

Issue 6 – 29 May 2020

Latest news from Torbay and South Devon

We are sending you this update to keep you informed about Trust developments. We thought you would find it especially helpful during the COVID-19 outbreak. Please feel free to share these updates amongst your networks. If you wish to unsubscribe, or you have been passed this update by someone else and you would like to subscribe please email: communications.tsdf@nhs.net

We are ensuring our website has the latest information on it so please do look there for the most up-to-date information www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/

You also keep up-to-date by following us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

Message to the people of Torbay and South Devon

We wanted to take this opportunity to thank the people of Torbay and South Devon for their overwhelming support of our health and care workers through the Covid-19 pandemic. We understand that the experience has been challenging for our community and that the human cost has been high. Our thoughts are with all those who have been affected.

We are extremely proud of, and grateful for, the care, compassion, flexibility and sheer hard work of all our staff who have kept vital services running making sure that all of our patients and their families have been supported through their illness.

We have been humbled by the support we have received from local individuals and companies. The 'clap for carers' every Thursday signifies the community spirit, patience and understanding that has been so important in helping us all deal with lockdown, as well as enabling the NHS to keep services running. It has been a huge boost for staff morale. We take part each week, to recognise the contribution of all key workers and volunteers providing essential services – in care homes, shops, schools, buses, transport networks, council services and others.

We have received support in so many other ways too – from donations of food, hand sanitiser and PPE, to children's drawings to brighten up our hospitals and, of course, people's fundraising efforts. The donors are too many to name here, but we appreciate all your efforts and your gifts, they are making a real difference. Thank you.

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES

Today, we also want to thank our partners and local communities. We do not work alone; we work with GPs, councils, care homes, charities and the voluntary sector to provide joined up services that meet people's broader wellbeing needs. Health and care staff provide care in people's homes, and the local community supports them in so many other ways - by collecting shopping, offering transport, running local clubs and support groups, walking dogs, to name just a few.

We are proud to be part of a community that has come together to work in partnership and serve the needs of our people. The experience will help us build and shape services for our future.

Sir Richard Ibbotson, Chairman

Liz Davenport, Chief Executive

Advice on easing of lockdown

With the easing of some of the UK government lockdown restrictions, lots of us are spending more time outside enjoying the warm sunny weather. Please do remember how strong the sun is at the moment and make sure you cover up and use good sun protection. It is also important to stay hydrated so please make sure you are drinking plenty of water.

Playgrounds and outdoor gyms still remain closed and should not be visited. Areas such as these make it very difficult for social distancing to be observed, and therefore increase the risk of the infection spreading.

For further guidance on what you can and can't do visit: <http://orlo.uk/E9Z9z>

Social distancing guide for young people

The government has developed a plan to allow people to gradually go back to the way they were living before COVID-19. But it's a gradual process, happening in different stages for different people.

Right now, the advice is still that everyone should be **staying at home as much as possible**.

The government has published guidance on social distancing especially for young people to help them understand what is expected.

NHS Test and Trace service

The new NHS Test and Trace service was launched yesterday (Thursday 28 May) across England, the government announced. The service will help identify, contain and control COVID-19, reduce the spread of the virus and save lives.

Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and will need to share information about their recent interactions. This could include household members, people with whom they have been in direct contact, or within 2 metres for more than 15 minutes. People identified as having been in close contact with someone who has a positive test must stay at home for 14 days, even if they do not have symptoms, to stop unknowingly spreading the virus.

If those in isolation develop symptoms, they can book a test at nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119. If they test positive, they must continue to stay at home for 7 days or until their symptoms have passed. If they test negative, they must complete the 14-day isolation period.

Members of their household will not have to stay at home unless the person identified becomes symptomatic, at which point they must also self-isolate for 14 days to avoid unknowingly spreading the virus.

For more information look [here](#)

Your NHS is here for you

If you or a loved one - adult or child - have a health issue we are here for you. Please do seek help.

To keep our patients safe we have put a number of things in place including ensuring that patients attending who do not have Covid-19 are treated and cared for away from any patients who are unfortunately suffering from the virus. This includes urgent and emergency care. So if you do need care urgently be assured that you can access it safely.

In the coming weeks we will be providing more and more services and we want you to be assured that if you are offered an appointment or you have need to access a service we will be doing this safely.

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES

Please remember you can still contact your GP, 111 online or call 111 for help. If you are told to go to hospital, you must go. We'll give you the care you need. www.nhs.uk

Our website has the up to date information <https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/>

Trust Board

With necessary social distancing the Trust has had to change the way Board meetings take place. Normally Board members would sit around a Board table and members of the public would be able to come along and observe. But we are not able to do this at the moment.

We are very keen that the public are still able to listen and see the decisions that are being taken and the discussions our Board members are having so to make this possible we have used technology to hold a remote meeting with members sitting in their offices and homes. The meeting was recorded and is now available for anyone to watch [here](#) on our website.

Visiting restrictions continue

To reduce the risk to patients, staff and any visitors, no visiting is allowed at our hospitals, except for:

- Specific reasons of safety (dementia or learning disability where anxiety would be increased significantly)
- Inpatients under the age of 18 years old (one parent/guardian only)
- A patient receiving end of life care
- The birthing partner accompanying a woman in labour

Even under these circumstances you should not visit if you have a new, persistent cough or high temperature (of 37.8 degrees centigrade or higher).

Additionally, if you live with someone who has symptoms you will need to stay at home for 14 days starting from the day the first person in your house developed symptoms and should not visit.

We are working with partners to regularly review our visitor restrictions in hospitals across Devon to ensure that we are taking the necessary steps to protect staff, patients and visitors. We will relax them only when it is appropriate to do so. We would like to thank everyone for their support and understanding.

Nightingale Hospital in Exeter – Update

Work to build the latest NHS Nightingale hospital began in early May with the hospital expected to be able to take its first patient from the end of June.

A huge amount of work is needed to convert the 36,000 sq. ft empty space into a fully functioning hospital in Exeter.

Key headlines from the build so far

- Three and a half weeks of demolition completed in just 5 days
- In the last 8 days over 3km of metal stud work has been put in – plus a massive 2 acres of plasterboard
- About 20 artic trucks delivering material all day, every day
- Over 140 people working on the site

More than 100 people have joined us as “staff in waiting” in just a couple of weeks. All have been recruited to a staff bank so that if the need arises, they can be re-deployed to work at the Nightingale hospital.

For more information go to: www.nightingale-exeter.nhs.uk

Sending your love to a patient

Do you have a relative or friend who is staying with us in one of our hospitals? You can now send them a message to let them know you're thinking of them through our new 'Sending Love' scheme.

You can now send a message and, if you wish a photograph, to a loved one while they are an inpatient in one of our hospitals. We will then print and hand deliver your message to help you stay in touch.

For more information and to find out how, visit: www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/sending-love/

Offers of support

We have been and continue to be overwhelmed by the level of support we have received. This means so much to us. But we also want to share this generosity with the wider community.

We've become one of the first Trusts in the country to work directly with local food charities, diverting food donations in order to support the community.

During the course of the Coronavirus pandemic, NHS hospitals have been receiving generous donations of food and drinks from businesses as a gesture of goodwill and appreciation to their staff. Staff at Torbay hospital decided to pass these donations on to those residents in greater need in their communities; people in food poverty or unable to access food as a result of the lockdown. The hospital is now also supporting [Torbay Food Alliance](#)'s fundraising efforts through their Crowdfunder.

This has been made possible through a partnership with Torbay Food Alliance, a consortium of 12 food banks and community voluntary organisations, which formed as a direct response to the Covid-19 lockdown. The organisations decided to work collaboratively to provide a more co-ordinated response to local need and to better share skills, resources and information. The approach has enabled them to work more closely with the Trust; as well as [Torbay Council](#), which has contributed over £30,000 of funding to help support this much needed service.

Since lockdown, the Alliance has provided more than 70,000 meals to vulnerable people in the community. More information about Torbay Food Alliance is available at www.torbayfoodalliance.org

A donations page is also available at www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk

We regularly post thanks for some of the amazing donations and support on our social media pages so please do follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to see them.

We are aiming to ensure that all donation offers are properly co-ordinated so we ask that anybody wanting to donate goods and services should email tsdft.donations@nhs.net

Former NHS executive returns to support Trust during pandemic

We have had a number of staff returning to support us during this difficult time, here is the story of just one rather familiar face, former Medical Director and interim Chief Executive, Dr John Lowes.

Dr John Lowes, whose wife, daughter, son and his son's wife all have professional links with the NHS, volunteered to come out of retirement to work with the Trust's senior management team.

John's wife Anne is a retired GP and volunteered to return and is looking forward to helping when called. Their daughter Hannah has been working as a consultant pathologist in Bristol, prior to moving to London.

Their son David is a trainee neurosurgeon in Cardiff and has been working with COVID-19 admissions. His fiancée Gabrielle (their April wedding has been postponed due to the pandemic) is working as a trainee paediatrician in Swansea.

John said: "All five of us in the family either work or have worked in the NHS, and really does feel as if it is part of our DNA!

"I had been retired from the Trust for a couple of years when I could see the growing problem of the Covid-19 pandemic starting in the Far East and concerns about how it would affect my family and myself.

"The younger members of the family are very much in the frontline I felt that having only stopped working a couple of years ago, I still had something to offer that might be of value."

John's career with the Trust began in 1993 as a Consultant Gastroenterologist, followed by roles including Director of Education, Medical Director and Interim Chief Executive. He finished his time at work as an Acute Physician in the Emergency Admission Units and Acute Medical Unit.

"Initially, during this pandemic all the focus was on how Torbay Hospital would cope with the challenges of large numbers of acutely sick people. "It is now clear that it is a much more complex process that requires a response that addresses the whole community, including people's homes, residential and care homes, community hospitals and the acute services provided by Torbay Hospital.

"The real challenge now is to develop a health and care system that will safely deliver in the new world, where Covid is going to be around for some time."