

the G1ST

News from Guy's and St Thomas' Issue 48 | 2025

Happy Birthday Evelina London

Celebrating 20 years of caring for young patients
in our Evelina London Children's Hospital

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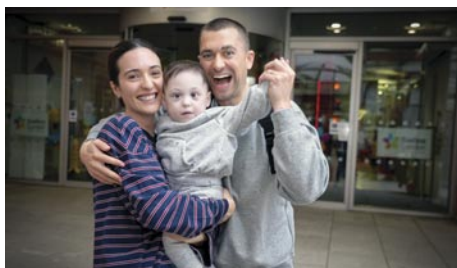
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Welcome

I am delighted and proud to have taken up my role as Chief Executive Officer at Guy's and St Thomas', returning to the frontline and to a Trust that is very special to me.

Over my first few months, I have enjoyed meeting colleagues from an incredibly broad range of teams across the Trust, as well as many inspiring members of our patient community. I would like to

thank everyone who has given me such a warm welcome.

Our magazine cover stars are 10-year-old Hasma Ziaie, one of our dialysis patients, and senior staff nurse Tinu Ademefun, who recently helped us celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Evelina London Children's Hospital building. Evelina London has much to be proud of over the past 2 decades, and you can read more about its fascinating history on pages 12-13.

In this issue we also explore how innovative technologies are enhancing our care for patients. On pages 8-9 you can read about a new process allowing the Trust to expand the number of donor organs available for transplantation. We also look at how genetic testing is allowing families to diagnose hereditary conditions and gain earlier access to preventative treatments, on pages 10-11.

Did you know that the grounds of Harefield Hospital are home to a very special colony of bees, donated by one of our patients? You can read more about Harefield's unique residents, and their fundraising honey, on page 7.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the GiST.

Amanda Pritchard

Amanda Pritchard, Chief Executive Officer
Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Meet the team

Words and photos by Matt Barker,
Catherine Beckett, Miriam Bream, Lauren Byrne,
Kelly Cook, Tom Costerton, Clare Elliott,
Azmina Gulamhusein, Rachael Hammond,
Maxine Hoeksma, Grania Hyde-Smith, Lucy Lisanti,
George Ogleby, Lesley Walker and Caroline Watson.

Cover photo by Alex Orrow Photography

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Front cover: Patient Hasma Ziaie, 10, with senior
staff nurse Tinu Ademefun at Evelina London
Children's Hospital

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 gstt.press@nhs.net

Visit us online at: www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk

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New bereavement suites for early pregnancy loss

St Thomas' Hospital has improved its support for families experiencing early pregnancy loss with 2 new dedicated bereavement suites.

Funded by Guy's & St Thomas' Charity, the suites are now open on the hospital's gynaecology ward.

Research nurse and early pregnancy specialist, Leanna Brace, led on the project, after identifying a gap in support for parents experiencing baby loss before 18 weeks of pregnancy.

Leanna said: "We know that early pregnancy loss – including terminations for medical reasons, miscarriage, ectopic and molar pregnancies – can be deeply traumatic for expectant parents.

"Although we have 2 bereavement suites on our maternity ward for families



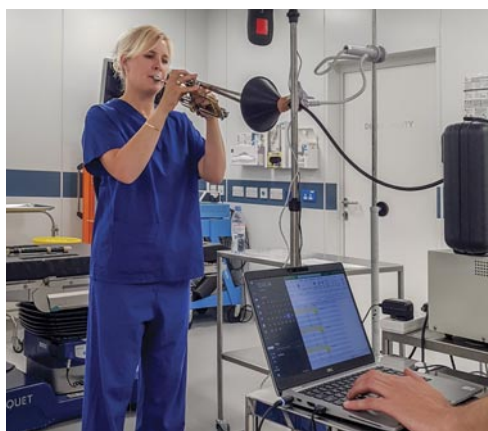
Project lead Leanna Brace and patient Serafina Pooja Jay at the launch of the new suites

experiencing a loss after 18 weeks, there had been no equivalent space for those suffering a loss earlier in pregnancy."

Leanna incorporated patient feedback into the new design of the 2 new suites, which now offer parents a calm, less-clinical, private space.

She added: "These parents need the same level of care as those experiencing loss in later pregnancy, and it's so important we now have these new spaces where they can begin to grieve."

Virus transmission study wins national award



Trumpeter Alison Balsom OBE taking part in the PERFORM trial

A collaboration involving 2 clinicians from Guy's and St Thomas' has won a prestigious science award for its progress in understanding how exhaled air contributes to the transmission of viruses.

The project, known as PERFORM COVID-19, was led by ear, nose and throat (ENT) consultant Natalie Watson and her husband, respiratory consultant Christopher Orton.

The PERFORM team recently won the Royal Society of Chemistry's 2025 Faraday Horizon Prize for the study, which focused on measuring the aerosol particles that people generate when they speak, exercise and play musical instruments.

The team followed participants over 2 years. One of the project's key findings was that aerosol production increases with the volume of a performance – so the louder the voice or instrument, the greater the emission. Similarly, engaging in strenuous exercise produced aerosols similar to heavy breathing, compared to normal breathing.

The research findings are expected to influence national guidance for any future pandemics.

IN THE NEWS

A round-up of media coverage featuring Guy's and St Thomas'.

BBC Radio 5 Live

Dr Ronny Cheung, consultant paediatrician at Evelina London, was interviewed on BBC Radio 5 Live about the introduction of Martha's rule in the NHS in England. Martha's rule is a patient safety initiative enabling families to seek an urgent second opinion if they are concerned about the deterioration of a loved one. Dr Cheung spoke about the need for collaboration between clinicians, patients and families.

Daily Express

We invited the Daily Express to watch a lung cancer operation performed using robotic assisted surgery at Guy's Hospital. The robotic system allows surgeons to operate with extraordinary precision. Tom Routledge, consultant thoracic surgeon, talked the reporter through a live procedure to remove a tumour from a patient's lung.



BBC London

BBC London filmed a news report at St Thomas' Hospital on a government plan to train more nurses in genetic testing, enabling them to spot potential inherited diseases earlier. Cardiogenomics nurse researcher, Dr Tootie Bueser, and consultant nurse, Catherine Renwick, were both interviewed alongside cardiac patient Chris Worwood.



Physiotherapist Luke Ellis shows how easy it is to return crutches

New walking aid return scheme

The therapies team at Guy's and St Thomas' has started a new scheme to improve patient access to walking aids, while also protecting the environment.

The team has installed bright blue collection bins at several Trust sites so that patients can easily return crutches and metal walking sticks once they have finished using them. Once returned, the therapies team gives the items a full check-up, deep clean, and fixes any wear and tear so they are ready for the next patient.

It is estimated that if just 2 out of every 5 walking aids were returned, the Trust could save around £40,000 and 30 tonnes of carbon a year.

Sandra Noonan, chief allied health professional, said: "Walking aids often play a key role in helping patients recover from illness, build their independence and support mobility.

"Returning these aids will help us protect the environment, provide patients with the equipment they need, and save money which can be better spent elsewhere."

The new walking aid collection points are available at: Guy's Hospital, St Thomas' Hospital, the Whittington Centre, Pulross Centre and Townley Road Clinic. The scheme will be rolled out across further sites in the coming months.



Evelina London patient Stefania Ivanov, 6, shows off her sparkly artwork during a creative workshop at the children's hospital. Stefania's art and other pieces from patients, staff members, and donors were auctioned at a charity event to raise money for Evelina London Children's Charity.

Your voice

Our new Instagram channels are another way for us to highlight some of the amazing things happening at Guy's and St Thomas', and for us to connect with our patients, staff and supporters.



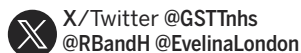
We also have an @maternity_gstt Instagram account, dedicated to specialist health advice and support through pregnancy.

Here are some recent comments we've received:

“ The best decision I made was choosing Guy's and St Thomas'! My midwives along the way were all fantastic and even though I ended up needing to get an induction, I had a super positive experience and a great birth thanks to all the midwives there!! ”

“ Thank you to everyone in the maternity services for everything you've done for us and our babies. ”

Join us on @gstt.nhs to meet our dedicated and talented staff, find out about new research and initiatives to improve health outcomes, see what's new at the Trust and hear some of the experiences of our patients. Let us know what you think in the comments.



Patients shine at Transplant Games

Dozens of the Trust's organ transplant patients, organ donors and their families celebrated life after a transplant with impressive sporting performances at the annual Transplant Games.

Three teams from Guy's and St Thomas' including heart, lung and kidney transplant recipients competed at the event in Oxford.

Among the Trust's star competitors were the Evelina VIPs team (Very Important Penguins), named after Evelina London's

Penguin clinic, which includes its urology and kidney department. Supported by the Evelina London Children's Charity, the Evelina VIPs dazzled spectators and took home more than 40 medals.

Godfrey Haire, a kidney donor and parent of one of the Evelina VIPs, said: "The Games are so special because you know everyone has been in a similar situation. I can be very competitive but the Transplant Games are about taking part as a team with the most amazing people."

Meanwhile, the Harefield Hamsters – all of whom have had a heart or lung transplant at Harefield Hospital – fielded their largest team in years, with 26 competitors scoring 33 medals.



The 'Harefield Hamsters' bagged an impressive 33 medals at the Transplant Games

Generation Study reaches 1,000th participant milestone

More than 1,000 expectant parents have now signed up at St Thomas' Hospital to be part of the world-leading Generation Study.

The national study aims to screen 100,000 newborn babies across the UK for over 200 rare genetic conditions. This is done by sequencing their whole genome from a small blood sample, typically taken from the umbilical cord shortly after birth.

Early screening means babies found to have a rare condition can be treated as soon as possible. Most babies will not have one of the conditions being studied, but their data will still support vital research into genetics and future treatments.



The Generation Study involves testing babies' whole genome from a blood sample

Emilie Cote, who recently had her baby at St Thomas', said: "I was really pleased to join the Generation Study to contribute to research and so that my son could be screened for many genetic conditions. The DNA will be stored long-term, which means we will hopefully help many valuable studies in the future."

Helping young people move to adult services



Patient Charley Gavin talks to Dr Ronny Cheung at the conference

Young people preparing to move from children's to adult health services attended a youth conference aimed at boosting their confidence as they begin to take charge of their health.

Patient Charley Gavin, 19, shared his experience of moving to adult cardiac services. He said: "I had been treated at Evelina London my whole life and it always felt like home to me. I was anxious when I was told about transitioning, but my new team were amazing and I felt supported from day one.

"Everyone's different and not everyone will feel confident straight away. My advice is to speak up and ask for help when you need it."

Throughout the day, the young people learned about advocacy, managing appointments and the support available to them throughout their healthcare journey.

The conference is part of Evelina London's commitment to improving transition pathways, and ensuring young people feel heard, prepared and involved in their care.

Lesley Walker learns how the Trust is using taxis to take patients to appointments.



Photo credit: London EV Company

The new electric hybrid taxi ambulances provide a greener transport alternative and extra space and comfort for patients

New cabs drive green transport

The black cab is iconic on London's streets – and now a version of it can be seen around the Trust's hospitals and community clinics.

A fleet of 12 "taxi ambulances" has joined the Trust's non-emergency patient transport, taking patients to outpatient appointments across the capital. Guy's and St Thomas' is one of the first trusts in the country to use them in this way.

These vehicles, made by London EV Company (LEVC), look like a London taxi, but are white and include the NHS logo and Trust name along with high-visibility ambulance markings to make them easily identifiable on the streets.

The electric hybrid vehicles are fully wheelchair accessible and include other features making them easier for people who are less mobile, including integrated ramps for getting wheelchairs in and out, a step, a swivel seat, braille switches and high visibility handles.

They are also more comfortable for patients to travel in, as they are quiet,

spacious with wider doorways, and have room for medical equipment to be easily stored. They can be used for patients with a range of needs and can also take several patients at a time.

Daven Carberry, from West Norwood, receives dialysis treatment at the Trust and has regularly used the taxi ambulances to and from his appointments in Brixton.

He said: "These vehicles are a really good idea. I use different types of patient transport but the taxi ambulances are more comfortable and have more space. It feels special to travel by taxi."

Being electric hybrid makes the vehicles ideal for driving in the city, and helps the Trust to move closer towards its net

zero targets.

So far, the taxi ambulances have covered more than 90,600 miles around London, making 19,800 patient journeys to scheduled appointments at Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals and community clinics.

They are the latest additions in the



Ambulance care assistant Arnel Zamora with one of the new taxi ambulances

Trust's transport provision for vulnerable patients and for those who would not otherwise be able to make their appointment.

Daniel Crossey, general manager of non-emergency patient transport at Guy's and St Thomas', said: "These new vehicles are more sustainable and accessible, but they also look great. Everyone can identify a London cab – we've even had people try to flag one down on the street."

"They have mostly been used by renal patients having dialysis, and patients have spoken very positively about them. They like the comfort, the additional space and the flexibility they provide. And the cab shape makes them feel special."

"The taxi ambulances are more comfortable and have more space. It feels special to travel by taxi."

Clare Elliott visits
Harefield Hospital's
honey-producing
beehives.



A sweet story of recovery



Harefield estates officer Bradley Crathern trained as a beekeeper to maintain the hives

Harefield Hospital is internationally recognised for its world-leading heart and lung transplant programme – but a lesser-known claim to fame is the hospital's very own honey-producing bee community.

Heart transplant patient, Tilman Marsh, donated several bee colonies to the Harefield grounds in 2022 as a way of saying thank you to the hospital that provided his care. Each colony is home to up to 60,000 bees during the summer months.

Over the past 3 years the bees have produced a good surplus of honey, which is sold through Royal Brompton and Harefield Hospitals Charity to raise funds for the hospital. The bees have been cared for by Harefield's estates operations manager, Brian Powell, and estates officer, Bradley Crathern, who in addition to their very busy day jobs trained as beekeepers with Harrow Beekeeping Association.

According to Brian and Bradley, the hospital gardens – maintained by the grounds team and a dedicated team of volunteers – give the Harefield honey a unique local taste. The grounds contain a rich mix of shrubs, wildflowers and trees, providing excellent foraging opportunities

for the bee colonies to thrive.

The idea for the Harefield bee colonies was born soon after Tilman Marsh received his heart transplant at Harefield Hospital in 2006. As part of his recovery, Tilman set himself the ambitious goal of walking the Wainwright's Coast to Coast trail – between the west and east coasts of northern England – with his family. Along the walk, they noticed a surprising lack of insects despite the abundance of flowers and good weather.

Inspired by this observation, Tilman and his wife, Sarah, enrolled in a beginner's beekeeping course and started keeping bees in their garden and local allotment.

Tilman said: "I received such wonderful care throughout my cardiac failure and transplant that I wanted to give back to the hospital.

"Selling honey was my way of contributing to the charity and thanking the hospital for the treatment I received.

"Initially, we sold honey from our

garden with proceeds going to the charity, which then evolved into donating the bee colonies to the hospital and the production of Harefield Hospital Honey."

With support from hospital management teams, an apiary was built to house the bees on the hospital grounds. Tilman and Sarah then worked closely with Brian and Bradley, and mentored

them throughout the whole process.

As part of this project, the Harefield estates team also led on the redevelopment of the hospital's lakes to create an environment where both staff and patients could have some respite from the busy wards, as well as providing a vibrant ecosystem for the bees to flourish in.

Brian said: "I didn't ever expect to be a beekeeper, but it has been a fantastic experience and has been great to work with Tilman and Sarah. Without their support, none of this would have been possible. Nature demonstrates what healthcare seeks to nurture: the industrious care of bees, the calm steadiness of lakes, the vitality of wildlife."

"I didn't ever expect to be a beekeeper, but it has been a fantastic experience."

Catherine Beckett

explores a new process enabling hepatitis C positive organs to be transplanted.



Since his heart transplant, Mark has enjoyed volunteering in the Harefield Healing Garden

Finding more hearts to save lives

Mark Bromage was the first person in London – and only the 4th in England – to receive a heart transplant from a hepatitis C positive donor at Harefield Hospital.

Hepatitis C is a bloodborne virus that can severely damage the liver if untreated. Until recently, most organs from hepatitis C positive donors were discarded due to the high risk of transmission and limited treatment options.

But with modern antiviral therapies now able to cure hepatitis C, these organs can be used safely.

Transplant specialists at Harefield, Guy's and King's College hospitals have collaborated on a new process that enables organs infected with hepatitis C to be safely transplanted into a patient. This means people waiting for a heart, lung, liver or kidney transplant may now have access to more donor organs.

Recent data suggests using hepatitis C

positive organs could lead to up to 75 extra organ transplants in the UK each year.

“For me, it was an easy decision to accept the heart. I had confidence in my clinical team.”

Mark, 64, said: “I had a mild heart attack in February 2023 and then in May 2024 I had another one which severely damaged my heart. I was eventually transferred to Harefield where after many tests and scans, my Christmas

Day gift was to be put on the waiting list for a new heart.

“The mental stress when you prepare for a transplant and are told the organ isn't suitable is painful. I went through this 3 times.

“Then in February, my consultant said there was a heart and it was a match, but I should be aware the donor was positive for hepatitis C.

“For me, it was an easy decision to accept it. I had every confidence in my wonderful clinical team. They assured me the virus was easily curable if I contracted

it after the transplant.”

Mark underwent the transplant earlier this year. He did not contract the virus and was discharged 2 weeks later. He is now enjoying life post-transplant, volunteering in the Harefield Healing Garden, baking cakes for fellow volunteers, and even fulfilling his dream of flying in a Spitfire aeroplane.

The former insurance executive added: “I feel so lucky. I have a positivity and zest for life that helps me make the most of every day. I get out walking with the dog every morning for an hour – I love it. I've also become a baker. I don't know why, as I never baked before.”

Dr Andrew Morley-Smith, transplant cardiologist at Harefield Hospital, said: “Thanks to the collaboration between our hospitals, our transplant and surgical teams were equipped to manage every eventuality with Mark's transplant. We were able to provide him with information and reassurance from the start. And if he had become infected with hepatitis C, we had quick access to the medication and specialist consultants at King's who would



Mark recently fulfilled his dream to fly in a Spitfire aeroplane



Mark with his wife Sue and Reggie the dog



Mark's clinical team brought together a range of expertise to ensure he could safely receive a hepatitis C positive heart transplant

“The pool of donor organs could become larger, which is good news for our patients on the waiting list.”

support us to treat it immediately.

“In the UK, transplanting hepatitis C positive organs is relatively new. Making it happen requires access to a combination of specialist knowledge and medication. I am proud our teams worked together to facilitate this. It means the pool of donor organs could become larger, which is good news for our patients who are on the waiting list, and especially critical for patients like

Mark, who are waiting for a heart.”

The new transplant process will also benefit patients at Harefield Hospital waiting for a lung transplant and those at Guy's Hospital who are waiting for a kidney transplant.

Dr Rachel Hilton, a kidney consultant at Guy's, said: “Now that we can accept organs from donors who are positive for hepatitis C, the likelihood of a match for our patients is higher.

“People who need a kidney transplant are often on dialysis, which can be very tough to live with. So it is fantastic that some of our patients could now come off the waiting list for a new kidney more quickly.”

Transplants would not be possible without the generosity of organ donors and their families. To register your decision to be an organ donor, visit www.organdonation.nhs.uk

Lauren Byrne

meets a campaigner highlighting the importance of genetic testing at Royal Brompton Hospital.



Royal Brompton's specialist cardiac genetic laboratory team. Left to right: Andrew Fleming, Anna Lockhart, Deborah Morris-Rosendahl, Kristina Mitro, Mat Edwards and Lizi Briggs

Helping families spot hereditary conditions

As the youngest of 6 children, Lisa Skinner thought it was normal to be double-jointed and 'bendy', like her mum and other family members.

It wasn't until her first child was born that she realised it could be a sign of something more significant.

Her daughter, Zoe, was very floppy and struggled to feed and swallow. When Zoe was slightly older, a health visitor noted that she could not remain sitting up in a high chair and that she was not crawling. She referred Zoe to a local physiotherapy and orthotics service, which helped her to get stronger.

When Lisa's second child, Jeremy, was born, he had similar issues.

Eventually Lisa and her children were diagnosed with a hereditary connective tissue disorder, Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, known as EDS. This is a group of conditions that can affect various parts of the body such as joints, internal organs and

blood vessels, including the aorta which is the main artery of the body.

Lisa talked with her brothers and sisters about whether they, or their children, might also have the condition, but no one was offered genetic testing at that point.

Sadly, Lisa's sister Angela died soon after because of a tear, known as a dissection, to her aorta. Five years later the same happened to her other sister, Kirsty.

Lisa said: "History had repeated itself. I'd meant to see Kirsty that day and I took it very hard."

Kirsty's death encouraged Lisa to push harder for genetic testing and her GP also referred her for an echo-

cardiogram, which is an ultrasound scan of the heart. It found a small widening, or dilatation, in the same part of the aorta that had affected Angela and Kirsty.

Lisa's 3 surviving siblings also asked for

scans, which identified similar issues in 2 of them.

Lisa's life has changed significantly since she and her family confirmed their inherited condition. She is actively monitored by her doctors and has received preventative treatment and advice on how to lower her risk of dilation.

She has been treated at Guy's Hospital for gastrointestinal issues linked to EDS, and her daughter was also seen by clinical geneticists at Guy's.

Lisa has become an active campaigner, highlighting the importance of genetic testing for inherited conditions. As part of this work she visited Royal Brompton Hospital's specialist cardiac genetic laboratory – which performs genetic testing for conditions like EDS – to share her family's experience of living with an inherited condition.

The 58-year-old said: "Having the opportunity to visit the lab to understand the testing processes and meet the people behind all this has been an amazing experience. It really helped me to understand the complexities and

"Having the opportunity to visit the lab to understand the testing processes and meet the people behind all this has been an amazing experience."



Fast Facts

- Royal Brompton Hospital provides specialist genetic testing for cardiac and respiratory conditions as part of the South East Genomic Medicine Service
- Over the last year, laboratories at Royal Brompton Hospital carried out around **6,500 specialist genetic tests**
- The South East Genomic Medicine Service provided over **110,000 genomic tests** last year for people living in south London and the south east of England.

Lisa Skinner has worked with Royal Brompton's cardiac genetic laboratory to bring attention to inherited conditions



Lisa Skinner with Mat Edwards at Royal Brompton's cardiac genetic laboratory

possibilities around genetic testing, which in turn will help me on both a personal level and with my volunteering work."

Clinical scientist and deputy head of the laboratory, Mat Edwards, said: "We're very lucky to have a wonderful group of patients who work with us to help improve our service and it was a pleasure to welcome Lisa to the laboratory.

"We deliver genetic testing for suspected inherited cardiac conditions for everyone in London and the south east of England – a population of approximately 19

million people – so we were able to show Lisa how the genetic testing is done and introduce her to the team. Crucially, it gave us an opportunity to hear about her experience and discuss what we can do better."

Outside her work with Royal Brompton Hospital, Lisa has started working with the South East Genomic Medicine Service to help encourage

coroners to consider inherited cardiac conditions, and keep samples when someone dies suddenly so genetic testing can be carried out.

"It gave us an opportunity to hear about Lisa's experience and discuss what we can do better."

Caroline Watson and **Kelly Cook** look back at 20 years of life-saving care at Evelina London Children's Hospital.



Bertie Melly, pictured with his parents Phoebe and Callum, going home for the first ever time

20 years young

For little Bertie Melly, Evelina London Children's Hospital was the only home he'd known.

The 18-month-old was born prematurely at 24 weeks, weighing just 745g, and has undergone 5 surgeries to his bowel – the first when he was only 10 days old.

After 547 days of being cared for by different teams across Evelina London, Bertie's parents, Phoebe and Callum, were finally able to take him home – the same day the hospital celebrated its 20th birthday.

Phoebe said: "I can't thank the team at Evelina London Children's Hospital enough for everything they have done for us as a family. Their care and love has carried us through the hardest times.

"Words cannot express the feeling of joy taking Bertie home, which was made even more special by the joint celebration of the hospital's 20th birthday."

Many patients feel like Evelina London is a second home, like Hasma Ziaie who receives dialysis treatment 4 times a week on Beach Ward.

"Words cannot express the feeling of joy taking Bertie home, which was made even more special by the joint celebration of the hospital's 20th birthday."

The 10-year-old said: "I love Evelina London because there are lots of play specialists and I've made friends on the ward. I really like nurse Tinu because she's very cool and fun – she does arts and crafts with us."

When the building opened its doors in October 2005, it was the first new children's hospital in London for more than 100 years, bringing together the majority of Guy's and St Thomas' children's services under one roof.

At the time, around 31,000 babies, children and young people were treated each year. Now, the hospital cares for almost 3 times as many patients.

From the very outset, Evelina London was a hospital designed by children, for children. Patients and local school children shared their views on many aspects of the new hospital, everything from the menus and furniture, to the design of the building itself.

Costing £60 million to build, construction was made possible by a £50

million grant from Guy's and St Thomas' Charity and £10 million from the NHS. The Evelina Children's Hospital Appeal raised around £10 million to furnish and kit out the new hospital.

Evelina London has celebrated many clinical milestones over the past 2 decades. In 2010, clinicians performed the world's first MRI-guided heart valve procedure on a child, and the following year they carried out the first paediatric kidney transplant





Hasma Ziaie joined celebrations for Evelina London Children's Hospital's 20th birthday

between an incompatible blood type donor and recipient.

More recently in 2021, a new life-saving gene therapy, Zolgensma, was given at Evelina London to the first baby in the UK with spinal muscular atrophy.

Looking ahead, there are ambitious plans to extend the children's hospital, with a significant fundraising commitment from Evelina London Children's Charity.

Gubby Ayida, Chief Executive of

Evelina London, said: "An expanded hospital will give us the opportunity to treat more patients and reimagine how we deliver our care for children and young people in future.

"What will remain constant is the passion, dedication and expertise of our teams and their drive to continue to deliver the highest quality care to children and families every day."

A message from Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales, Patron of Evelina London



HRH The Princess of Wales became a Patron of Evelina London in December 2018

"As Patron of Evelina, I'm delighted to join everyone at Evelina London Children's Hospital in celebrating the anniversary of its iconic hospital building.

Over the past two decades, this extraordinary space has enabled Evelina London to care for nearly three times as many children and young people as when it first opened. It is a place that symbolises love, healing and hope and has had such an impact on countless lives.

As I know from my visits, the building's bright, welcoming spaces and wonderful light-filled atrium ensure children feel safe, supported and nurtured as they face whatever challenges lie ahead.

What makes this building so special is the remarkable staff, whose compassion and expertise shine through in every corner of the hospital, and create an environment where families feel cared for and uplifted.

Looking ahead, I am filled with hope for Evelina's future. As it continues to grow, even more children will benefit from the world-class care that defines Evelina, a place where healing begins with connection, and every child is cherished."

Tom Costerton meets the prosthetics team helping to restore patients' confidence.

Feeling like yourself again



Caroline Reed and Martina Galea

When most people hear the word 'prosthetic', it is artificial arms and legs that come to mind – but the maxillofacial prosthetics team at Guy's Hospital works on a smaller scale.

Specialising in facial and jaw prosthetics, they provide replacement ears, eyes and other facial features to transform the lives of patients across London and the south east.

Caroline Reed, consultant maxillofacial prosthetist who leads the service, said: "Our goal is to give patients who need facial prosthetics the ability to feel like themselves in daily life."

"We aim to provide patients with realistic prostheses that help them move forward with their lives after treatment. Accepting the prosthesis as part of themselves is an important step towards

"Our goal is to give patients the ability to feel like themselves in daily life."

rebuilding confidence."

Patient Paul Turner discovered a fast-growing tumour in his nose in 2024. After scans and discussions with his care team, he chose to have his nose surgically removed and replaced with a silicone prosthesis, rather than undergo radiotherapy. Before receiving his final prosthesis, Paul was fitted with a temporary

dressing so he could feel confident in public while his wounds healed.

Paul said: "The temporary prosthesis gave my face a profile, so from day one I could go out with confidence."

"At the same time, Caroline Reed and I worked together on designing my new nose. I enjoy painting portraits and was a perfectionist about getting the design right, but Caroline was incredibly patient and her eye for colour and detail mean



Paul Turner has a new prosthetic nose

most people can hardly tell it's not real."

The 81-year-old also wanted something easy to manage, after seeing others struggle with adhesive-held prosthetics.

"Instead of glue, which looked quite uncomfortable, my nose is held on with



Nick Edmund with his wife Teresa

magnets," he said. "This means I can pop it on and off whenever I feel like, which is so convenient and comfortable."

Another patient, Nick Edmund, came to the maxillofacial prosthetics team after enduring years of head and neck cancer treatment, ultimately needing a new scalp and losing sight in one eye. Last year, doctors found a tumour on his right ear and advised surgery to remove most of the ear's mid-section. After surgery, Nick was referred to the maxillofacial team and cared for by Martina Galea Mifsud, a principal maxillofacial prosthetist.

Nick said: "I had started calling myself Nelson Van Gogh because of my ear and one working eye. Martina was so reassuring from the off and joked her goal was to return me to plain Nelson."

Despite earlier surgeries, losing part of his ear affected Nick's confidence the most. The 64-year-old said: "It's strange, you would think having a visibly non-functioning eye and a replaced scalp would be worse, but at the time it all happened quickly and I mostly took it in my stride.

"But with my ear, I noticed I was more self-conscious than with my other surgeries, so I was keen to get a prosthetic

that helped me feel like myself."

Like Paul, Nick's prosthesis was developed over several weeks in close collaboration with his clinician. Matching the shape and contours of the remaining ear was delicate work, but after several appointments the prosthesis was sculpted and coloured to blend seamlessly, restoring both form and confidence.

"I was a perfectionist about getting the design right. Most people can hardly tell it's not real."

Fast Facts

- Between January 2024 and December 2024, the prosthetics team saw **249 patients**. So far in 2025, they have helped **229 patients**, with Caroline and Martina seeing 67 between them
- The prosthetic team **provide 22 different types of prostheses**
- A prosthetic can take anything from **2 to 10 appointments**, depending on how complicated it is
- The team use a variety of materials, from **3D printed resins to silicone**, which they **match to a patient's skin tone**
- When it comes to creating eyes, the team **paint them by hand using oil paints**
- Patients then receive **follow-up care**. Depending on the prosthetic, this can be **anything from once a year to every 4-8 weeks**.

Once it was ready, Nick was thrilled—except for one problem. "I'm left-handed and only my right eye functions, so I found positioning the prosthetic in the correct place before the glue hardened impossible to achieve without help," he said.

"I mentioned this to Martina who, after some creative thinking, came up with an innovative solution whereby it hooks on instead. I'm pleased to say I can now fit it myself. Martina's skill and dedication are incredible – in fact, the entire team are a credit to the NHS."

Most of the prosthetics fitted by the maxillofacial team need replacing every two years due to wear on the soft silicone. Paul is due for a replacement soon and is looking forward to making a few tweaks.

He said: "It's amazing – the process carries on even after you get your first nose. I'm so thankful to Caroline and the team for their patience and skill, and for making sure I get the right nose to live my life with complete confidence."

Maxine Hoeksma

learns about a free health programme for people with type 2 diabetes.

“We want people to feel empowered to take control of their health.”

Food for thought



Ingrid can still enjoy her favourite dishes on the diabetes programme, with a few important adjustments

Ingrid Hamilton is in her kitchen, putting the tips she's gathered from the Trust's healthy eating and exercise programme for people with type 2 diabetes to good use.

The IT administrator, from Tooting, joined the 7-week free online programme, known as HEAL-D, in December 2024 and hasn't looked back.

Specially tailored to the meet the needs of Black African and Black Caribbean people, the course outlines how to manage diabetes, with the added benefit of discovering healthier ways of cooking traditional foods.

Since taking part in the programme, Ingrid's blood glucose levels have improved.

Ingrid said: "Most diabetic education is geared to people who eat salads and not the foods I would normally eat, so it's not going to work for me. The minute I can go back to having a little bit of rice and peas, that's what I'm going to do.

"But on this programme they don't

want you to give up the foods that you're used to. They teach you portion size and sometimes it's just a tweak in the way you cook things. Instead of frying it, put it in the oven. If I decide I want to do stewed chicken, the amount of oil that's in the pan is minimal now, because I would add more water, just to get it started.

"The way I used to season food, I'd have a line of all my seasonings. I'd put a little bit of this one, a little bit of that one. But they've all got salt in. So they suggested pouring them all into a big container. You'll use less seasoning, and therefore less salt. Now my plate is smaller too. Half of my plate is vegetables and salad, and a quarter of it is protein.

The 59-year-old added: "I do a lot of walking now. When I'm working I try to take 2 breaks where I'll go for a walk. I remember them saying you've got to walk at a pace so that you can't speak but you can hum. Programmes like this are brilliant,

they are so needed."

Alexis Prince, senior specialist diabetes dietitian and educator, said: "The idea is to support people to make positive diet and lifestyle changes without feeling that they have to change their diet completely. It incorporates traditional foods, making the programme much more relevant and accessible.

"People share how they are getting on and what foods they like to eat. We get them to look in their cupboards to see how they can adapt cooking methods and recipes to make some tasty dishes they will enjoy.

"The physical activity focuses on realistic goal setting and being able to keep any changes they make over the 7 weeks of the programme going.

"We want people to feel empowered to take control of their health and make positive lifestyle changes that are going to benefit them long term, whilst also engaging with other people who may be experiencing similar feelings."

More information about the HEAL-D programme is available on the Trust website.

Lesley Walker looks at why we need sleep, and how we can get it.

Dr Alanna Hare is a consultant in sleep medicine at Royal Brompton Hospital

Getting a good night's sleep

We are increasingly obsessed with getting a good night's sleep, with apps and trackers to monitor our rest. But why is sleep good for our body and mind? Do we really need 8 hours a night, and what's the best way to do it?

Dr Alanna Hare, consultant in sleep medicine at Royal Brompton Hospital, said: "Sleep is crucial for our brain and our body. During sleep, our brain maintains itself by removing toxins, consolidating memories and forming new pathways for learning. This all helps us learn, think clearly, make decisions and to be creative the next day.

"At the same time, our body rests and repairs itself, slowing heart rate and blood pressure, boosting our immune systems to fight infections, and regulating our metabolism and hormones."

It's important to make sure your sleep environment is suitable. Keep your room cool (but not too cold – 16 to 19C is ideal), dark and as quiet as possible to help you get to sleep, stay asleep and ensure good quality rest. You can use an eye mask or ear plugs to help.

Create a consistent routine to set your

body clock – go to bed and wake up at the same time, and don't sleep in during the weekend to "catch up".

Not everyone needs 8 hours a night, but you should aim for 7 to 9 hours.

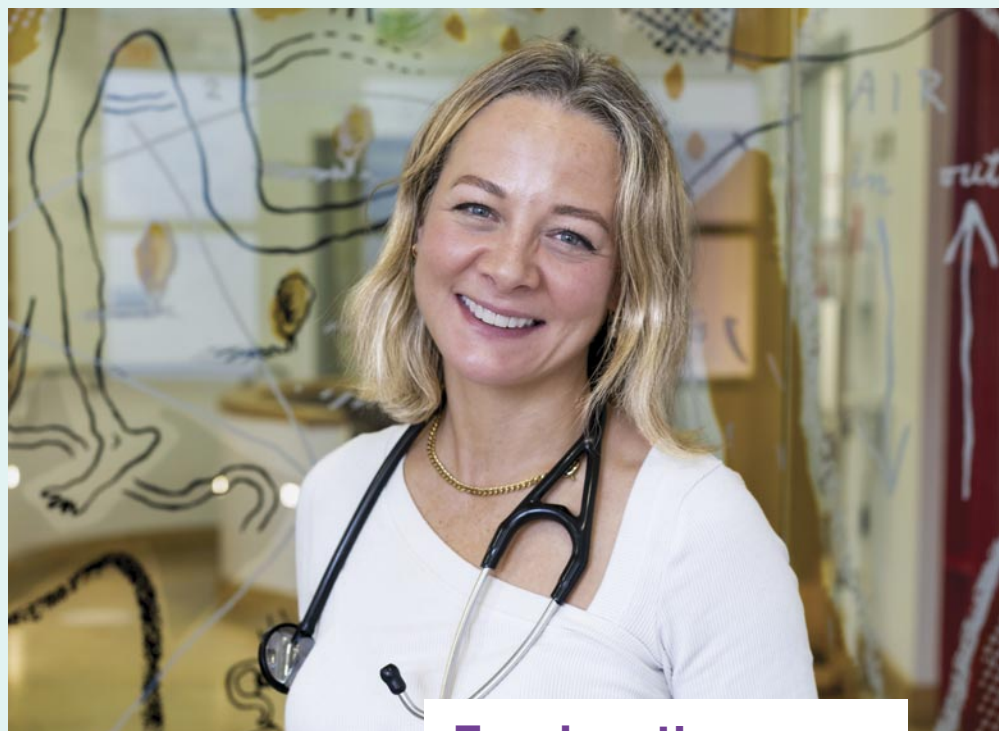
Dr Hare added: "Avoid social media sleep hacks and viral trends, which are mostly untested and may

disrupt your sleep rather than improve it. Keep it simple and focus on winding down before bed by listening to music, reading or doing a short mindfulness exercise.

"Stop using devices for at least 30 minutes before you want to go to sleep, and try to schedule exercise for earlier in the day. Being active helps us feel sleepy at night, but try to avoid high intensity exercise in the 2 hours before bed."

If you're exhausted during the day and need a nap, keep it to 20 minutes at most. Any longer can interfere with your night-time sleep, and can often make you feel more sluggish and tired.

Also look at what you're eating during the day. Dr Hare said: "There are links between gut and sleep health. We know a healthy microbiome in your gut is associated with healthy sleep. Make sure



Top sleep tips

Dr Alanna Hare shares her top tips for good sleep:

- **Go to bed and get up at the same time every day**
- **Wind down before bed – and switch off screens at least 30 minutes before**
- **Eat a Mediterranean diet with lots of plants and fibre to help your gut and your sleep**
- **Limit nicotine and alcohol – and avoid caffeine from lunch-time onwards**

you include lots of different plants and fibre in your diet as this will feed your gut and improve your sleep."

Stress and anxiety are well-known for affecting our sleep. There are simple strategies to manage stress, such as mindfulness-based techniques. These can improve sleep quality and also help us to cope better with stressful situations during the day.

Dr Hare added: "You can reduce physical and mental tension using techniques like progressive muscle relaxation, where you tense then release different muscle groups in your body, working your way up from your toes to your head."

Tom Costerton
meets fundraisers
at the 10th annual
St Thomas' abseil.

A decade of taking the plunge



Kiren and Angad Dillon scaled the hospital building to thank staff for saving the life of their son, Dhian

Patients, staff and supporters celebrated 10 years of bravely taking the plunge for charity, abseiling 160 feet down St Thomas' Hospital.

The annual challenge raises vital funds for 3 of the charities that support Guy's and St Thomas' to deliver care for patients above and beyond what the NHS can provide, with this year marking the 10th anniversary of the event.

Over the past decade the abseil has seen more than 3,000 people scale the front of the St Thomas' building to raise over £1.5 million for patients and staff through Guy's & St Thomas' Charity,

"For the abseil, we were back at the very same place – but this time with our son healthy and thriving. That feels like a miracle."

Guy's Cancer Charity and Evelina London Children's Charity.

This year's event raised a record figure, with £200,000 pledged so far.

Angad Dillon and his wife, Kiren, were among this year's abseilers raising funds for Evelina London Children's Charity.

Their son, Dhian, was born prematurely at

St Thomas' following a complicated pregnancy. After spending time in the neonatal intensive care and special care baby units, Dhian finally went home – only to be rushed back to Evelina London's

children's intensive care unit with severe sepsis.

Thanks to the expertise and compassion of clinical teams caring for Dhian, he is now thriving and has just turned one.

Angad said: "Coming back to abseil past the units where Dhian fought so hard to survive was both emotional and uplifting. The skill and kindness of the teams at St Thomas' and Evelina London gave our son his start in life and gave us hope. The abseil was our way of celebrating his first birthday and supporting Evelina London Children's Charity."

Kiren said: "Last year we spent countless hours at those windows, looking out at Big Ben and Parliament. For the



Members of the Trust's executive team bravely took the plunge



YouTuber Max Fosh abseiled down St Thomas' Hospital where he was born



Over 3,000 people have taken part in St Thomas' Abseil since it began

abseil, we were back at the very same place – but this time with our son healthy and thriving. That feels like a miracle. Evelina London Children's Charity does amazing work for families at their most vulnerable, and we wanted to give something back."

Alongside appreciative parents and patients, a celebrity with a very special link to St Thomas' Hospital joined this year's abseil.

Popular YouTuber Max Fosh, who has 4.7 million subscribers to his channel, took the opportunity to abseil down the hospital building where he was born. He

"Evelina London Children's Charity does amazing work for families at their most vulnerable, and we wanted to give something back."

completed the abseil challenge after meeting a group of young dialysis patients at Evelina London earlier in the day.

Max's abseil followed a YouTube video he made at St Thomas' Hospital earlier in the year to celebrate his 30th birthday, having tracked down a 'birthday twin' who had also been born in the St Thomas' maternity unit on the same day as him.

Max said: "I owe a lot to St Thomas' Hospital. It was the first building I ever saw back in April 1995 and it's as

wonderful today as it was back then. Being able to give back to such a fantastic institution by abseiling down it was rewarding."

Director of fundraising for Guy's & St Thomas' Charity, Rachel Kiggell, said: "It was incredible to see so many people getting involved to raise money for each of our charities. The stories of patients and families are a testament to how much the Trust and its staff touch people's lives, and the donations we collected will make a huge difference to their work."

To sign up for next year's abseil, or to join another exciting fundraising event, visit the 3 charities' websites

gsttcharity.org.uk
evelinacharity.org.uk
guyscancercharity.org.uk

Behind the scenes

Ayo Iyiola, deputy health records manager at the Trust

Q What does your job involve?

A I manage the day-to-day running of patient health records, ensuring everything from legacy files to scanning processes are handled smoothly and on time. Clinicians rely on accurate, high-quality data to make informed decisions, so our work is essential. Our move to Epic – our electronic patient health records system – in 2023 has significantly improved access and efficiency.

Q Tell us about a typical day

A No two days are the same. We receive a high volume of queries from across the Trust, so delivering a reliable, high-quality service is vital. I oversee scanning operations, quality assurance checks, staff performance and incident reporting. I'm also

involved in recruitment and make sure we have the supplies needed to keep things running smoothly.

Q How do you maintain accuracy and confidentiality?

A Patient confidentiality is at the heart of everything we do. We follow strict NHS and Trust policies to ensure records are only accessed by authorised staff, with regular checks and training in data protection. We use secure systems like Epic and act quickly to resolve any concerns.

Q What do you find rewarding about your role?

A Knowing that our work helps clinical staff make the best decisions for patients is incredibly rewarding. Accurate, accessible records are the backbone of great care,



and it's fulfilling to be part of the team that makes that happen. I'm also a strong advocate for apprenticeship opportunities at the Trust, having benefited from a senior leadership programme. I now hold a Master's degree in leadership and management.

From the frontline

Emma Roberts, staff nurse in the main theatres at Guy's Hospital



I have worked in the main theatres at Guy's Hospital for the past 2 years. This is a varied and rewarding role.

I specialise in assisting with chest (thoracic) operations. Mostly, I am involved in operations to remove lung cancer, or diagnostic procedures to examine patients' lungs and airways. The Trust uses state-of-the-art technology and does robotic surgery. Out of hours, I help with other types of emergency surgery.

My job involves preparing equipment, instruments and other medical supplies for operations and handing the surgical team what they need.

It is a priority to ensure patients' safety and be their advocate while they are asleep under general anaesthetic. We follow the World Health Organisation surgical safety checklist to prevent

mistakes and reduce risk to patients.

I also make sure that patients are positioned safely on the operating table and kept warm during the operation. An important duty is to count all our surgical instruments before, during and at the end of the procedure.

The job gives me a sense of purpose and fulfilment. I enjoy working in a highly skilled, multicultural team that focuses on caring for one patient at a time. It is a privilege to contribute towards patients' cancer care and see new advanced technology.

In a busy theatre environment, I need to stay calm and focused under pressure. Effective teamwork and communication are essential. I try to anticipate what support to give during an operation and I am always ready to speak up for patients.

Maxine Hoeksma

shines a light on the life of an extraordinary doctor, humanitarian and anti-racism campaigner.

Honouring a man of conviction

The name of Jamaican doctor, Harold Moody, is emblazoned large on the front of a new health centre that sits at the heart of the Aylesbury Estate in Walworth.

The building was named after the pioneering anti-racism activist following a public vote, and is the perfect reminder for visitors that Dr Moody, a Southwark resident, campaigned a century ago for equal rights for all.

Harold Moody was born in 1882 and came to England in 1904 to study medicine at King's College London. But despite excelling in his studies, Moody was denied a hospital physician job because of the colour of his skin – when a matron refused to work with a Black doctor.

After 3 years of unsuccessful job-hunting, and unwilling to give up, Moody set up his own practice in Peckham in February 1913.

At this time, Britain did not have a National Health Service, which meant that poor families struggled to pay doctors for medical treatment. A committed Christian, Dr Moody often treated the children of poor families for free.

According to the 1901 census, 33,000

Londoners were born in "British colonies or dependencies", with Chinese, Indian, African and Black Caribbean people becoming more prominent in the city. Through his work in the community, and facing numerous prejudices himself including difficulty finding lodgings, Moody stepped up to become a respected civil rights campaigner and leader.

His biggest achievement came when he helped form, and became president of, The League of Coloured Peoples (LCP) in 1931. The group wanted to highlight problems, but also celebrate the successes of Black people, and opposed racism in all its forms. Its members pushed for hospitals to hire more Black nurses, for greater access to employment, and an end to housing discrimination.

His work included fighting for the lifting of the 'colour bar' in the British armed forces – the discriminatory practice of restricting 'non-Europeans'

from serving in the military. He fought passionately for fair wages for Trinidadian oil workers and campaigned for employment rights for Black seamen. In 1943, Moody was appointed to a government advisory committee that looked at issues around the welfare of people of colour living in Britain.

Harold Moody served as the LCP's president right up to his death in 1947. His work is often credited with laying the foundations for anti-racism legislation in Britain, and he continues to receive recognition today, featuring in the book, '100 Great Black Britons'.

Guy's and St Thomas' currently provides speech and language therapy, health visiting, school nursing, breastfeeding, and midwifery services from the new Harold Moody Health Centre. The Aylesbury neighbourhood nursing team and the nutrition and dietetics weight management service are also based at the site.

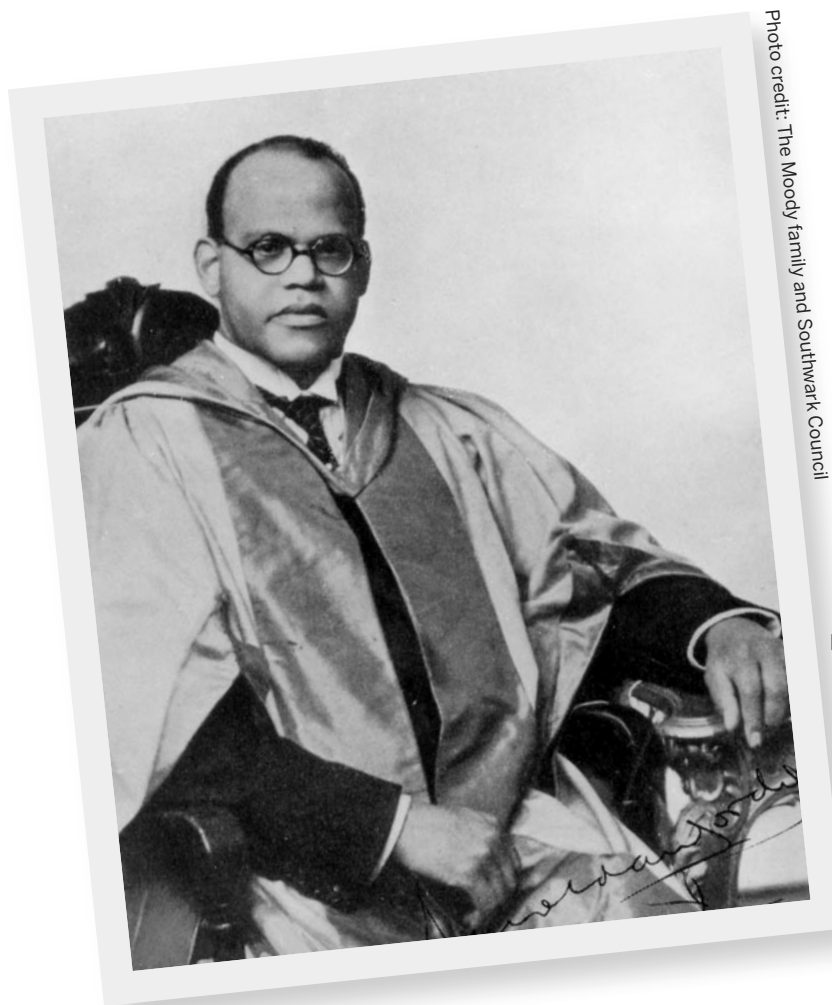


Photo credit: The Moody family and Southwark Council

Dr Harold Moody

Meet the governor

Emma Barslund Blackman reveals the personal and professional reasons behind her decision to become a governor.

Guy's and St Thomas' governors represent the views of our patients, public and staff members, ensuring our services meet the needs of the communities we serve.

Emma Barslund Blackman became a governor to give back to the organisation that saved her life. She was admitted to intensive care at St Thomas' Hospital and received extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) treatment, the highest level of life-support that temporarily replaces the work of the lungs.

As an assistant psychologist and budding clinical psychologist, Emma also appreciated the psychological support from the team. She said: "I was invited

back to visit the hospital, which was really important to meet people and make sense of things. When you're in an induced coma, your understanding is very distorted and limited. The team also runs a support group."

Emma wants to approach her governor role from the perspective of a patient and mental health professional, ensuring that patient concerns, as well as psychological considerations, are reflected.

Her current career journey began during the COVID-19 pandemic. Emma said: "I started working in mental health in 2020. I used to work as a fashion model and that obviously wasn't a key worker role. I saw a job working as a



mental health support worker and things have grown from there."

Emma wants to focus her efforts on ensuring people can give and receive the best possible care at the Trust.

She said: "If it wasn't for St Thomas', I wouldn't be here today. When I saw the opportunity to be a governor, I instantly knew it was the right thing to do."

Meet the member

Khadija Gitay shares what being a member means to her.

Guy's and St Thomas' members are made up of staff, patients and public volunteers.

Members can get involved by providing feedback on how we can improve our services to meet the needs of our communities.

Khadija Gitay's link to the Trust dates back over 30 years, starting when she had orthodontic treatments as a child at Guy's Hospital and continuing when she did work experience at St Thomas' while studying at nearby Southwark College.

Khadija, now 54, has maintained a deep connection to the Trust through her membership, and particularly enjoys attending in-person events to learn about medical developments from Trust researchers and clinicians.

She said: "There's all sorts of amazing things happening right here, with even more since Royal Brompton and Harefield joined the Trust a few years ago. I'm not



much of an online person so it's really nice that there are so many in-person events I can attend."

Khadija was particularly pleased to attend the Trust's recent Annual Public

Meeting. She said: "It was brilliant because all the different sections of the Trust were showcasing the developments they're making, and you get to hear it straight from the people doing the research."

When asked what makes Guy's and St Thomas' special, Khadija believes it's the Trust's ability to treat thousands of patients across multiple sites, while still putting the patient first. She said: "I've attended talks from people who manage the A&E and you can really see how they organise everything so people are taken care of with a personal touch."

To become a member call **020 7188 7346**, email gstt.members@nhs.net or visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership

Get involved and make a difference

Sign up and help us shape your services

We involve patients, their families, carers and Foundation Trust members in planning, designing, improving and monitoring the services and care that we provide.

How to sign up

Complete this form – <https://bit.ly/PPInvolvement> – to tell us what interests you. We will get in touch when there are opportunities to get involved.

Current opportunities for children's services

We are looking for young people, parents and carers who are interested in improving services at Evelina London to join our Youth Forum and Involvement Register. To find out more and get involved, please email gstt.elchengagement-pf@nhs.net

Make a difference to maternity and neonatal care

We want to hear from parents who have used maternity or neonatal services to join the St Thomas' Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership (MNVP). To find out more and get involved, please email stthomasmnvp@gmail.com

Other opportunities

You can also help us to improve our:

- heart and lung services
- cancer and surgery services
- local community health services

Events and activities

We involve people in different ways, such as workshops, interviews and advisory groups. Some events are held online and others face-to-face. We will adapt activities to help you take part wherever we can.

Find out more

If you have any questions, email gstt.getinvolved@nhs.net or call 020 7188 6808.

Raise money for your hospitals and community services

For all the latest news about our amazing fundraisers and how you can support us, follow:

 [facebook.com/GSTTCharity](https://www.facebook.com/GSTTCharity)

 [facebook.com/evelinalondonchildrenscharity](https://www.facebook.com/evelinalondonchildrenscharity)

 [facebook.com/RBHCharity](https://www.facebook.com/RBHCharity)

 [facebook.com/guyscancerc](https://www.facebook.com/guyscancerc)

COMPETITION



We have a pair of adult tickets for **Thames Rockets' new Rocket Rebel Ultimate London Adventure**. To be in with a chance of winning, simply complete the wordsearch below.

E	T	P	N	M	C	P	E	N	N	M	W
T	S	E	V	R	A	H	R	N	O	Z	G
W	C	A	K	L	E	A	I	Y	R	I	L
A	C	O	R	N	M	T	F	L	T	R	N
S	P	H	N	K	A	K	N	F	L	O	G
B	P	P	E	K	G	L	O	A	M	Y	O
P	W	I	L	S	E	B	B	A	L	S	H
O	S	N	C	E	T	R	N	K	A	C	E
I	M	I	I	E	A	N	S	M	L	A	G
B	I	T	R	A	I	V	U	U	H	R	D
D	R	A	H	C	R	O	E	T	L	F	E
F	I	R	E	W	O	R	K	S	N	X	H

Acorn
Blanket
Bonfire

Chestnut
Cinnamon
Conkers

Fireworks
Harvest
Hedgehog

Lantern
Leaves
Orchard

Rain
Scarf
Spice

Name

Address

Telephone

Email

Send your entry by **Wednesday 11 February 2026** to the GIST competition, Communications Department, 4th floor, Staircase C, South Wing, St Thomas' Hospital, Westminster Bridge Road, SE1 7EH; or you can email gstt.gist@nhs.net.

The winners 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 winners. The prize is non-transferable. Your name and details will be collected solely for the purposes of this competition and in order to be able to contact the winner and send them the prize. By entering this competition, you give your consent for us to use the data you provide in this way.

Thames Rockets T&Cs: The prize winner will be able to redeem the prize using the code provided online or over the phone. Prize is valid 12 months from the date of issue. There are no age restrictions- however children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult on board. Please note those with past or current back or neck conditions are strongly advised not to travel with us. Without exception, expectant mothers are not permitted on-board at any stage of their pregnancy.

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St Thomas'
Charity
&...**



supporting &...

**We support the dedicated NHS staff at
Guy's and St Thomas', and the exceptional care
they provide to patients and their families.**

Search Guy's & St Thomas' Charity to find out more.

Care never stands still. And neither do we.

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