This has been a year of major achievements for the Trust in many areas. Here are some of the highlights:

April 2003
- 26 'modern matrons' are appointed to lead nursing throughout the Trust and improve patient care.
- The Trust is awarded 'top hospital' status by CHKS, which compares NHS Trusts. The award reflects good performance on a number of areas, including low mortality rates, low readmission rates after surgery, and the short length of time people wait for planned surgery. In April 2004, the Trust again achieves 'top hospital' status.
- A team of surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and radiologists from the Trust visit three hospitals in Boston, USA, to see what lessons they could learn. The team returned with plans for revolutionary changes in the way in which the Trust organises elective surgery. These plans are currently being implemented across the Trust.

May 2003
- A one-stop skin cancer clinic opens at the Churchill Hospital.
- Sir William Stubbs, former Chairman of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, is appointed Chairman.
- At the Trust's annual healthcare Conference, awards are made to six staff for significant achievements in their professional areas.
- The Heart Valve Bank at the John Radcliffe becomes one of only three in Britain to gain accreditation in a national inspection scheme, following £150,000 investment by the Trust in new laboratory facilities.

June 2003
- The Department of Health announces that the Trust is to become a regional centre of excellence for the treatment of children with cleft lip and palate.
- New laboratory facilities in the Transplant Centre are opened to support pioneering research into the use of pancreatic islets in the treatment of diabetes.
- The Trust's Emergency and Outpatient Departments are praised in the annual patients' survey.
- The Trust launches a campaign to encourage recycling, aimed at cutting a third of its waste disposal costs.

July 2003
- The Kadoorie Centre opens. The centre, which offers outstanding new facilities for research and education in critical care, was funded by businessman Michael Kadoorie.
- The Trust narrowly misses out on two stars in the Government's performance ratings, relating to the previous financial year.

August 2003
- A pictorial account of the Trust's four hospitals, by artist Jane Peart, is unveiled by Chairman Sir William Stubbs. Copies of the specially commissioned picture, which celebrate people and places across the Trust, hang in each hospital.

September 2003
- Trevor Campbell Davis, formerly Chief Executive of the Whittington Hospital in London, starts as Chief Executive of the Trust.
- The Secretary of State for Health, Dr John Reid, visits the Radcliffe Infirmary to inaugurate a new Emergency Department at the John Radcliffe Hospital.

October 2003
- The Trust commissions a double-decker bus advertising NHS careers to tour the county in a bid to boost staff numbers.
- The new £8.5m Trauma Centre at the John Radcliffe hospital, which opened in October 2002, is short-listed for an NHS Building Better Healthcare Award.
- The Trust launches a campaign to encourage patients to speed up the rate at which patients are discharged from the hospital when they no longer need acute care, known as patient choice.

November 2003
- On World Diabetes Day, the Government announces that the Trust will become one of seven national centres funded to carry out pancreatic transplants.
- The Starter Home scheme, offering assistance to staff wishing to buy their own property, is extended, so that anyone working for the Trust is eligible to apply.
- A new physiotherapy-led hand clinic starts at the Radcliffe Infirmary funded through the Government's 'Action on Plastic Surgery' programme.
- A national survey reveals that patients having surgery at the Radcliffe Infirmary for serious nose and sinus problems have the best outcomes in England and Wales.
- A new sexual health clinic for teenagers, supported by the Radcliffe Infirmary, is launched.

December 2003
- The Chairman, Sir William Stubbs, announces a 'Review of the Trust', to be launched in July 2004.
- The Trust signs a £135m deal with The Hospital Group PLC for the new John Radcliffe Hospital.
- The Surgical Emergency Unit at the John Radcliffe celebrates its first anniversary, having treated 4000 patients in its first year, and won praise from a patients' survey.

January 2004
- Science and Innovation Minister Lord Sainsbury announces a £500,000 grant to the NHS South East Innovations Hub, led by the Trust. The Hub encourages innovation in the NHS and helps patients to turn their ideas into commercially viable concerns.
- The new Emergency Department at the John Radcliffe Hospital opens its doors to patients. The official opening of the £10m development is in May 2004, when the Earl and Countess of Wescott visit the Trust.

February 2004
- The official opening of a new dermatology centre at the Churchill Hospital. This provides new operating theatres, consulting rooms and much improved patient facilities.
- The £3.2m Kadoorie Centre opens. The Centre now offers a combination of patient care, education and world class research on diabetes and endocrine and metabolic disorders.

March 2004
- New cardiac monitoring equipment is donated to the Horton Hospital. The donation has been given to the hospital by the family and supporters of a young man who died suddenly as a result of a rare cardiac abnormality.
- Joint work with social and healthcare partners to speed up the rate at which patients are discharged from the hospital when they no longer need acute care shows success. The waiting time for patients in the Emergency Departments reduces significantly. In July 2004, the Trust is awarded £1,000,000 by the Department of Health for its achievements in cutting waiting times. The money is being used to develop a new National Medical Assessment Unit at the Horton Hospital.
- The Trust scores well in a national staff survey, and finishes the year in financial balance.
FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE –
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

When I was appointed to run the Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals, in September 2003, I was asked to be part of an organisation with such a distinguished history and considerable reputation. This brief overview of four years shows you that we have continued to develop and improve our patient care. We now need to bring a more planned approach to our future.

Our services have developed over many years, in response to specific patient needs, the interests of individual staff, patients and their families, a multitude of separately funded initiatives. It would be surprising if the resulting mix fully met the current needs and aspirations of patients, service commissioners and other stakeholders. In particular, we do not know whether we have the right balance between general and specialist services.

The NHS is meanwhile changing in a number of fundamental ways. These changes, together with rapid advances in medicine and drug treatments, raise questions about the future of some services. In particular, we do not know whether we have the right balance between general and specialist services.

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