



News and events from Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust.

## Welcome to e-connect!

We're officially counting down to the festive season now and we hope that you will have the opportunity to take some time off to relax and recuperate.

With the emergence of the new variant of COVID-19 (Omicron) and the uncertainty it brings, we know that many of you may be worried about your upcoming plans. The government announced that from Tuesday 30 November, face coverings were once again mandatory in shops and on public transport and all travellers returning to the UK are required to have a PCR test.

In line with this, we are continuing to require all visitors to wear a mask, observe social distancing rules of 2 metres and use the hand sanitiser provided. This is not only to protect you and

your loved ones, but also our staff too.

We hope that you enjoy reading about all the things that have keeping us busy as we countdown to the festive period - from our KMPT Awards to recruiting new staff members.

Stay safe and we hope you have a lovely festive break.

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## **Andy Cruickshank appointed as Chief Nurse**

We are pleased to announce that Andy Cruickshank has been appointed to the role of Chief Nurse at KMPT.

Andy will join the Trust early next year, from his current role as Director of Nursing at East London Foundation Trust.

Andy is delighted to be joining the organisation and said: "I am really looking forward to joining KMPT at such an exciting time in the Trust's development.

"As someone who lives in the county, I have been aware of the substantial improvements made each year to the services KMPT provides. I am very much looking forward to be part of such a forward-thinking organisation that so clearly puts people and the communities it supports at the heart of everything it does."

Andy brings with him a wealth of experience and knowledge of complex mental health care, and during his time at East London Foundation Trust, has been responsible for implementing a wide-range of initiatives focused on quality improvement to help continuously improve the standard of nursing care.

Chief Executive, Helen Greatorex, said: "I am delighted that we will be welcoming Andy at the beginning of March 2022.

"We were specifically looking for a very experienced and committed Registered Mental Health Nurse to join the team as our Chief Nurse, and Andy brings significant experience as well as a clear passion for the positive difference that nurses can make to the experience of those who use our services.

"He also joins us from a trust whose Care Quality Commission's rating is Outstanding and we look forward to learning about how we can go even further and faster in our improvement of KMPT services."



### **KMPT Awards winners announced**

On Thursday 2 December we held our KMPT Awards ceremony virtually.

Unfortunately, with the emergence of the new variant of COVID-19 (Omicron), we decided to cancel our face-to-face event and instead livestreamed the awards. It was a difficult decision to make, but the safety of our staff is paramount and we felt it only right that we take these steps.

With that in mind, we still managed to have a very enjoyable evening full of celebration, appreciation and laughter.

Our Deputy chief executive and Executive director of partnerships and strategy, Vincent Badu, hosted the event, with our Executive and Non-executive directors all taking to the floor to present the different awards.

We were treated to four brilliant videos, discussing the journeys and work of our four Lived Experience nominees - Ashley, Lucy, Theresa and the Transforming neurodiversity support board, and the viewers at home got to vote for their winner via Slido.

You can find out all the winners and highly commended [here](#)

We had amazing feedback from those watching from home, with many of them reacting under the livestream and on social media.

Thank you to everyone who made the evening possible and truly represented the brilliant people that we have in the organisation. Fingers crossed that next year we will be able to return to a face-to-face event, but for now we're just delighted that we got to show our appreciation and celebrate all of our winners and highly commended.

Congratulations again to everyone who was nominated, shortlisted and of course our winners.

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## **We are inviting those with learning disabilities to support the development of a video about prescribed medication**

Our Mental Health of Learning Disability Service is developing an innovative video explaining prescribed medication to patients with Learning Disability. The team would like to learn what information will be useful to users with accessibility needs to know when they have started a new medication.

We would like to hold a focus group in January 2022 to collect peoples' views. We are inviting people that have accessibility needs, when viewing information, to the focus group. The focus group will be accessible to everyone who attends.

We would also like to encourage staff and carers of this client group to have discussions with patients about what information regarding medication would be helpful to see in the video and to send their feedback directly to Partnerships and Engagement.

If you would like to take part in our focus group, send some written feedback or would like more information please contact Kamila Lobuzinska on [kmpt.engagement@nhs.net](mailto:kmpt.engagement@nhs.net)





## Please don't abuse our staff – it's not in a day's work

Working in the NHS is very special – it is often seen as a vocation; we recognise what a privileged position we hold.

Our people feel pride in what they do; they join the healthcare profession because they want to help others and make a real difference to people's lives.

The overwhelming majority of our patients, clients and service users are respectful of the years of training and the skills healthcare professionals have developed so they can care for others.

People understand the caring and compassionate nature that makes someone want to work for the NHS; whether they are clinicians or in support roles.

The past eighteen months during the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, have demonstrated the passion with which our staff go above and beyond every day and the risks they expose themselves to as they do so.

But even before that, our teams were committed to high-quality patient care across Kent and Medway and they remain so now.

We understand the frustration when you may have to wait a little longer at a clinic appointment, urgent treatment centre or emergency department, or when you may not be able to get through to a GP practice on the phone.

Some people don't understand why we are still asking them to wear masks in healthcare settings when they don't wish to do so. We also know others don't wish to participate in the COVID-19 vaccination programme. The second is a personal choice; the first keeps our staff safer.

However, what we cannot accept is abuse – verbal or physical – towards our workforce. They are there to help, not be abused.

NHS staff across Kent and Medway are reporting more and more incidents of the abuse they face when they go into work.

We ask the small minority of people engaging in this behaviour stop and think of the impact it can have on individuals; on their families and on the NHS and to stop it.

On 16 November we launched our [#notinadayswork campaign](#) to remind people that abuse of NHS staff never has been and never will be acceptable.



## Flu and COVID-19 boosters

The NHS is continuing to deliver essential winter vaccines, including the annual flu vaccination programme and COVID-19 boosters.

In the South East two million people have already received their COVID-19 vaccine booster as the NHS COVID-19 vaccination rollout continues across the country against the virus. Those who are eligible for a COVID-19 booster at least three months on from their second dose include:

- you are aged 18 or over
- you are aged 16 or over with a health condition that puts you at high risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19
- you are a frontline health or social care worker
- you live or work in a care home
- you are aged 16 or over and are a main carer for someone at high risk from COVID-19
- you are aged 16 or over and live with someone who has a weakened immune system (such as someone who has HIV, has had a transplant or is having certain treatments for cancer, lupus or rheumatoid arthritis)

Booster vaccines are by far our best protection against the virus and you can book your booster [here](#)

We are continuing with our own flu campaign by encouraging all of our staff to 'boost their immunity' this winter by getting their free flu vaccine, to help protect themselves, their family and loved ones, but our patients too. Thank you to our brilliant team of vaccinators who are working hard behind the scenes delivering flu clinics across the Trust and ensuring as many staff as possible can get their flu vaccine. You can find a pharmacy that issues the flu vaccine [here](#)

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## Could you be our next volunteer?

With so many services in need of assistance, we're always looking for volunteers to help out throughout the Trust. Volunteering provides you with the chance to get out, meet new people and

make a difference to the lives of the people within our community.

We're currently looking for:

- **Drivers** to take our patients (and their families) to appointments, home visits and other important business all across the county
- **Gardeners** to help maintain our many gardens and green sites across the county. You can either volunteer alongside our occupational therapy teams on garden activities with patients, or as part of a group of garden volunteers working alone
- **Pets as therapy volunteers** who can bring their animals onto our site and bring comfort and relaxation to our patients' day.

### So, what are you waiting for?

There are so many volunteering opportunities available right now and you could make a real difference to the lives of our patients. If any of these roles sound of interest, or you know of someone who would be a great fit, please register your interest via our [website](#), where all of our volunteer roles are listed.

You can also call our Voluntary Services team on 01227 812137 for further details about any of the roles on offer. We look forward to hearing from you!



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We'd love to hear what you think.

If you have any feedback about econnect that you would like to share, please contact the communications team at [kmpt.communications@nhs.net](mailto:kmpt.communications@nhs.net)



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