end!" explains Isabel.

Another feature of the training is the ability to reflect on how a team has handled a potentially stressful, emergency situation. Scenarios are filmed and played back so participants can reflect on and discuss what has happened.

"Patient safety must be maintained. It is important to simulate real situations so that lessons can be learnt and improvements can be made. The debriefing session allows individuals to reflect on what they did with the aim of improving their performance in the future," said Shumontha Dev, consultant in emergency medicine.

Responsible for setting up the scenarios is James Gaydon, simulation technician. "The equipment we use is very leading edge and it's my job to make sure everything runs smoothly," explains James.

Through a programme funded by Guy's and St Thomas' Charity, the centre offers young people the chance to experience first hand what it's like to work in healthcare. This also helps to promote careers in science and healthcare in the local community.

The team is looking to the future with more staff. They have recently been awarded £500,000 ultrasound simulation training equipment to be used across several sites. "This is fantastic news and we hope to continue in our efforts to become leaders in the field," adds Isabel.



## MEDICAL MANIKINS

Each manikin costs between £45,000 to £70,000. They come in different shapes, sizes and ethnicities.



We ask Chief Nurse **Eileen Sills** about her role, and how working with patients and governors can help to improve our services.



Eileen shows off the new outpatient centre to a willing volunteer

# Improving safety and quality for patients

## Q What does the role of Chief Nurse involve?

**A** I have responsibility for the safe, effective and compassionate delivery of nursing and midwifery care across our organisation. I set and drive standards and ensure that we have a vision to guide how our nursing workforce needs to be in the future. I am also responsible to the Board of Directors for infection control and the patient experience.

## Q How does patient and user involvement improve services?

**A** It is essential that we listen to and engage with our patients and members of our community. They use our services and interact with our staff, so they are best placed to tell us how we could do it better, including what is going well and where we can improve. Collaboration with users and our governors can lead to a real change

in the way services are delivered, for example, with the design of our new outpatient facility at Gassiot House.

## Q Tell us how the governors have made a difference?

**A** Our governors keep our feet firmly on the ground. They bring appropriate, constructive challenge and a perspective from the local community. They work with us by taking part

in annual ward assessments. Staff enjoy having them as part of the assessment team and learn from them as they challenge us to look at things from a different perspective.

## Q Your proudest achievement at Guy's and St Thomas'?

**A** Being visible to our patients, and building a fantastic rapport with our nursing and midwifery staff.

## Q What do you enjoy most about your job?

**A** Clinical Fridays are my favourite day of the week. This is when I am out in clinics and on the wards. It makes me realise what is important, and there is nothing more rewarding than being with patients and meeting and listening to our staff. Our weekly Safe in your Hands briefing is a powerful and heart warming occasion, where some of the stories shared are very humbling. It also allows our senior nurses to feed back what is happening around the hospitals and makes me proud to be part of Guy's and St Thomas'.

## Q Tell us your quality priorities for this year?

**A** I want to ensure that every older patient who uses our services is treated with the utmost dignity and respect. I want them to leave Guy's and St Thomas' or our community services saying that they felt they were wrapped in cotton wool, felt special and were kept safe. I want our staff to have the skills and confidence to care and interact with patients with dementia. I want us to work towards being not only the number one Trust in London for patient experience, but to also be one of the top five Trusts in the country.

## Evelina patient sets up heart foundation

A boy with a rare heart condition who had five life-saving heart operations at the Evelina Children's Hospital has set up a foundation to help other children with heart problems.

Twelve-year-old Keith Ssewamala from Tulsa Hill was always active until he was admitted to hospital in 2008 with chest pains.

Tests showed that Keith had an aneurysm on his left ventricle (a blood clot in one of the four chambers in the heart). The clot was successfully removed.

However, in 2011, Keith complained that he had begun coughing up blood, and then, terrifyingly, he started to lose his eyesight.

He went on to suffer a seizure and was admitted to Evelina Children's Hospital where he underwent five open heart and keyhole operations.

Between operations, he and his parents set up a foundation for children with heart conditions in England and Uganda.

Consultant paediatric cardiologist Professor Shak Qureshi, who has been in charge of Keith's care, says: "Keith has been diagnosed with Takayasu's arteritis – a rare form of heart disease that more frequently affects adult women, not young boys like Keith. It involves inflammation in the walls of the largest arteries in the body, the aorta and its main branches.

"It's taken four years to diagnose this rare condition but Keith continues to improve. Doctors at the Evelina performed the fifth, and what we hope will be the final, operation on Keith earlier this year."

Keith says: "The care I received at Evelina was absolutely wonderful, the doctors, nurses and play specialists are very funny and helpful. I want other children with heart conditions



Keith with his surgeon, Mr David Anderson

to have the right care and support too, which is why I helped set up the foundation."

Evelina Children's Hospital is a leading centre for cardiac services. The Department of Congenital Heart Disease at the Evelina Children's Hospital has an international reputation for all aspects of diagnosis and treatment of patients of all ages with heart problems – from before they are born, through to adolescence and into adulthood.

### Find out more

Visit Keith's website  
[www.keithheartfoundation.org](http://www.keithheartfoundation.org)





Dedicated Guy's and St Thomas' staff worked through the Blitz

St Thomas' suffered bomb damage

# Keep calm and carry on

London has a fascinating history of which Guy's and St Thomas' is part. With all eyes on the capital this summer, we look back at a period of recent history where our great institution played its part.

How do you prepare for war? Before the first bomb was dropped in London, the hospitals were busy making arrangements. In 1939, basement rooms were converted into temporary wards and operating theatres so that patients could still be treated, and students could still be trained.

Both hospitals were obvious targets due to their central location close to Parliament and St Paul's Cathedral.

Blackouts were in place across the country, which meant that lights had to be switched off. There were heavy duty curtains covering windows and doors to prevent enemy bombers detecting light. This obviously presented practical problems for nurses going about their duties and although they did have small torches, there was a fear they could bump into walls.

A rather ingenious solution was that the walls were painted in some parts of the basement with white rabbits and other animals so that nurses could see where they were going.

Although everything was done inside to prevent light escaping, little could be done outside where the river Thames gleamed at night and helped to guide the enemy planes to central London.

The damage to both hospitals was devastating as the pictures above show. Ten members of staff lost their lives between 1939 and 1945 and many others were injured. Remarkably, no patients were hurt and the hospital remained open for most of the time.

Sir Hugh Taylor, Chairman, says: "I can hardly imagine the difficulties overcome by the staff, but it's a testament to their human spirit that they continued to work. Seeing photographs of the scale of the damage, it's clear that a huge effort would have gone into making sure that the hospitals continued to provide emergency and general care throughout the war years.

"We must not forget the 10 staff who lost their lives in the line of duty, and also remember the remaining staff most certainly did keep calm and carried on. They are the unsung heroes."

Below is an extract from *The war diary of St Thomas' Hospital, 1939 – 1945* edited by Frank and Dorothea Cockett. These paragraphs were taken from the diary of an unknown official who kept a record of day to day events during the 'London Blitz' between September 1940 and July 1944.

**"I can hardly imagine the difficulties overcome by the staff, but it's a testament to their human spirit that they continued to work"**

Chairman Sir Hugh Taylor

Wednesday 16 April 1941

"The alert sounded at 9.15pm. The raid commenced immediately afterwards, and continued uninterruptedly until 4am. At 10pm a number of incendiaries fell in the garage yard.... Incendiaries also fell all over the main building: the turret of Block 7 and the adjoining roof caught fire and burned fiercely until controlled by the Fire Brigade after some hours...

A succession of bombs fell in the river, shaking the hospital continuously, and at 1am the blast blew in most of the windows at the south end of the hospital, followed shortly afterwards by a similar explosion which shook the centre of the building...

The blast from this explosion also wrecked the two basement wards, Nuffield and Arthur, from which the patients had to be evacuated immediately. Nuffield was, in addition, flooded with water from the tanks on the roof, while Ophthalmic ward, which is immediately above Nuffield, caught fire and this was not put out until the early hours of the morning.

The patients and 40 casualties, admitted from the raid, were temporarily accommodated in Scutari, the basement corridor, No 4 classroom, and the canteen.

The emergency lighting installation was brought into immediate operation as the main electricity supply failed, together with that of gas and water.

At 3.30am the debris between Blocks 7 and 8 caught fire again, and was not put out for some time.

The Women's Voluntary Service (WVS) sent down a mobile canteen at 6am, while all other patients with the exception of five who were too ill to be moved, were evacuated to Sector Hospitals at 9.30am.

It is unbelievable, but true, that the only casualty was a patient in Arthur ward, who had her face cut by flying glass."





We find out how staff and patients are getting into the Great British spirit this summer with a review of the Jubilee and how we're planning for the London 2012 Games.

# A summer of celebrations

We kicked off a summer of celebrations in grand style during the Jubilee weekend, giving nearly 1,500 staff, friends and patients a unique opportunity to mark this once-in-a-lifetime event.

## Location, location

Making the most of our advantageous location right on the river, tiered seating and a marquee provided an uninterrupted view of the Thames River Pageant as it passed the Houses of Parliament. Guests enjoyed afternoon tea and face painting for our younger guests, as well as musical entertainment provided by a staff choir, King's College London's Big Band, and Non-Executive Director and concert pianist David Dean.

"The Jubilee was a wonderful opportunity to invite friends, staff and patients to share our unique location," says Chief Executive Ron Kerr.

Patients on the wards were treated to a special Jubilee themed menu featuring coronation chicken, and strawberries. Those who were well enough to leave their beds were able to see the flotilla from viewing points high on both hospital sites.

Forty local Brownies from Waterloo, almost all of whom were born at St Thomas', sold chocolate brownies to guests and raised £600 for the Evelina Children's Hospital.

## Festive for patients

Staff decorated the wards with bunting, pictures, and even cardboard cut-outs of the Queen – and their efforts were judged by Chief Nurse Eileen Sills. "I was enormously proud of our nursing teams who went the extra mile to ensure their patients felt part of the celebrations," she says. "Everyone had a fantastic time and our staff, particularly in catering, worked tirelessly to provide excellent food and entertainment to make the day extra special."

## Diamond couple

For the parents of senior nurse manager David Wheeler, Elizabeth and Raymond, the day was even more special as it was also their diamond wedding anniversary. "My parents had an amazing day," says David. "They really enjoyed the relaxed party atmosphere and chance to watch the flotilla at close hand."

## TV stars

The BBC visited St Thomas' maternity unit to meet new mothers who had given birth over the Jubilee weekend. The parents of new baby Santiago were among those interviewed live by BBC's Angellica Bell in the maternity unit's relaxation garden room which

has fantastic views over the river.

Santiago's father said: "The birth of a child is always a great event, but it's even better to be here with all the boats going by."

## A 2012 legacy

As the Trust prepares for the other key event this summer – London 2012 Games – we are seeking to maximise the opportunity to create a lasting legacy and celebrate the Olympics coming to the capital. "We asked staff to suggest ways we can create positive memories of 2012 and leave an Olympic legacy for the Trust," says Nicola Grinstead, deputy director of operations, who is leading our planning for the London 2012 Games. "We had an overwhelming response and one of the suggestions – a staff challenge – was launched in June.

"We're inviting teams across the Trust to compete in a staff competition over the summer which is built around the five key Olympic and Paralympic themes. It will give teams the chance to show their skills and creative talents when it comes to fundraising, volunteering, getting healthy, changing the way that we work and creating positive memories of 2012. The winners will be announced later this year at our annual Trust awards ceremony." ►





► As part of our focus on volunteering, we are very excited to be collaborating with the Lilian Baylis Old School in Lambeth. This is a local community project that aims to provide opportunities for local young people, increase social inclusion, and tackle gang culture, through access to training and mentoring, or sports and arts projects. Our staff are volunteering and making a lasting difference to the local community.

Staff also suggested an Olympic time capsule, and we need everyone's help to decide what will go in it.

We are planning two time capsules – one will be buried at St Thomas' and the other will be sent to Brazil, where the next Olympic and Paralympic Games are to be held.

A panel from the Evelina Children's Hospital will decide on the final items for the capsule, why not Email Olympics@gstt.nhs.uk with your ideas.

#### Our own 2012 celebrities

We are proud that a significant number of staff from across the Trust have been selected to volunteer, perform or work at the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Among these are 13 staff who were selected from thousands to perform in the opening ceremony. "I was pleased just to go to the audition – it was an experience in itself," says Alison Dines, a toxicology database scientist by day. "They lined us up, took our photos, and noted down our vital statistics. We had to attend 25 rehearsals in total, but I thought 'this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity', and I'm thrilled I could take part."

Tracy Holmes, a senior nurse at the Trust, has been appointed as venue medical manager. Tracy will be based at the Olympic park in Stratford managing a team of medical staff who provide care to athletes and the public. She will make sure that anyone who is injured or ill is either treated onsite, or sent to a nearby hospital.

"I'm honoured to have been offered this role – I couldn't wait to be part of the 2012 Games," says Tracy. "It's a



Staff involved in the opening ceremony



Shireen Williams

**"I'm very excited because I wanted to do something completely different from my day job, and I'll also meet many interesting people from around the world"**

huge responsibility to ensure top-class athletes and spectators get the right treatment – and potentially treating them myself in the stands of the stadium."

Shireen Williams, operational services manager and deputy hospitality manager who speaks three languages, was selected to look after VIPs. "I wanted to volunteer and have been asked to chaperone international dignitaries," she says. "I'm very excited because I wanted to do something completely different from my day job, and I'll also meet many interesting people from around the world."

#### Health and well-being

"We are keen to encourage staff to be inspired to get more active and the Games period is a great time to think about this" says Michelle D'Arcy, who looks after staff rewards and

benefits at the Trust. "We already have a 'workplace activator' programme, where members of staff encourage their colleagues to make exercise part of their daily routine. But many other opportunities have arisen as part of our health and well-being programme that we are linking to the Games celebrations.

"Over 1,000 staff are participating in the Global Corporate Challenge – which encourages staff to walk over 10,000 steps a day. The challenge started in May and we have 144 teams competing against their colleagues and organisations around the world. This has really encouraged staff to build exercise into their daily routine."

We are also delighted to have been awarded a gold medal in the NHS London Sports and Physical Activity Challenge. The panel of judges was

"impressed by the activities available and our ideas to build on the 'Games effect' in mobilising and motivating staff to participate in a wide range of events."

#### Business as usual

There is also a practical side to preparing for the London 2012 Games, as Nicola Grinstead explains: "More than half a million people are expected in London every day during the Olympics and Paralympics, and staff have been working hard to ensure that it is 'business as usual' for our patients. We have robust plans in

place to maintain the smooth delivery of services throughout the Games period.

"We will be operating a normal service for all patients throughout, but it is important that patients and staff plan their journeys well in advance and allow extra time for travel. Our local area is considered a traffic 'hotspot,' so we are advising patients to check the latest travel information, and information about any disruption to our services will be available on our own website, so we also urge patients to check this before they set off."



Above and right: Staff celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee at St Thomas' Hospital

**"We will be operating a normal service for all patients throughout, but it is important that patients and staff plan their journeys well in advance and allow extra time for travel"**

#### DID YOU KNOW?

During the 2012 Games:

- The whole of the South Bank, from Waterloo to London Bridge, is considered a traffic hotspot
- Journeys in London are expected to take an extra 90 minutes
- Peak congestion times will be 7am-7pm.

#### TOP TIPS:

- Visit [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk) and [www.getaheadofthegames.com](http://www.getaheadofthegames.com) to plan your journey and allow extra time
- Please let us know if you are unable to attend your appointment for any reason by calling **020 7188 9900**
- The latest information about our services will be available on [www.gstt.nhs.uk](http://www.gstt.nhs.uk)





# The facts about Blood pressure

Keep your blood pressure healthy.

Blood pressure is the strength of your blood pushing as your heart pumps it round the veins in your body. High blood pressure (hypertension) often has no symptoms, so the only way to find out about this is to get your blood pressure measured. You can ask your GP to do this.

## Is age a factor?

In the west, blood pressure tends to rise with age, hence the saying that your blood pressure should be 100 plus your age. In fact, 120/80 is now

considered optimal whatever your age, and the Blood Pressure Association says that ideally everyone should aim for a blood pressure of 110/70.

## Family history

Around 30 per cent of cases of stage 1 hypertension are put down to genetics. For example, individuals who have one or two parents with hypertension are twice as likely to suffer from high blood pressure as the general population.

Some studies have found that hypertension is more common among people of African-American, African-Caribbean, and south Asian descent. However, researchers have also found large variations within black and white racial groups, suggesting that culture and environment may be at least as important as ethnicity.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

When a nurse or doctor measures your blood pressure they tell you two numbers, for example '140 over 90' – but what does this mean?

- **144** This is the 'systolic' blood pressure, and is the highest level that your blood pressure reaches when your heart beats.
- **92** This is the 'diastolic' blood pressure, the lowest your blood pressure reaches when the heart relaxes between beats.

## RETINA

Sustained hypertension can damage the retina by narrowing the blood vessels in the eye. Symptoms can include vision problems and headaches.

## HEART

The biggest risk factor for cardiovascular disease in industrialised countries, hypertension accounts for half of all heart attacks in the UK.

## KIDNEYS

The kidneys play a role in regulating blood pressure. However, hypertension increases the risk of renal injury and chronic kidney disease.

## What are the effects?

High blood pressure is a silent, serious condition as you may not experience any symptoms when your pressure is high, says Juliet Jaikumar, specialist nurse for congenital heart disease.

"It can affect the blood vessels, causing them to harden and narrow. If this happens, the blood vessels may be unable to supply enough blood to the organs like the heart, brain, kidneys and your limbs.

"60 per cent of Britons over 40 are in the higher risk category, so it's worth getting your blood pressure checked by your GP."

## Low blood pressure

Low blood pressure (hypotension) can also cause health issues. You can discuss any concerns with your GP.

## ARTERIES

High blood pressure can lead to hardening and obstruction of the arteries outside the heart or brain and cause chronic ischemia (lack of blood supply), resulting in pain and more severely, tissue loss.

## BRAIN

Hypertension accounts for 60 per cent of all strokes in the UK and is also associated with impaired brain function.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

Maintaining a healthy blood pressure is very important. If you have high blood pressure there are lifestyle changes you can make to try to reduce your blood pressure.

- **Lose weight** – being overweight increases the blood pressure; every 1kg that you lose helps lower your blood pressure
- **Eat less salt** – reducing your salt intake lowers blood pressure
- **Exercise** – try to do 30 minutes of moderate exercise, five times a week. Simply going for a walk counts
- **Stop smoking** – smokers are more likely to develop high blood pressure, so try to give up.

## PRESSURE READINGS

180	<b>Severe hypertension</b>
110 (and over)	Can occur when very high blood pressure causes damage to a vital organ. Symptoms include headaches, chest pains and breathlessness. Emergency treatment is required.
160	<b>Hypertension, stage 2</b>
100	Affects 5-10 per cent of patients with hypertension, and arises from a secondary cause such as cancer or kidney disease.
140	<b>Hypertension, stage 1</b>
90	Accounts for 90-95 per cent of cases. There is no obvious cause but it carries major risk of stroke and heart disease.
120	<b>Normal blood pressure</b>
80	Keeping your blood pressure at this level significantly reduces the risk of heart disease or stroke. Healthy eating and reducing stress are a good start.
90	<b>Hypotension</b>
60 (and under)	Low blood pressure is often associated with shock and can leave the brain and major organs without oxygen, leading to life-threatening conditions.



# Role reversal

Aysha Tariq, 16, is a patient the at Evelina Children's Hospital following a transplant 17 months ago. Aysha chose to interview senior play specialist Cathy Gill.

## Q What is a play specialist?

A Play specialists support children and young people as outpatients and inpatients. We provide children with therapeutic play which helps them to cope with their treatment. We prepare patients for invasive procedures, or keep them distracted while they are having tests that might not be very nice.

We're also here if patients need someone to talk to. They might have questions about their condition or treatment that they don't want to ask the clinical staff, or they need something explaining in a non-medical way.

## Q What difference do you make to the patients at the Evelina?

A We offer continuity and normality for children and families, and, as we're not medical staff, we provide a break from their condition or treatment. Many of our patients have been in and out of the Evelina for years, so we build up relationships with the patients, and they know us well.

## Q What inspired you to become a play specialist?

A I did childcare training and worked as a nanny. I wanted to do something different to give back to children. I did some research and discovered that there was a fantastic job that I could do in a hospital, so I trained as a play specialist and started at the Evelina 20 years ago.

## Q What do you enjoy most about your job?

A I feel humbled to have this job; I meet the most

**"I feel humbled to have this job; I meet the most amazing children and families"**

amazing children and families. The patients, especially those with chronic long-term conditions, have a fantastic outlook to life which is really inspiring. Also no two days are the same!

## Q Have you met any famous people?

A Martin Kemp from Spandau Ballet was my highlight! I've also met JLS, the Saturdays, and lots of X-Factor contestants when they have come to meet patients at the Evelina.

## Q Do you ever work outside the hospital?

A Our local Rotary Club are very generous and they make it possible for us to take some of our patients to Chessington World of Adventures every year. I also help with the Transplant Games – where patients who've had a transplant compete in a national event. I'm really excited about this year's Transplant Games as it's the nearest the competition has been held to us and will be in Medway on the 23 – 27 August.

### PLAY SPECIALISTS

- The first play specialists in the country were employed by St Thomas' Hospital in 1957
- Patients used to call play specialists 'Lady Greens' because of their green uniforms
- There are 11 play specialists at the Evelina
- It takes two years to train as a play specialist.

## WHO'S YOUR HERO?



A cup of tea. A hand to hold. A shoulder to lean on. A few words of comfort. These are just a few of the things that thousands of NHS heroes provide every day to make sure that each and every patient receives the very best care. Who's your NHS Hero? Who do you know who always goes the extra mile to provide exceptional care?

Show them how much you appreciate them with a nomination as your NHS Hero 2012. This is a new national recognition scheme and complements the Trust's own monthly CARE awards for individual staff and teams who go the extra mile.

Completing a nomination form only takes a few minutes of your time, but the pride of being nominated will stay with your hero forever. And, remember, you don't need to save lives to be a hero.

### To nominate your NHS Hero

Visit: [www.nsheroes.com](http://www.nsheroes.com)  
Or to nominate someone for a CARE award, visit the Trust's website:  
[www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk)  
or pick up a leaflet in the hospital.





**"I am always humbled and inspired by the extraordinary things people do to support others"**

## Say what?

Nicola Grinstead, associate director of clinical services

**Q Who would you most like to be stuck in a lift with?**

**A** Nelson Mandela – I once worked in Soweto and would love to hear his story first hand.

**Q What's your best advice?**

**A** Take every opportunity, always give 100 per cent, stand up for what you believe in and never give up.

**Q What do you do in your spare time?**

**A** As deputy chair of the World Girl Guides, my job is to help girls fulfill their potential. This includes everything from visiting international events or chairing board meetings, to promoting our Stop violence against girls campaign.

**Q What's your favourite place in the world?**

**A** Cape Town because of the sun, delicious food, fabulous views and gorgeous wine.

**Q If you could choose a superpower what would you pick?**

**A** The ability to double time – there is so much to do.

**Q What's your guiltiest pleasure?**

**A** Yorkshire pudding – and a day at the races.

**Q Who are your heroes?**

**A** Volunteers – I am always humbled and inspired by the extraordinary things people do to support others.

**Q Tell us something about you that we don't know.**

**A** Despite the fact I am our Olympic lead and I am very enthusiastic about its legacy, I didn't apply for any tickets. I was also in the Independent on Sunday's Happy List 2012!

## Saying thank you to 'critical' friends

We have recently held elections to our Council of Governors, which means that we have also said thank you and goodbye to eight long-serving governors.

The Council of Governors are the eyes, ears and voice of the wider membership and help us to carry out our work in a number of ways. Two of our former governors tell us about their time here.

### Brian Lymbery

"I'm incredibly proud to have been associated with an organisation such as Guy's and St Thomas'. As a patient governor, I felt I was able to bring a different view to many discussions and ensure that the needs of the local community were taken into account."

### Victoria Silvester

"I chaired the patient experience working group and one of our greatest achievements was to ensure that the Board of Directors gave close attention to the outpatient experience. Being a governor gives you the opportunity to make a real difference."

### The governors who have stepped down are:

Brian Lymbery, Jeremy Marsh, Pauline Anderson, Jean Bates, Edward Heckels, Victoria Silvester, Simon Wallace, and Shamim Khan.

The results of our most recent elections are available on the membership page on our website.

### Find out more

Make a difference – become a member of Guy's and St Thomas'  
Call: 0800 7310319 Email: [members@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:members@gstt.nhs.uk) Visit: [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk)

## Mentoring scheme changes lives

A scheme launched in conjunction with the Prince's Trust is helping young people through work experience.

John Waugh was one of the first young people to complete the Get in the NHS work experience programme at Guy's and St Thomas', run by the Prince's Trust last year.

John, aged 21, had been unemployed for a year when he heard about the programme. He says: "This scheme gave me the work experience that I needed. I was so relieved to be taken on by Guy's and St Thomas' when the placement finished. I really enjoy working in the finance team, it's friendly and I learn new things all the time."

He was also recently awarded the position of Prince's Trust young ambassador. In his spare time, he will work alongside schools and support other young people struggling to find work, sharing his knowledge and learning. He will also help to advise the government on employment issues.

The programme provides work placements for young people who have been long-term unemployed. They are assigned to staff who act as mentors. Following the first scheme at Guy's and St Thomas', we are proud to say that almost half of those who completed the programme, successfully applied for paid employment at the Trust.

Chairman Sir Hugh Taylor says: "We are grateful to the staff who committed their time to mentoring these young people. Ultimately, the success

**"This scheme gave me the work experience I needed. I was so relieved to be taken on when the placement finished"**

of the programme was down to the young people who grasped the opportunity with both hands, and we are delighted that so many of them have found employment."

We aim to build on the success of this programme and we have committed to running three more schemes during 2012/13.



## MY INSPIRATION



Philipsia Greenway, transformation and integration programme manager, community health services.

"I was raised on the tiny island of Montserrat in the Caribbean. I have memories of teachers who expected us as children to recite old English poetry, which at the time meant nothing to me. However, as an adult, lines from some of the poems I learned continue to offer inspiration to me in both my personal and professional life. My favourite remains *Myself* by Edgar Albert Guest. It supports the importance of being true to oneself, which in turn will affect the way that you treat others and how others treat and think of you.

"I have been fortunate to have role models who have lived by being true to themselves. At work I have the opportunity to live out this inspiration and, I hope, inspire others."





# From the frontline

## Security operations and training manager, Ike Obi.

“The security team looks after the safety of patients, staff and visitors at Guy’s and St Thomas’. This now extends to staff who work in the community.

“We come in to contact with over 900 patients, visitors and staff each day, responding to all emergency calls that are made through switchboard and also verbal requests for security assistance.

“This includes searching for missing patients, preventing patients who lack mental

capacity from leaving hospital before their treatment is completed, and responding to all fire calls and crash calls in non clinical areas.

“We also lock up areas in the hospital that need to be kept secure out of hours, and give staff access to secure areas when they need it.

“Both our hospital sites have security control desks with CCTV, panic alarms, lift and intruder alarms which we monitor 24-hours-a-day. The control desks are also a point of contact for any of our visitors who need information or assistance.

“It doesn’t stop there. We also look after car parking services and provide conflict resolution training to our staff.

“We work to ensure a safer environment for everyone.”

# Ask us: hay fever fact and fiction

We speak to allergy consultant **Stephen Till** to find out about this common condition.

## How many people are affected by hay fever?

About one in four people have hay fever and it’s becoming more common. One theory is that children are living in cleaner environments. Dirt and bugs seem to stop our immune systems from developing allergies.

## What causes hay fever?

Two types of pollen cause hay fever. During spring, tree pollen causes hay fever symptoms. During summer, it is grass pollen that causes the problems.

## What are the symptoms of hay fever?

It’s like having a cold: blocked and runny nose and sneezing are the most common symptoms. You might also get itchy and swollen eyes, and itchy ears and throat. Sometimes the symptoms are so bad that they affect people’s daily lives. Hay fever can be a major problem affecting concentration, sleep, work and study.

## I get hay fever all year round, why is that?

This isn’t hay fever, as the main cause will not be pollen. It may be another allergy and the symptoms will often be caused by another trigger such as dust, animals, or moulds.

## What are the treatments?

You can get over-the-counter remedies such as antihistamines (common medicines to treat allergies), eye drops and nasal sprays. If your hay fever is really affecting you, you can visit your GP who will determine whether you should see an allergy specialist like me.

One of the ways we treat patients is through desensitisation (also known as ‘immunotherapy’) – where we inject a small amount of pollen gradually over several weeks to build up immunity to the pollen.

## How can I avoid getting hay fever?

Unfortunately, you can’t really avoid it but try to stay inside in the evening during pollen season.

## Tell us a hay fever myth

It is very rarely caused by flowers.



# What’s on

**25 July**  
4pm-7pm  
**Board of Directors and  
Council of Governors meeting**  
Robens Suite, Guy’s

**July – 17 August**  
**Photography exhibition of  
our inpatients’ menu**  
Outside Atrium 2 (opposite  
the Sakar newsagents), Guy’s

**19 July – 31 August**  
**Exhibition of objects made  
from bone**  
Florence Nightingale Museum

**July 27 – August 12**  
**London 2012 Games**

**July 28**  
**World Hepatitis Day**

**August 17**  
**Summerfest**  
Archbishop’s Park

**Every Monday:**  
**Free lunchtime concert**  
1-2pm, Central Hall, St Thomas’

**Every Wednesday:**  
**Free lunchtime concert**  
1-2pm, Atrium 3, Guy’s  
(note new location and start time from June 2012)

**August 29 – September 9**  
**London 2012 Paralympic  
Games**

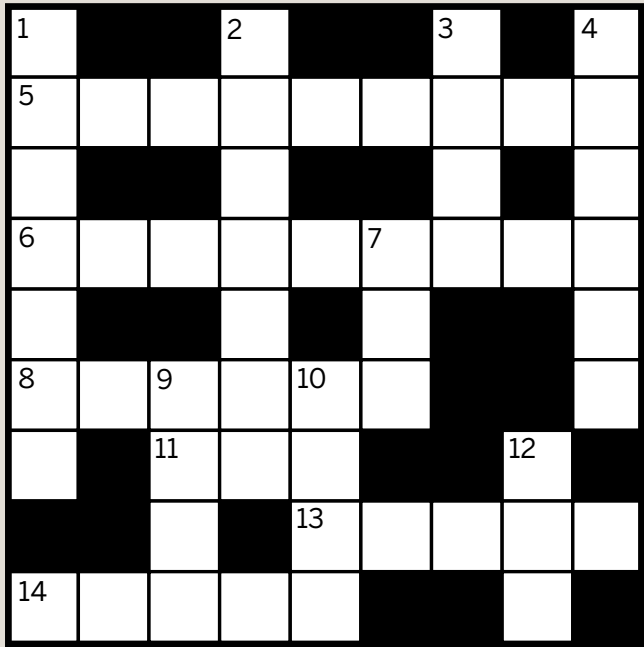
**September 2 – 8**  
**Migraine awareness week**  
Call 0116 275 8317 or visit  
[www.migraine.org.uk](http://www.migraine.org.uk)

**September 5**  
**Teeth seminar**  
St Thomas’ Hospital, Nevin  
Lecture Theatre, 6.30pm  
Open to everyone – you  
must register to attend  
by calling 0800 731 0319  
(free from landlines)

**September 10 – 16**  
**Know your numbers!**  
National blood pressure  
testing awareness week  
Call 0845 241 0989  
or visit [www.bpassoc.org.uk](http://www.bpassoc.org.uk)

# Competition

Simply complete the crossword to be in with a chance of winning a pair of tickets to enjoy an Alfred Hitchcock film during Hitchcock season at the Waterloo BFI Imax cinema.



## Across

- 5. It flies people on holiday (9)
- 6. Britain’s summer tennis tournament (9)
- 8. It snaps holiday moments (6)
- 11. Country of the Grand Canyon (3)
- 13. Rafael, the Spanish tennis player (5)
- 14. Sat for a picture (5)

## Down

- 1. One of London’s airports (7)
- 2. These creatures collect rubbish on Wimbledon Common (7)
- 3. Material on a beach (4)
- 4. Dog-house (6)
- 7. Long period of time (3)
- 9. People drink coffee out of them (4)
- 10. Unit of currency for tourists in South Africa (4)
- 12. Piece of cricket equipment (3)


Send your completed crossword by **10 August** to *The GiST* Competition, St Thomas’ Hospital, Communications Department, 4th floor, Block C, South Wing, Westminster Bridge Road, London, SE1 7EH; or you can also email [communications@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@gstt.nhs.uk)

The winner will be selected at random and notified within seven days of the draw. The result will be final and we will not enter into any correspondence regarding the competition or the winner. The prize is non-transferable.

**Raise money for your hospital**  
[www.togetherwecan.org.uk](http://www.togetherwecan.org.uk)



# On your marks



During the London 2012 Games, we will be operating a normal service for all patients. Please plan your journey well in advance and allow extra time for travel.

Please do also let us know if you are unable to attend your appointment call **020 7188 9900**.

For further information, see  
**[www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk)**

