

**Trust Board Meeting in Public: Wednesday 8 July 2020**

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<b>Title</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer's Report</b>
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<b>Status</b>	For Information
<b>History</b>	Regular report to Board

<b>Board Lead(s)</b>	<b>Dr Bruno Holthof, Chief Executive Officer</b>			
<b>Key purpose</b>	Strategy	Assurance	Policy	<b>Performance</b>

**Summary**

<b>1.</b>	<b>A common purpose and togetherness – our response to COVID-19</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>COVID-19 patients thank OUH staff</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Supporting our BAME staff</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>COVID-19 treatment trial</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>COVID-19 vaccine development</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Emergency Department expansion opens to patients</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Thanking people working ‘behind the frontline’ during COVID-19</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>OUH team wins Royal College of Physicians award</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Oxford Biomedical Research Centre news</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Oxford Academic Health Science Network and Oxford Academic Health Partners news</b>

## Chief Executive's Report

### 1. A common purpose and togetherness – our response to COVID-19

On behalf of the Trust Board, I would like to thank all staff who have continued to keep our patients and their colleagues safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout our response to COVID-19 at OUH, our strength has been in our common purpose and togetherness.

It has been exemplified in the hashtag we have used when sharing stories about our extraordinary staff, our volunteers and everyone else who has pulled together in these unprecedented times – #OneTeamOneOUH.

This togetherness and sense of One Team has also been demonstrated by the way in which Oxford Hospitals Charity has co-ordinated generous offers of support at this time from hundreds of local businesses, groups and individuals.

Colleagues from OUH and the University of Oxford have worked together more closely than ever during the pandemic and we have been very grateful for the invaluable contribution of medical students from the University of Oxford, student nurses and midwives from Oxford Brookes University, and all those staff who have returned to the NHS frontline.

The common purpose, focus and determination of all staff in this unprecedented time has been a source of deep pride in what we have done as one team at OUH, but there have also been moments of great sadness.

We have lost a number of staff to COVID-19 and I want to pay tribute to them. Our thoughts are with their family, friends and close work colleagues who are deeply affected by their loss.

We are a team and every single member of our team is precious. None of us can deliver our service to patients alone and so we stand together in honouring the memories of our colleagues and sharing the sadness of their families and everyone else who loved them.

### 2. COVID-19 patients thank OUH staff

More patients have shared their experience after being treated for COVID-19 at OUH.

#### Ken's story

A patient who spent nearly three weeks in hospital battling COVID-19 has thanked OUH staff for saving his life.

Ken Wood, 60, from Abingdon, was cared for at the John Radcliffe Hospital for 19 days after being rushed to hospital with a high temperature and difficulty breathing.

He was on the Intensive Care Unit for 13 days before his condition improved and he was moved to a ward before being discharged home to continue his recovery.

Ken says: "I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to the NHS – all those that cared for me – for my life. They have made such an amazing difference for me, my family, and close friends.

"I will never forget what has been done for me, and what staff continue to do for others. I send my sincerest thanks and heartfelt gratitude."

[You can read Ken's story in full on the OUH website.](#)

### **Jenny's story**

A 77-year-old patient who spent 77 days in intensive care with COVID-19 at OUH has praised the staff who cared for her as she continues her remarkable recovery.

Jenny Eadon spent 11 weeks on the Intensive Care Unit at the John Radcliffe Hospital after receiving initial treatment at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury.

She battled severe complications as a result of COVID-19, including kidney failure, heart issues, pulmonary embolism, and a stroke.

Thankfully, Jenny's condition improved and she was moved to a wards before being discharged to Abingdon Community Hospital, which is run by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, to continue her recovery.

Jenny says: "I am so glad to be alive. I know I have a lot of rehabilitation ahead of me but I am very determined to build my strength and get better.

"I want to say a huge thank you to all of those who have cared for me and helped me as I continue on my road to recovery. They are so brave and dedicated to do what they do, and I would give them all a hug if I could."

[You can read Jenny's story in full on the OUH website.](#)

### **3. Supporting our BAME staff**

I sent a personal message to all OUH staff on 4 June – jointly with our Chief People Officer, Terry Roberts – on behalf of the Trust Board to reaffirm our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion at OUH.

It reflected on the Black Lives Matter movement and on the diversity of our staff which is one of the strengths of the NHS in general and OUH specifically.

In our message to staff, Terry and I wrote: "Now, more than ever, it is important for us to pull together as we see the shocking scale of racism which is still sadly prevalent in society today and as we discover more about the disproportionate impact which COVID-19 is having on people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.

"We recognise that our BAME staff colleagues may be feeling a heightened sense of anxiety, vulnerability and indeed anger at this time."

We are taking action to address inequalities by:

- Ensuring that inclusive recruitment is a key part of the training which we provide to those managers who recruit new staff to join our team at OUH
- Encouraging BAME staff to have a stronger voice in the organisation by getting involved in our Staff Network
- Not tolerating racism or harassment of any kind at OUH – our Respect and Dignity at Work Procedure ensures a zero tolerance approach to unacceptable behaviours

We know that as a Trust there is much more we need to do - and the Trust Board is committed to driving this work forward with all staff at OUH.

Additional support is available for staff at this time including our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), which is confidential, free, accessible by phone or online, and can help support staff with a wide range of work, family and personal issues, and our online Guide to Health and Wellness for staff on the Trust website.

#### **4. COVID-19 treatment trial**

Oxfordshire patients with COVID-19 were among the first to be recruited to a major [new clinical trial](#) to test the effects of potential drug treatments for those with the virus.

The [Randomised Evaluation of COVID-19 Therapy \(RECOVERY\) trial](#), which is being led by researchers from the University of Oxford with support from the NIHR Oxford BRC, is the largest of its kind in the world.

It will provide doctors and the health service with information they need to determine which treatments should be used.

The researchers have found that a cheap and widely available steroid reduced the risk of death in COVID-19 patients on ventilators by a third and by a fifth in those on oxygen.

Dexamethasone was one of the drugs being tested as part of the RECOVERY trial which has recruited more than 11,500 patients across 175 NHS hospitals since it began in March.

Recruitment to the dexamethasone arm of the trial was halted for adults on 8 June as it was felt that sufficient patients had been enrolled to establish whether or not the drug had a meaningful benefit.

The drugs currently being tested in the trial are:

- Lopinavir-Ritonavir (commonly used to treat HIV)
- Low-dose Dexamethasone (children only)
- Azithromycin (a commonly used antibiotic)
- Tocilizumab (an anti-inflammatory treatment given by injection)
- Convalescent plasma (collected from donors who have recovered from COVID-19 and contains antibodies against the SARS-CoV-2 virus)

## 5. COVID-19 vaccine development

The University of Oxford's Jenner Institute and the Oxford Vaccine Group have begun recruiting for the next phase in human trials of a COVID-19 vaccine in human volunteers – [full details are available on the vaccine trial website.](#)

The Phase I trial in healthy adult volunteers began in April and more than 1,000 immunisations were completed.

The Phase II part of the study involves expanding the age range of people the vaccine is assessed in to include adults aged 56-69 and aged 70 and over, as well as children aged between five and 12 years old.

For these groups, researchers are assessing the immune response to the vaccine in people of different ages, to find out if there is variation in how well the immune system responds in older people or children.

The Phase III part of the study involves assessing how the vaccine works in a large number of people over the age of 18. This group will allow assessment of how well the vaccine works to prevent people from becoming infected with COVID-19.

Because COVID-19 infection rates in the UK are declining, the team has also started a trial in Brazil where infection rates are higher and the time needed to prove the vaccine is working will be shorter.

The Brazilian trial officially began on Saturday 20 June and will enrol 5,000 volunteers across the country. Vaccinations will take place in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and a site in the north east of Brazil.

Three leading members of the NIHR Oxford BRC's Vaccines Theme are leading the Oxford vaccine trial – Professor Sarah Gilbert and Professor Adrian Hill of the University of Oxford's Jenner Institute and Professor Andrew Pollard of the University's Oxford Vaccine Group. The Oxford BRC provided crucial funding to get the trial up and running and then helped to fund an evaluation of the safety of the vaccine.

## 6. Emergency Department expansion opens to patients

New facilities that will benefit patients needing treatment in the Emergency Department at the John Radcliffe Hospital have opened. Expansion work began in April 2019 and was completed in June, with the first patients admitted on Monday 22 June.

The extension provides a better use of space, more diagnostic equipment, and improved privacy and dignity for patients, as well as improved turnaround times for ambulances.

The new space also provides an extra nine bays for the immediate care of seriously ill patients. It includes a paediatric resuscitation room and an isolation room with an adjacent CT scanner and control room, as well as a nurses' bay and improved bereavement and relatives' rooms. Six new ambulance spaces have been created and a more efficient drop-off point is set up at the entrance of the new building.

I am delighted that the new Emergency Department expansion is now open. It will ensure that high-quality care is delivered to our patients at the right time and in the right environment. Due to the growing population in our area, the expansion is vital to ease the pressure on our services caused by increased numbers of patients.

Dr Sachin Mandalia, Clinical Lead for the Emergency Department, says: "We know that our patients will have a much better experience when they need our help. Nobody wants to need emergency care but when you do, you want the care to take place in the best possible facilities. This new area will help us to deliver the standard of care that we aspire to."

Katy Mimpres, Matron of the Emergency Department, adds: "Our staff have shown incredible professionalism during the construction of this extension and their teamwork has been exceptional. I'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who made this happen."

I would also like to thank Oxford Hospitals Charity for funding a dedicated CT scanner for the resuscitation area of the Emergency Department, which will help speed up diagnosis and treatment of the sickest patients. The scanner was funded thanks to a legacy gift to the charity from a grateful former patient.

The Charity has also funded comfortable and appropriate furnishings for the bereavement and relatives' rooms as well as a series of artworks and light boxes for the area.

## **7. Thanking people working 'behind the frontline' during COVID-19**

We have launched a new internal communications, social media and website campaign to publicly thank some of the people who have been working tirelessly to support frontline staff at OUH during the #OneTeamOneOUH response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The campaign has specifically focused on those teams which the public may not be aware of because their work is not always so visible.

Teams featured so far on [our website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) include:

- The [M&S Foodhall and Café](#) at the John Radcliffe Hospital
- Our [Chaplaincy team](#) who support patients, their loved ones and our staff.
- The [Linen team](#) who are responsible for not only the freshly-laundered bed sheets, blankets and pyjamas essential for the daily bed and linen changes that keep our inpatients safe and clean but also a staff uniform service for doctors and nurses

Our campaign has included personal thank yous from Trust Board members.

It means a lot to teams that sometimes don't get a lot of recognition to be publicly thanked in this way, and for their hard work and dedication to be recognised at Board level.

[All the Thank You stories to date are available on our website.](#)

## **8. OUH team wins Royal College of Physicians award**

### **OUH staff and teams shortlisted for Royal College of Physicians award**

I would like to congratulate an OUH team who won the Person-centred Care category of the [Royal College of Physicians' Excellence in Patient Care Awards 2020](#).

These prestigious annual awards promote and reward the impressive work that physicians are doing around the world to improve patient care through education, innovation, research and clinical practice.

OUH staff who work in partnership with the Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine and others on the [Moving Medicine](#) project to support healthcare professionals to integrate physical activity into clinical care, including through the [Active Hospitals](#) programme, won the Person-centred Care award category.

In addition, Professor Raashid Luqmani (Consultant Rheumatologist at OUH) was a finalist in the Digital award category – for Rheumatology assessment database innovation in Oxford – and our team who are working on the [Active Hospitals](#) programme pilot here at OUH – were finalists in the Quality Improvement award category

## 9. Oxford Biomedical Research Centre news

### COVID-19 related Oxford BRC news

A clinical trial to test whether Azithromycin, a commonly used antibiotic, can treat the symptoms of COVID-19 in outpatients has recruited its first participant, a patient enrolled at the John Radcliffe Hospital. The [ATOMIC2 trial](#), which is being led from Oxford and is funded by the Oxford BRC, the University of Oxford and Pfizer, will enrol 800 people who tested positive for COVID-19 but felt well enough to be cared for at home. The trial, led by Dr Tim Hinks, complements two other national trials – RECOVERY and PRINCIPLE – which are testing Azithromycin in different categories of patients – inpatients and general practice. Azithromycin is an antibiotic with unusual anti-inflammatory and anti-viral properties, so it is being seen as a promising potential treatment for COVID-19.

As part of a new UK trial, University of Oxford researchers will investigate whether administering the anti-inflammatory drug infliximab to patients with COVID-19 can prevent progression to respiratory failure or death. The multi-arm, multi-stage [CATALYST Trial](#), is being led from Birmingham in collaboration with the Oxford BRC and University College London (UCL) BRC. The overall aim is to guide the selection of new drug interventions for large phase III trials in hospitalised patients with COVID-19 infection. The Oxford arm of the study is led by the Oxford BRC's Co-theme Lead for Musculoskeletal, Professor Duncan Richards, and by Dr Matt Rowland.

A study led by University of Oxford researchers has found that patients with severe COVID-19 respiratory failure have very [low levels of iron](#), compared to those with less severe disease. Changes in iron levels have been associated with worsening disease for other viral infections, but this is the first study to find a similar link for COVID-19. The investigations are part of an Oxford BRC-funded study evaluating blood cell-related biomarkers associated with adverse outcomes in COVID-19 infections.

Oxford researchers are working with clinical collaborators from NHS trusts, including OUH, to test [a drug that could raise oxygen levels](#) in the blood in COVID-19 patients in order to improve their chances of recovery. The trial, which is funded by the medical research charity LifeArc, is led by Professor Peter Robbins, the Oxford BRC's Co-theme Lead for



Respiratory Medicine. The drug being tested is almitrine bismesylate, which is known to increase oxygen levels in patients with acute respiratory distress syndrome.

An international study investigating the [impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on sleep](#) and daily rhythms in adults has been launched. The UK arm of the International COVID-19 Sleep Study (ICOSS) is led by Professor Colin Espie, of the Nuffield Department of Clinical Neurosciences, and is funded by the Oxford BRC. The study will look at changes in sleep quality in relation to social confinement such as a national lockdown or self-isolation, risk of exposure to the virus, and psychological symptoms such as anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress.

Professor Trisha Greenhalgh, the Oxford BRC's Theme Lead for Partnerships for Health, Wealth and Innovation, has received [significant Government funding](#) for a new study to support GPs to deliver effective remote care to their patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. She was awarded £750,000 from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) for a new study entitled 'Remote-by-Default Care in the COVID-19 Pandemic'. The study aims to address the technological tools that GP surgeries use to interact with patients, the organisational and wider infrastructure changes that might be required to scale up and deliver better remote care, and insights from this time of crisis that will help build a more resilient NHS.

#### **Other Oxford BRC news**

The Oxford BRC's Theme Lead for Cancer, Professor Xin Lu, has been elected as a [Fellow of the Royal Society](#), in recognition of her contribution to cancer biology.

Professor Andrew Farmer, the Oxford BRC's Co-theme Lead for Technology and Digital Health and an experienced general practitioner, began a [new role with the NIHR](#) on 1 June as Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Programme Director.

The Oxford BRC Open Day, organised jointly with Oxford Health BRC, was scheduled to take place in June but was postponed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. A virtual event is now expected to take place later this year, with a programme of talks, videos, blogs and activities for schools.

Oxford BRC-funded researchers presented important new findings in the field of gender equity and women in Biomedical Research Centres at the final event of the international [STARBIOS2 project](#), held online as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. Started in 2016 and funded by the European Commission's Horizon 2020 programme, STARBIOS2 aims to implement a Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) approach in research institutions.

Following an external audit, the Oxford BRC has again been successfully certified to the internationally recognised [ISO 9001:2015 standard](#). Oxford is the only NIHR BRC in the country to have this designation.

#### **10. Oxford Academic Health Science Network and Oxford Academic Health Partners news**

##### **Oxford Academic Health Science Network news**

The Oxford Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) continues to support our partners in the NHS and social care in responding to the challenges posed by the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. We have refocused our work using our experience in sourcing innovation, sharing expertise and connections to support our partners across the region in delivering an effective response.

The research and innovation priorities of workforce, use of digital/AI technology, mental health and multi-morbidity that emerged from the [NHS needs survey](#) last year have proved to be highly relevant in responding to the pandemic.

Earlier work in digital and diagnostic innovation has enabled rapid regional and national rollout of innovation to support the response to the pandemic. There has been further progress in the spread of the [Brainomix image-sharing platform](#) across 30 sites in the South East, based on work by the Thrombectomy Innovation and Transformation (TITAN) quality improvement team chaired by Dr Guy Rooney, the Oxford AHSN's Medical Director.

The AHSN has also overseen the rollout of [Sleepio](#), a digital therapy programme improving health and wellbeing through better sleep, initially part of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System workforce programme, which has now been made available free to all NHS staff in England with thousands already using it.

Our Chief Executive, Professor Gary Ford, has [written about the unprecedented response from the NHS, supported by AHSNs and others](#).

More details of the [AHSN's Covid-19 response](#) – including case studies and resources – can be found on our website.

The AHSN's forthcoming face-to-face meetings, workshops and shared learning events have been postponed or replaced by webinars. [Full details of online events are available on the Oxford AHSN website](#).

An independent survey of stakeholder views of AHSNs, commissioned by NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) and the Office for Life Sciences, has been published. [The national report and the Oxford AHSN regional report are available on the Oxford AHSN website](#).

The AHSN Network has produced a webinar with the Intensive Care Society on safe tracheostomy care – [it is available to watch on YouTube](#).

### **Oxford Academic Health Partners news**

The Board of Oxford Academic Health Partners (OAHP) wishes to recognise the work and great contributions of Stuart Bell who recently retired as Chief Executive of Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust – he was a founder member of the Board. We welcome Dr Nick Broughton, the new Chief Executive of Oxford Health, to the Board.

Dr Sara Ward has been appointed as the interim Chief Operating Officer of OAHP pending permanent recruitment. Sara supported the application and set-up for the Oxford and Thames Valley National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) before she joined OAHP.

Strategic goals and objectives for OAHP will form the basis for the operational plan for 2020-21 and will inform longer term activity to 2025. Key areas include:

- Development of the Joint Working Agreement between the four Partners, based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Partners in February 2020, and on the Joint Working Agreement already in place between the University of Oxford and Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) since 2011
- Development of an expanded Joint Research Office to support all Partners in the governance and delivery of clinical research, and the clinical research facilities to enable early stage research
- Delivering close formal co-ordination of research infrastructure including NIHR centres, facilities and collaboratives, alongside other major centres and institutes, to ensure pull through from its world class basic research to clinical practice
- Clarifying the purpose of and plans for the OAHP charity # 1174725, registered in 2017, which provides an independent vehicle for delivery of objectives and a platform for formal interaction with stakeholders through associate member status and grant awards to individuals within OAHP – the OAHP Board will continue as the Trustees for the Charity
- Development of plans to build on the positive aspects of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that these can be maintained and developed for patients, staff, researchers and the public

Further information can be found at [www.oxfordahsc.org.uk](http://www.oxfordahsc.org.uk).

**Dr Bruno Holthof**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**July 2020**