

## DIARY DATES

**February 10** - Big Care Debate public meeting at Community Centre, Tiptree, 5.30pm.

**February 12** - Big Care Debate public meetings at CVST, Rosemary Road, Clacton, 4pm and 7pm

**February 12** - Colchester Hospitals Governors Council in Training Rooms South, Colchester General Hospital, 11am

**February 17** - Big Care Debate public meeting at the Community Room, Foundry Court, Manningtree, 4pm

**February 18** - Big Care Debate public meeting at Town Council Office, Brightlingsea, 4pm.

**February 19** - Big Care Debate public meeting at the MICA Centre, West Mersea, 2pm

**February 26** - Colchester Hospitals Board Meeting, Training Rooms South, Colchester General Hospital, 2pm

**March 10** - North East Essex partnership Foundation Trust Council of Governors at Marconi Sports and Social Club, Chelmsford, 4.30pm

**March 23** - Joint meeting of Colchester borough PPG representatives at PCC Offices, Turner Road, Colchester, 2pm

**March 25** - North East Essex Partnership Foundation Trust board meeting at Weston Homes Stadium, Colchester, 9.30am

# Local research aids dementia diagnosis

ONE of North Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (NEP) leading Consultant Psychiatrists, Dr Zuzana Walker together with colleagues at University College London (UCL) has published ground-breaking research which makes a significant impact nationally and internationally on improving the diagnosis and treatment of dementia.

Dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB) is difficult to diagnose and is the second most common type of degenerative dementia after Alzheimer's disease.

The difficulties in diagnosing DLB can have serious detrimental effects on patients' health.

However, this new research has revealed that a Dopamine transporter scan (DaTSAN) is helpful in cases with very uncertain diagnosis (patients with only one feature of DLB) that are frequently misdiagnosed as Alzheimer's disease.

Dr Walker who works at NEP and UCL has been conducting research projects into dementia, its care and treatment since 1996.

## Disabled sports fans get special help plea

THE government is calling on disabled sports fans to share their experiences of viewing live sport at stadiums and sports grounds.

Ministers are hoping thousands of Britain's 12 million disabled people will give their views on everything from wheelchair access and disabled parking to accessible toilets, hearing loops and treatment by other supporters at live fixtures.

Organisers want to hear from fans of all sports – and in particular rugby, cricket, football, hockey, basketball, cycling and motor-racing.

Last year the government called on Britain's football leagues to take urgent action to redress some of the "woeful" lack of appropriate support and space for disabled spectators, reminding them of their legal obligations to provide adequate room and adjustments for disabled fans.

Research showed nearly half of Premier League football clubs don't offer even half the wheelchair space they should for disabled people.

Find out more at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/bid-to-improve-disabled-access-at-sports-stadiums>

This newsletter is produced for North East Essex Health Forum by the Communications Working Group of the Health Forum Committee who would love to hear your views on it.

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## North East Essex Health Forum

# Forum Focus

Informing, Engaging and Debating

February 2015

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# Make sure you have your say on future plans

... even more important as Clinical Commissioning Group goes into financial savings mode

CONSULTATIONS on patient service changes under Care Closer to Home and Urgent Care were extended as the Clinical Commissioning Group behind them offered more people the opportunity to give their views

It gives yet greater importance to making the right decisions under the two massive spending areas involved in the Big Care Debate as it draws to its final close.

Spending has to be directed into the areas where patients need the right care and support.

You have until Monday February 23 to make comments.

And if you have queries on what is proposed there are still public meetings to be held. Full details of dates, times and venues are in the diary on the back page.



Meanwhile the January meeting of the group's board heard that the current financial year's budget was short by just over £3m and the year starting in April by some £24m (which may be reduced to £13m by using previous surpluses).

Staff have gone into financial recovery mode and a full review of all spending areas is being held through a series of special groups.

Everyone from Colchester General Hospital to GPs and the Health Forum are being asked to contribute.

Focus helps to keep Health Forum members and the public informed and in touch with the North East Essex health scene

# Inadequate rating 'unfair' - hospital

THE Care Quality Commission (CQC) labelled Colchester General Hospital as 'inadequate' and placed conditions on the managing trust's registration to help it improve how patients are assessed, discharged and transferred for the most appropriate medical attention.

In a statement, Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust accepts it delivered care which was sometimes below the high standards rightly expected by patients, and apologises to those patients who were let down.

However, the trust is concerned that the CQC report is not balanced and does not reflect the unprecedented pressures it was under at the time of the inspection in November and December last year or the considerable progress the trust has made over the past 12 months.

In November, the trust saw an increase of more than 10% in the number of patients brought in by blue light ambulances compared with the same month the previous year.

In December there was an increase of more than 40% in the number of patients treated in the trust's A&E "majors area" (seriously ill adults who were likely to need admission to hospital).

In its report, the CQC acknowledges that "staff were exceptionally busy" during their inspections and "staff stress levels were high".

The regulator also noted that "surges in activity meant that people had long waits to access services".



as a contingency to deal with significant pressures.

The CQC also said this meant "staffing levels on EAU were not sufficient and had not been assessed based on patient acuity in line with NICE guidelines".

Dr Lucy Moore, the trust's chief executive, said: "The examples of poor care that the CQC has identified in its report are unacceptable.

"They do not reflect the standards which we expect to deliver consistently for all our patients, and we have already taken urgent action to address shortfalls.

"However, I am disappointed that the CQC has decided to rate Colchester General Hospital as inadequate following visits to the A&E department and Emergency Assessment Unit.

"While being exceptionally busy can never be an acceptable excuse for providing sub-standard care, it is not unreasonable to point out the inspectors visited at a time of unprecedented demand within the NHS when, frankly, many hospitals like ours were struggling.

"Many people – including our staff – will not be surprised to read that clinicians were very busy and working under considerable stress."

Some of the measures the trust has taken since the CQC

inspectors first visited on November 12 include:

1 reducing the number of beds on EAU from 45 to 40 and redeploying staff there from a ward the trust closed last month

2 introducing more frequent meetings of senior clinicians so that capacity, staffing and patient acuity levels are being reviewed constantly

3 stepping up a recruitment campaign to fill nurse vacancies as quickly as possible

4 creating an Emergency Division, which covers A&E, EAU and patient flow and capacity issues, with its own leadership team. Expert advice is being provided by a former president of the College of Emergency Medicine

5 introducing spot-checks to assess compliance with safeguarding policy to ensure that patients' privacy and dignity are respected at all times

6 setting up debriefing sessions to learn from any incidents.

These measures have been achieved with the full support of the trust's partner organisations. In addition, the trust continues to receive support from experts at the national Emergency Care Intensive Support Team (ECIST).

## Forum is working on serving patients better

MEMBERS of the Health Forum believe they have made major strides in improving engagement through better organisation, more robust communication systems and the setting, and achieving, of common goals.

They reported to the January meetings of the North East Clinical Commissioning Group board and the Health Forum Committee:

1 The impact of the forum's first dedicated Engagement Officer has been felt on every organisation level and has benefitted the whole operation from members, public and patients and clinical commissioning group admin colleagues.

2 Greater direction and purpose to the Communications Working Group has improved contact levels throughout the operation of the forum. It has seen a task and finish group on training complete its function and the forming of a new Training Working Group to



oversee forum initiatives.

3 Birth of a printed version of the Health Forum newsletter. Now called Forum Focus and printed monthly, which is available at all GP surgeries, health centres and other NHS bases. Additional requests for regular copies are still arriving.

4 An information documents library has been established on the clinical commissioning group website for forum members, to see less email usage.

5 The Health Forum's own leaflet has been revised and a new edition printed. Members have been involved in outreach on behalf of the clinical commissioning group and forum at five different events and the forum committee has taken on responsibility for a publicity board at the PCC building.

6 Liaison has been initiated to

6 Liaison has been initiated to improve the flow of both 'soft' intelligence gathered by forum members and, at the same time, give more direction to patient experience evidence involving PALs and the complaints team.

7 Local Health Forum agendas are now finalised up to two months ahead so they can be better publicised through posters and the efforts of the communication team.

8 Establishment, with the clinical commissioning board's help, of a PPG member liaison group for Colchester which has held two productive meetings, the second with visiting speakers.

9 Health Forum Committee meetings are more structured through a revised report filing system, introduction of agenda planning meetings and the general effects of enhanced liaison.

## NHS decides to support Citizen idea

NHS England board has formally agreed to implement NHS Citizen participation in NHS England.

Board members agreed to set up a 'task and finish' group with NHS Citizen and others on resolving how NHS England can be an 'exemplar' for public participation in NHS decision making.

A paper presented and ap-



proved by the board also committed to take action on all five of the issues that were discussed at the NHS Citizen Assembly in September and agreed in principle to develop NHS Citizen in the next finan-

cial year (2015/2016).

The board paper said: "We now need to ensure NHS Citizen is a core part of the way NHS England enables public participation.

"We must also ensure that it is supported, without seeking to control, to make the necessary step change in public involvement across the NHS."



## Join the Health Forum to give your views

VOLUNTEERS interested in shaping their local health services are the lifeblood of the North Essex Health Forum.

People who want to do something meaningful and make change happen.

Members have the chance to get involved at different levels according to what interests they have and what time they can commit.

Sometimes the Clinical Commissioning Group may ask for your views on a specific matter.

At others, the Health Forum Committee, which is elected by Health Forum members, will seek opinions and comments.

You will be sent information and newsletters to keep you in touch with what is happening and your thoughts will be sought on service changes in the early stages of planning.

You can take part in the Patient Participation Group at your local surgery and attend regular public forums in Colchester, Clacton and Harwich if you want.

All members also get the chance to apply to take part in workshop sessions, focus teams and review teams aiming to ensure that patients receive the best possible service.

## Who can become a member of the Health Forum?

POTENTIAL members must be one or more of the following within North East Essex:

A registered patient at a GP practice

Live or work here

Be a volunteer, or representative from a voluntary organisation, operating here.

Use any services commissioned by the North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group.

Be a carer or guardian of someone using a service commissioned by the North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group.

Even if you do not meet any of the criteria you

will be welcome to join as a non-voting member.

That means you will still receive information and newsletters and be able to give your opinions when asked.

To join simply surf to [www.neeccg.org.uk](http://www.neeccg.org.uk) and click on the button marked Join The Health Forum on almost any page.

Or ring free phone **0800 881 5115** or write to: **The Health Forum Committee, Freepost Plus RTBS-YYXS-BATR, Primary Care Centre, Turner Road, Colchester, CO4 5JR.**

We look forward to working with you!

## Current members of the Health Forum Committee

Dawn Bostock ... chair and Tendring rep ...

[dawn.bostock@nhs.net](mailto:dawn.bostock@nhs.net)

Ray Hardisty ... deputy chair and Colchester rep ...

[ray.hardisty@nhs.net](mailto:ray.hardisty@nhs.net)

Mark Aitken ... Colchester rep ...

[mark.aitken1@nhs.net](mailto:mark.aitken1@nhs.net)

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Lucy Taylor ... Healthwatch Essex ...

[lucy.taylor@healthwatchessex.org.uk](mailto:lucy.taylor@healthwatchessex.org.uk)



Befriend the North East Essex Health Forum on Facebook at NEEssex Health Forum and receive newflashes and information relevant to public, patient and carer engagement



# Rallying round to defend the general

COLCHESTER General Hospital's overall assessment is based on ratings for five fields (safe, effective, caring, responsive, well-led) in each of eight different services (including A&E) – a total of 40 ratings.

The trust is currently rated "good" in almost half of these ratings and "inadequate" in just six but the CQC decided to give Colchester General Hospital an "inadequate" rating overall.

However, the CQC noted "the majority of patients we spoke with were happy with their care", "the workforce were committed and loyal" and good multidisciplinary working.

Dr Shane Gordon, clinical chief officer at North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, said: "We do not believe that the inadequate rating fully reflects the hard work by frontline staff and the hospital's clinical leadership over the last two years.

"This work will take time to show real benefits, and patience will be needed.

"The CQC report notes many instances of good practice and quality services provided by qualified clinical teams. We acknowledge that there are still improvements to be made.

"We will continue to work with the trust and all our partners to deliver a detailed improvement plan."

Tom Nutt, chief executive officer of Healthwatch Essex, said: "Healthwatch Essex has been working closely with the trust since the publication of our own detailed, and some-



times critical, report on patient and carer experiences of cancer care in Colchester.

"Since then, we have been encouraged by the resolve and commitment of the senior management and nursing staff charged with implementing improvements.

"We will continue to work with the trust to help articulate and bring to life a vision for improvement which puts patient experience at the heart of care."

The hospital trust's governors said: "We are disappointed and concerned with the Care Quality Commission's latest report on Colchester General Hospital.

"Clearly, improvements are needed – many actions have already been taken and more are planned.

"The report does not reflect the progress that has been made at the trust over the past year and does not recognise the tremendous dedication of the trust's highly committed staff.

"As trust governors we can say that our patients and local communities can have confi-

dence in the quality of care and treatment provided by Colchester Hospital Trust.

"We are on a journey of improvement but it's a journey that will take some time.

"The trust's reputation has been tarnished following a CQC report at the end of 2013 which triggered independent inquiries into allegations of bullying and cancer waiting time manipulation.

"The inquiries concluded that there was no evidence of a systemic culture of bullying at the trust, nor any evidence of data manipulation.

"But these allegations have adversely affected the trust's reputation and made it more difficult to recruit and retain vital staff.

"We sincerely hope therefore that this latest CQC report does not have a similar effect on our proactive efforts to recruit and retain staff".

**\*A complete file of reports on the hospital can be found by surfing to the Health Forum's document file on the clinical commissioning group web site ... and there is praise for it filling page 5.**



Alan Rose

## Chairman from April

ALAN Rose has been appointed Chairman of Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust.

Since 2006, he has been a Non-Executive Director (NED) of York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, serving as its Chairman since April 2010.

When his maximum nine-year term of office ends on March 31, he will become Chairman of the Colchester trust.

Mr Rose said: "I feel privileged to be given the opportunity to help the Colchester trust to regain the confidence of the communities it serves and that of the stakeholders in health and social care, whom I am sure also wish to see this."

"The coming months and years will be challenging for all concerned due to the incessant pressures the Health Service is under, but I am confident that the staff of the trust, backed by the huge support I sense the community still maintains in it, will provide the foundation for a new phase of good care."

## £375,000 scheme to improve outpatients dept

WORK has started on the first phase of increasing the size and improve the layout of the main outpatient department at Colchester General Hospital.

It will enable the department to accommodate some of the additional patients who will use the hospital as a result of the transfer of services from Essex County Hospital.

The first phase of the project will cost £375,000 and involves building inside what is currently a courtyard adjacent to the main outpatient department in the original hospital building at Colchester General Hospital.

Another courtyard was developed in a similar way in 2013 as part of a project to create a new and bigger majors area for the hospital's Emergency Department (A&E).

The current project, which is expected to be completed by May, involves creating a new reception and waiting area for the outpatient department, which will be bigger than the one it is replacing.

This will free up space for the second phase of the project

which is to increase the number of consulting suites from 20 to 23 and to reconfigure other space to improve the experience of outpatients.

Rossa Baker, Matron for Outpatients, said: "The main outpatient department at Colchester General Hospital is located in the original part of the hospital which has undergone limited investment over the past 30 years."

"The new reception and waiting area will be light, relaxing and airy, and also fitted with new chairs and furniture."

"We are also planning to implement a self check-in system, similar to those at many GP practices, which will help reduce queues."

The second phase of increasing the number of consulting suites is so that the main outpatient department at Colchester General Hospital can accommodate some of the extra patients resulting from the transfer of services from its sister department at Essex County Hospital.



*It's for everybody*

## Have you made your 2015 Health Pledge?

HERE is a great idea we are passing on from members of Thornley House Patient Participation Group.

It is just perfect for those who have not made any 2015 New Year resolutions.

Or have made one that failed and wish to try again.

The group says "We are not doing this on behalf of the NHS, medical professionals, politicians or civil servants."

"We are hoping to inspire people to take action to improve their health."

"The campaign aims to encourage and support people to take small steps to make big improvements."

"The big idea is that individuals pledge to do something to



improve their health in 2015.

"We are hoping that doing it as part of a group will add support and encouragement".

They explain: "A Health Pledge is your commitment to taking small steps to achieve a big change."

"You could consider it a guide to help you on your journey to a healthier you."

"It will encourage you to make

the small, easy steps which will lead to a big improvement in your health.

"Once you have decided what you want to do and how long for, write it down and post it somewhere you can refer to it whenever you need reminding."

You can find tips and more details, like suggestions on pledges at: <http://www.healthpledge.co.uk/>

## Saying farewell to stalwart Tony

MEMBERS of the Health Forum are saddened by the loss of stalwart health campaigner Tony Constable.

A prominent champion of patients, in particularly the elderly, he was also a regular attendee at regional and national levels.

And active member of LINK, he switched to the North East



Essex Health Forum when that organisation was lost to health reforms.

He was also to be seen playing prominent roles at the Essex

Older Peoples' Planning Group, Colchester pensioners' Action Group and the Colchester Branch of the National Federation of Occupational Pensioners.

His funeral takes place at Colchester Crematorium at 11.45am on Wednesday February 11. Both the Forum and CCG will be represented.

## Points to note about using your Forum Focus



**FORUM Focus is created in Microsoft Office Publisher and then turned into a PDF for easy delivery to members through e-mail.**

**However, readers may find that the various highlighted web address links may need to be copied and pasted into your browser instead of just clicked like many online newsletters.**

**To print into a magazine you will need to use A3 paper and fold the pages.**

**Printing onto A4 paper will give you 16 separate sheets.**

## Helping patients get to the correct PALS

HERE is a text version of a poster the Health Forum Committee created to assist patients make complaints.

Copies of it are available from our engagement officer, Paula Martin.

PALS is a Patient Advice and Liaison Service for people using the NHS.

It exists to help individuals ... patients, carers, relatives and friends ... to resolve any problems.

The service can also provide service information or links to the right people to talk to.

PALS is confidential, non-judgmental and independent. North East Essex Clinical



Commissioning Group (NEECCG) PALS  
01206 286939 and 0800 328 5620 Email: [pals.nee@nhs.net](mailto:pals.nee@nhs.net)  
Colchester Hospital University Foundation Trust (CHUFT) PALS  
01206 742683 and 01206 746448 (Internal extensions 2683 and 6448)  
0800 783 7328 Email: [PALS@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk)

North Essex Partnership University Foundation Trust (NEPFT) PALS  
01245 546433 Email: [pals@nepft.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@nepft.nhs.uk)  
Anglian Community Enterprise (ACE) PALS  
0800 819 9030 Email: [ace-cic.patientsexperience@nhs.uk](mailto:ace-cic.patientsexperience@nhs.uk)  
East of England Ambulance Service  
01234 243320 or 0800 028 3382 Email: [eoasnt.feedback.nhs.uk](mailto:eoasnt.feedback.nhs.uk)  
Essex Cares  
0800 035 9770 Email: [essex-carescomplaints@essexares.org](mailto:essex-carescomplaints@essexares.org)

### PPG reps time move

THE next joint meeting of Colchester PPGs (facilitated by the North East Essex Health Forum) will take place on Monday March 23 in Room 14A on the Second floor of the Primary Care Centre, Turner Road, Colchester, CO4 5JR.

Due to many requests, please note that this meeting will now be held in the afternoon from 2pm to 4pm and not in the evening as on previous occasions.

### Test roll-outs

THE Friends and Family test will be further extended from April 1 to cover NHS-funded acute hospitals outpatients and day cases, ambulance services and patient transport services.

There are also consultations in progress in relation to starting the same survey in dental practices.

## How satisfied are we with our GPs?

NHS England together with Ipsos MORI, have published the latest Official Statistics from the GP Patient Survey, aggregated data for January to March 2014 and July to September 2014.

The survey provides information on experience of primary care services.

In total 881,183 completed people the survey nationally, with 30,517 respondents from Essex.

In Essex- 83% of people said their overall experience of GP surgery was either very or fairly good, and 75% would either definitely or probably recommend their surgery to someone who had just moved into the area.

Very or fairly good satisfaction varied in Essex from 80% in Thurrock CCG to 86% in Castle Point and Rochford CCG.

73% of people were either very or fairly satisfied with opening

hours of their GP surgery.

72% said the GP surgery is currently open at convenient times, but many people said if they were open Saturdays or after 6.30 it would make it easier to speak to someone (76 and 71% respectively).

Length of time people waited to see GP/nurse in Essex: 38% saw or spoke to a GP or nurse the same day, 12% waited till the next working day, 30% waited a few days, 16% waited a week or more.

In Essex 11% of people were not able to get an appointment to see or speak to someone.

Of these 10% went to A&E or a walk-in centre while just 2% saw a pharmacist.

\* From January 1, this satisfaction survey has been replaced by the Friends and Family Test in all GP practices.

# Patients give praise

**THIS line of postings appeared on Colchester Streetlife over four days in December .... and, yes, the hospital did notice it!**

**streetlife.com**  
the local social network



Sandra P  
I HAVE just come home from spending the weekend in Stanway ward at Colchester General Hospital. And I have to wonder why they get such negative press?

I was sitting at home on Friday evening looking at emails and generally surfing the net. I noticed my left hand was swollen and getting very painful to the touch, and one of my rings was beginning to "cut" into my finger.

I managed to get my wedding ring off (thank goodness) and the middle finger had a gold band on it, but this was a cheaper one.

I did no more and called a taxi and I went up to A&E and there were around eight people waiting to be seen.

It was about an hour when I was seen by a triage nurse and I was told it could be about 3-4 hours before I would see a doctor, but she did suggest I get the ring cut as it would eventually be more serious than at first realised.

This was done eventually done and I felt better for that.

I did see a doctor who said we will get you into x-ray and check there are no foreign bodies in your hand.

To cut a long story short I was diagnosed with cellulitis in my hand from a bite from my kitten, and I was taken to Stanway ward at 5am Saturday December 20.

I cannot fault the service from

all members of staff, even the cleaners and ancillary staff, and sister, nursing staff were all very professional and I felt like royalty.

Good on you Colchester General Hospital and especially Stanway ward!

Diane C  
My husband was in Colchester Hospital for two weeks in May of 2013. Unfortunately he died 03/06/13 but as for the care and attention he had over the years they were brilliant. We are always getting negative reports about the hospital but my experience has only been positive.

Ronald M  
I agreed with Diane C. CGH were brilliant when my mother passed away and they consoled with us and very helpful indeed!

Clive G  
What a relief to hear some good comments about our amazing hospital.

My mother-in-law has been admitted to Mersea/Brightlingsea/Nayland wards several times over the past year and we have been amazed and delighted at the treatment she has received.

Nothing has been too much

trouble for any of the doctors or nurses etc

The hospital has always been very clean and despite the pressure that we are sure the staff are under, it has never been used as an excuse.

In fact, she was taken to A & E during, what had been published in the newspapers as a particularly bad time - staff shortages etc.

We would never have guessed it - she was treated with the utmost patience and efficiency - they were all amazing.

Please, please newspapers - concentrate on the good things that the hospital does and help to boost the moral of the wonderful staff.

Lindsay S  
This is one of the loveliest threads I have read and I'm lifted by all of the positive comments.

Jax H  
Colchester hospital is the best. They all work so very hard.

Julie G  
I'm going to write to the local MP, the Colchester Press and the CEO of the hospital once I get out and am feeling better to commend the hospital and their amazing staff!



## FREE ways to wellbeing

TAKE part in free wellbeing days of The Bounce! Programme.

They are all being held at Colchester Institute from 10.30am to 3pm and include a free lunch.

They are February 9 and 24 and March 3, 16 and 27.

Email: [tracey.macrae@colchester.ac.uk](mailto:tracey.macrae@colchester.ac.uk) to book.

## Dementia pay

NHS England will drop the scheme paying GPs £55 for each additional patient on their list diagnosed with dementia from April, NHS England's chief executive has said

Mr Simon Stevens called the scheme a 'one-time catch up opportunity' which will run until the end of March.

## Better service

ONE of Colchester's bus services ... route 8 ... to and from Colchester general Hospital is now running every 10 minutes instead of every 12.

But service 2 is no longer serving Severalls Business Park.

# ACE now running from library hub

PEOPLE wanting to turn over a new leaf and become a healthier person will now have a very appropriate venue in which to do so – at Colchester town centre library and community hub.

A range of NHS health improvement services, including weight management and smoking cessation, are now available from the library in Trinity Square.

For the past 10 years, these services, now commissioned by Essex County Council's Public Health team, have been available from Cornerstone in nearby Sir Isaac's Walk.

The services are run by Anglian Community Enterprise



(ACE) the organisation responsible for managing more than 40 NHS community healthcare services across large parts of Essex.

People can call into the library or phone 0800 022 4524 to access the wide range of services.

\*Sexual health services previously provided by ACE from Cornerstone will now be available from The Townhouse in West Stockwell Street.

## Digital way to good health

TRAINING older people in the use of social media improves cognitive capacity, increases a sense of self-competence and could have a beneficial overall impact on mental health and well-being, says a new study.

A two-year project funded by the European Union and led by the University of Exeter in partnership with Somerset Care Ltd and Torbay and Southern Devon Health and Care NHS Trust gave a group of vulnerable older adults a specially-

designed computer, broadband connection and training in how to use them.

Those who received training became more positive about computers over time, with the participants particularly enjoying connecting with friends and relatives via Skype and email.

It found that those trained had heightened feelings of self-competence, engaged more in social activity, had a stronger sense of personal identity and improved cognitive capacity.



## We'll ensure you can access documents

**READERS who are not on the internet, or are unable to get access to a computer, can still receive the documents mentioned in Forum Focus.**

**Simply, ring the Health Forum on FREEPHONE 0800 881 5115, say which document you want and give your address.**

**We will obtain a copy and mail it to you.**

## Health and Wellbeing activity with community and voluntary groups

### Funding for local health projects



Tracy Rudling

COMMUNITY organisations which help improve people's health and care across north east Essex are being invited to bid for a share of funding being offered by local charitable organisation, Anglian Community Trust (ACT).

It is the charitable arm of community health services provider Anglian Community Enterprises (ACE),

Applicants must demonstrate to trustees:

- how the funding for which they have applied will benefit the health, well-being and/or welfare of people living in the communities in which ACE provides services;

- good value for money;
- the work is meeting needs that are not already being met;
- there will be no 'pick up' costs after 12 months, eg running costs, maintenance costs etc.

Application forms and supporting information can be found on ACT's website, [www.angliancommunitytrust.org](http://www.angliancommunitytrust.org)

Completed application forms must be returned to Tim Huggett either via e-mail or by post to 659-662, The Crescent, Colchester Business Park, Colchester, Essex, CO4 9YQ, by February 18, 2015.

## Leading voice at national report launch

COLCHESTER-based voluntary group champion Tracy Rudling has told a national body that local people are best placed to understand the needs of their place, as well as their communities, and therefore how services should be designed to meet them.

Mrs Rudling, chief executive officer of Colchester CVS, was speaking at the launch of the latest action report by the Transformation Challenge Panel at the Houses of Parliament.

The panel is strongly in favour of communities taking charge over their own services and destinies, based on the specific needs of individual places.

Mrs Rudling said her organisations is finding itself working with more groups all of the time, which are stepping forward to meet unmet needs and find solutions to local problems.

"They want to help fix these issues and work towards helping people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

"They are also creating new mechanisms for this approach and asking us to support their ideas.

"We focus on assets and strengths, not just need, which has involved us embracing some national good practice and projects that deliver our desired outcomes, but also co-produce the delivery to meet the need of the locality, in partnership with the locality."

Mrs Rudling added that although people are always looking for innovation, sometimes existing models also need to be supported.

"It's worth allowing time for things to bed in with longer term certainty, to maximise the outcomes.

The panel's report calls for three fundamental changes:

1 A new person-centred approach to help specific groups and individuals with multiple and complex needs.

2 More easily accessible and more flexible funding available to invest in the upfront costs of transformation.

3 Radical improvements in how data and technology are used to provide smarter services

The recommendations are based on evidence from six months of research.

## Health group topics for the deaf and their carers

DATES and locations for the 2015 meetings of the Deaf Healthy Living Groups have been announced.

They are all 10.30am to 12.30pm and assisted by signers in British Sign Language.

Tending meetings are in Clacton library.

Topic on February 25 is Meningitis Now.

Other sessions are booked for: April 29, June 24, August 26 and October 28.

Colchester meetings are at Riverside Office Centre.

Next date is March 25 with the topic Prostate Cancer UK.

Other meetings are arranged for May 27, July 29 and September 24.

# Give to fund charity

MINISTER of State for Care and Support, Norman Lamb, is to launch a major fundraising campaign for a Colchester charity.

He is throwing his support behind the idea of encouraging people to pledge £1 a week to fund the work of Age UK Colchester.

And he plans to be at the official launch at Colchester Town Hall on the afternoon of February 18.

He will be in the town at the invitation of Colchester MP, Sir Bob Russell, who was concerned that, without regular funds, the charity could be in jeopardy.

Pound-Age is the lifeline.

The scheme encourages people to assist the current services, and expand to meet fu-



-ture needs, through donating £1 a week.

Services for the elderly range from information to legal advice and advocacy to computer training.

Group activities include those for studying family history, crafts, Men in Sheds, knitting and simple coffee and chat.

"We believe Colchester people and businesses want to

see our charity continue serving the borough," said chief executive Edward Pentney.

"The charity is vital to many elderly people across the borough and we are receiving new requests to help every day.

"This scheme is a straightforward way to try and ensure we have the money needed to pay for what needs to be done."

At the same time the charity is planning to move from its existing base in Globe House, George Street, into premises that offer both a charity shop and office accommodation.

The search is already on for premises that offer the joint facility and are cost effective.

Further details on Pound-Age from the charity on 01206 368420.

## Grant support

THIRD and final phase of a project to refurbish Winsley's House, the HQ of Colchester Community Voluntary Services (CCVS), on High Street, can go ahead thanks to The Veolia Environmental Trust.

They have awarded the CCVS a grant of £20,000 to fund the installation of a new boiler and central heating system for the building.

## Drop in chat

THE Colchester Prosthetic User Group is to run a drop in and chat event monthly throughout 2015 in Clacton.

They will be held on the fourth Thursday of every month between noon and 2pm at Coastal Community Centre, Clacton Coastal Academy, Pathfields Road, from February 26.

## Looking for the carnival charity

CLACTON Carnival Committee is looking for a Clacton-based charity or organisation, which needs funds in the region of £3,000 for a project which will directly benefit people locally, to be the main charity for this year's Carnival Procession.

Last year a cheque for £2,100 was given to the Clacton Branch of the RNLI who needed to upgrade the clothing the crew wear when they get called out.

For full details of how to be considered for the main charity please write to the Mrs Nicola Freeman, Carnival Press Officer, 2 Albany Gardens, Clacton, CO15 6HW or phone Clacton 426262.

Details of the criteria are also available on the carnival website: [www.clactoncarnival.org](http://www.clactoncarnival.org)

## Family help

COLCHESTER and Tendring Youth Enquiry Service has relaunched Family Counselling Service for young people aged 11-19 (11-25 with disabilities) and their families.

They are able to offer up to 12 weekly one hour sessions to families experiencing problems in their relationships.

You can download the information flyer and referral form from the CVST website <http://www.cvstendring.org.uk/support-for-groups/e-bulletin.html>

## Shopping aid

FRINTON and Walton Silver-Circle has vacancies for shopping trips on Thursdays for residents who are over 60 and don't have their own car. It is also looking for volunteer drivers available on Fridays. Ring 01255 852000

## Carers to self caring

**healthwatch**  
Essex

HERE is the link to our latest Voice Network film about the lived experience of carers. It is <http://bit.ly/11FwR3n>

The film marks the beginning of our research project to understand the emotional complexities of caring and to identify desired forms of support.

We have trained our first group of ambassadors with learning disabilities. Part of the training was on what happens at a learning disability health check - so their first task as ambassadors is to encourage their friends and peers to have a health check with their GP.

Do you have a passion for an area of health and social care? If you'd like to help us by being our eyes and ears in your local community, sign up to become an ambassador.

Have you seen the Healthwatch Essex Information Service adverts yet? Over the next few weeks we'll be promoting our 0300 number on local buses, radio stations, pharmacy bags and newspapers. The service offers a one-stop-shop for information on health and care services in Essex.

Are you a member of your GP surgery's Patient Participation Group (PPG)? If so, we'd like to invite you to a learning event about how you can work with Healthwatch Essex. You'll also receive training on how to capture the lived experience of people in your community.

Essex County Council is keen to get your thoughts on its strategy to delay and prevent ill health, as well as empower people to live independently for as long as possible. Have your say before February 12.

And if you'd like some assistance, we're here to help on 0300 500 1895.

# Midwives are best says new NICE guidance

MORE women should be encouraged to give birth at midwife-led units rather than traditional labour wards, says NICE. In updated guidance, the evidence now shows that midwife-led care is safer than hospital care for women having a straightforward, low risk, pregnancy.

This is because the rate of interventions, such as the use of forceps or an epidural, is lower and the outcome for the baby is no different compared with an obstetric unit.

Mid-wife led units can be based at hospital sites next to obstetric units or freestanding and based away from a hospital site.

Around 45 per cent of women have a low risk of developing complications during their pregnancy.

Factors that can increase the risk of complications during birth include being over 35, being overweight or obese, bleeding after 24 weeks of gestation,



and having a high blood pressure.

Complications from a previous pregnancy can also increase the risk of complications during birth for pregnant women.

The guidance recommends that home births are also equally as safe as a midwife-led unit and traditional labour ward for the babies of low risk pregnant women, except for first-time mothers.

## Erectile drug and dementia

A COMMONLY prescribed drug used to treat men with erectile problems could become the next treatment for dementia, according to Alzheimer's Society and Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation (ADDF).

Tadalafil – part of the same class of drugs as Viagra – is to be one of the drugs investigated in new research funded by the two charities in a cross-

Atlantic research partnership. Scientists led by Dr Atticus Hainsworth at St George's, University of London will explore if tadalafil, which dilates blood vessels, could help prevent vascular dementia by increasing blood flow to the brain.

Vascular dementia is the second most common form of dementia.

## Catching up on what is happening with mental health in North Essex

### Joining forces on contract

NORTH Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (NEP) and the South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (SEPT) are working together as Essex health partners in a ground breaking move to establish a single, new, specialist treatment and recovery service (STaRS) for people with a drug or alcohol dependence across the whole of Essex from April 1.

Essex STaRS, as the new service will be known, will be different from current specialist prescribing and shared care service and will be a collaborative, recovery-focused system designed to empower people to move from the illicit use of drugs and alcohol towards a life free from dependency and which is maintained voluntarily.

Essex STaRS will have its main centre in Chelmsford, but all clinical staff will be co-located at other partners' premises, such as Choices, other local alcohol service providers, some GPs' practices and other community locations.

The emphasis will be on better integration of services between STaRS and the rest of the Integrated Recovery Management System (IRMS) offering people an increased choice of pathways in their recovery.

In conjunction with Choices there will be user-led recovery planning throughout treatment.

### User screening

CLINICAL Nurse Manager Lidia Woods at North Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (NEP) has published an article in Elsevier Journal about screening for Hepatitis C for people who currently inject drugs or formerly injected drugs.



### Parents fears over child mental health

PARENTS are more likely to worry about their children's mental well-being than any other health issue, suggests research.

Some 40% of 2,267 parents surveyed by Action for Children said their children's emotional well-being was a primary concern.

Among mothers, this rose to 47%, according to the charity's analysis of data collected by YouGov.

The charity wants more early support for families to prevent major problems.

"Spending time and money preventing a problem rather than repairing the damage is the right and logical thing to do.

"With councils facing reduced

funds, we are calling for a shift in funding towards early support to help prevent concerns or issues from becoming major problems," said chief executive Sir Tony Hawkhead.

YouGov carried out online interviews with 9,015 adults across the UK, of whom 2,267 were parents of children aged 18 or under.

The results suggested fathers were less likely to worry about their children's mental and emotional well-being, with 32% highlighting it as a concern.



### Crisis care agreement

AGENCIES across Essex, Southend and Thurrock have signed the local Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat, demonstrating their commitment to working together better to deliver improved mental health services for people in crisis.

The concordat is an agreement between emergency services, statutory and voluntary mental health services, the police, public health and the clinical commissioning groups (CCG's) involved in the care and support of people in crisis.

It sets out how organisations will work together better to make sure that people get the help they need when they are

having a mental health crisis.

The agencies have made a commitment to delivering the concordat throughout the county by putting in place, reviewing and regularly updating action plans to improve services.

Stephen Kavanagh, Chief Constable Essex Police said: "I wholeheartedly welcome the introduction of this agreement. My officers are responding on a daily basis to calls where people with mental health issues have reached crisis point.

"It is of vital importance that people in distress are provided with access to professional care and support, beyond that which policing can provide".

## Catching up on what is happening with mental health in North Essex



The St Aubyn Centre's school has been rated 'outstanding'.

### Top rating!

OFSTED has rated the St Aubyn Centre's Therapeutic Education Department as 'an outstanding school'.

The Colchester centre, which is run by North Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (NEP), provides care and treatment for young people aged 13 to 18, who are experiencing mental health problems.

The Essex County Council Therapeutic Education Department provides specialist education for the young people at The St Aubyn Centre.

### Consider being a governor

DO you have the passion, enthusiasm and commitment to improve mental health services in Essex?

NEP which is responsible for providing mental health, substance misuse, and community services is looking for local residents who can become governors at the trust.

As a governor, you will help to shape mental health services in Essex and stop stigma and discrimination.

Clive White, Lead Governor at NEP said: "It's a great opportunity to represent your area, raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing, attend meetings and events organised by NEP.

"If you ever wanted to get involved with the NHS, this is your chance!"

There are opportunities in both Colchester and Tending.

You can express your interest now by contacting the trust secretary for more details.

Email [Dermot.mccarthy@nepft.nhs.uk](mailto:Dermot.mccarthy@nepft.nhs.uk)

### Trust launches strategic plan

NORTH Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (NEP) has launched its new five year strategic plan "All together, better".

It is designed to set a clear direction for the trust moving forward, provide a framework for how the organisation responds to change, sets objectives and provides the public and stakeholders with an understanding of the trust's future direction.

Chief Executive of the trust, Andrew Geldard, said: "The changes within the NHS mean that services providers, such as NEP, have had to change their approach to strategic planning, from implementing central policy to one of working within a competitive market.

"In any market there is uncertainty which increases the need

for us to have clarity of purpose, a focus for future thinking and an approach to every change and opportunity the market may produce.

"Our new strategic plan does just that."

At the core of the plan are four main objectives.

1 NEP will be recognised as a leading provider of specialist mental health care

2 NEP will be a system leader and a partner in the development and delivery of integrated community services

3 NEP will continue to improve patient experience

4 NEP will continue to improve patient outcomes

A full copy of the plan is available on the trust web site at <http://www.nepft.nhs.uk/your-trust/5-year-strategy/>

### Festive delights

FESTIVE decoration awards were won by two North East Essex facilities run by the North Essex Partnership. St Aubyn Centre, Colchester, (silver) and Free-land Court, Clacton, (highly commended).