

Cover Sheet

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Executive Summary

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Chief Executive Officer's Report

1. Trust Board news

- 1.1. **Yvonne Christley** will take up her role as our new substantive Chief Nursing Officer on 1 May. She is currently Chief Nursing Officer at Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. [More details of Yvonne's appointment are on our website.](#)
- 1.2. This is the last OUH Trust Board meeting for both **Paula Gardner**, our Interim Chief Nursing Officer, and **David Walliker**, our Chief Digital and Partnership Officer, who both leave the Trust at the end of April. On behalf of the Board I would like to thank Paula and David for their service.
- 1.3. **Sara Randall**, our Chief Operating Officer, has announced that she will be retiring at the end of June.
- 1.4. On behalf of the Trust Board, I would like to thank Sara for everything she has done over the past 20 years working in Oxford.
- 1.5. Her focus on putting patients at the heart of everything she does and her collaborative and supportive leadership style have made her a key member of our team.

2. Industrial action update

- 2.1. Junior doctor members of the British Medical Association (BMA) took industrial action for five days from 7am on Saturday 24 February to 11.59pm on Wednesday 28 February.
- 2.2. We worked closely with our staff and colleagues from the BMA in advance of and during the strike days to ensure that patient safety was paramount at all times, while recognising and respecting the right of our people to take part in lawful industrial action.
- 2.3. Wellbeing support continues to be available for all our staff during these challenging times. Our [Guide to Health and Wellbeing](#) contains a full listing of all the support available to individuals and we also continue to ensure that all our people know how to access our Employee Assistance Programme, CareFirst. This is a confidential and free service for staff, available 24/7.
- 2.4. All patients affected by the industrial action, for example by the unavoidable rescheduling of some outpatient appointments and operations, were contacted in advance.

3. National Patient Safety Commissioner visits OUH

- 3.1. We were delighted to welcome Dr Henrietta Hughes, the National Patient Safety Commissioner, to OUH on 16 February.
- 3.2. She visited the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford to learn about the progress being made here at OUH around patient safety and quality improvement.
- 3.3. Dr Hughes met with Dr Rustam Rea, our Deputy Chief Medical Officer and Director of Patient Safety and Effectiveness, Paula Gardner, Interim Chief Nursing Officer, Caroline Heason, Head of Patient Experience, and patient representative Sylvia Buckingham, one of our Patient Safety Partners.
- 3.4. She also visited the Oxford Simulation, Teaching and Research Centre (OxSTaR) to find out about research being conducted to improve patient safety.
- 3.5. [More information about the visit is available on the OUH website.](#)

4. Life-changing treatment for stroke patients now available 24/7

- 4.1. The stroke unit at OUH is providing life-changing mechanical thrombectomy treatment 24 hours a day for the first time.
- 4.2. Mechanical thrombectomy – removing a blockage in a large blood vessel in the brain – can reduce disability and prevent or limit long-term care needs following a stroke.
- 4.3. Effective use of mechanical thrombectomy requires rapid transfer of acute stroke patients to regional centres with specialist teams.
- 4.4. The OUH stroke unit is at the centre of a regional integrated stroke delivery network and the wider Thrombectomy Innovation and Transformation Network (TITaN) connecting hospitals in Aylesbury, High Wycombe, Reading, Milton Keynes, Northampton and Swindon.
- 4.5. This is excellent news for patients and demonstrates that we are leading the way nationally for stroke care here in Oxford, at the heart of a strong regional network of hospitals.
- 4.6. [Our news story goes into more detail about this innovative service.](#)

5. New renal dialysis and radiotherapy services in Milton Keynes

- 5.1. We are working closely with our partners in Milton Keynes to improve and enhance services for people living in the city and the surrounding areas.
- 5.2. A [new Renal Dialysis Unit run by OUH and located in Milton Keynes](#) was officially opened on 29 January.

- 5.3. The 16-bed Whitehouse Dialysis Unit, which opened its doors in December 2023, provides specialist care closer to home for kidney patients in the Milton Keynes area.
- 5.4. We have reached a formal agreement with Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust for the provision of a [new radiotherapy treatment centre on the site of the Milton Keynes University Hospital](#).
- 5.5. The new centre will be run by clinicians from OUH so that cancer patients can receive treatment closer to home.
- 5.6. It builds on the success of a similar new facility which we opened on the Great Western Hospital site in Swindon last year.

6. Oxford Critical Care and Oxford Muscle Service earn accolades

- 6.1. Congratulations to colleagues from **Oxford Critical Care**, based on the John Radcliffe Hospital site in Oxford, who performed well in the recent [Quarterly Quality Report \(QQR\)](#) by the [Intensive Care National Audit and Research Centre \(ICNARC\)](#).
- 6.2. The report, which covered the six-month period from April to September 2023, showed that Oxford Critical Care had a low risk-adjusted acute hospital mortality rate. This means that fewer patients died while receiving intensive care than would be expected from the severity of their illness.
- 6.3. This is an excellent achievement by our critical care colleagues and I would like to thank them for all that they do. [More details of the Oxford Critical Care team's success are available on our website](#).
- 6.4. The **Oxford Muscle Service**, also based at the John Radcliffe, has been named as a Centre of Excellence by national charity [Muscular Dystrophy UK](#).
- 6.5. This accreditation recognises the outstanding care which is provided to patients, as well as the team's commitment to improving health and care for people living with muscle wasting and weakening conditions. [You can read more about the work of the Oxford Muscle Service in our website news story](#).

7. New staff recognition programme launched

- 7.1. Following feedback from staff in our quarterly People Plan Update virtual listening events and in the annual NHS Staff Survey, we have developed a new holistic recognition programme.
- 7.2. The first milestone in the implementation of this programme was the launch of our new 'Instant Recognition – A Note of Appreciation' scheme on 15 January.

- 7.3. Staff can complete a simple, short online Note of Appreciation to say Thank You or Well Done to a colleague who receives an email to let them know.
- 7.4. Instant Recognition is a way for our people to show appreciation to a colleague for the help or support they have given or for a job well done by sending a short, personalised instant message which is linked to one or more of our Trust values.
- 7.5. More than 1,000 Notes of Appreciation were sent in the first month after the scheme was launched.
- 7.6. The annual [Staff Recognition Awards](#) nominations window opened on 1 February and closed on 3 March. This was an opportunity for colleagues to recognise both teams and individual members of staff.
- 7.7. Staff could also nominate volunteers and people who fundraise for our hospitals while our [Patients' Choice Award](#) was an opportunity for patients and their families and loved ones to nominate OUH staff who have gone the extra mile to care for them.
- 7.8. More than 2,800 nominations were received in total, making this the most successful nominations window since the Staff Recognition Awards began.
- 7.9. This year's finalists will be announced in May and winners will be revealed at our awards evening at Oxford Town Hall on 20 June.

8. OUH teams and colleagues recognised in national awards

- 8.1. Consultant Nurse **Gerard Mawhinney** was named Clinician of the Year at the [Bone Cancer Research Trust's 'Bone Idols' Awards](#) on 3 February.
- 8.2. The **OUH Communications Team** was shortlisted in the 'Communications Team Health and Wellbeing' category of the [NHS Communicate Awards](#) on 7 March for the internal communications campaign to promote our Cost of Living Support for Staff programme.
- 8.3. Three individuals and three teams from OUH are finalists in the [Unsung Hero Awards](#) on 15 March. OUH as an employer is also in the running to win the Special Recognition Award for the outstanding support provided for non-clinical staff. The Unsung Hero Awards recognise **non-clinical staff and volunteers** working in the NHS.
- 8.4. **Radio Horton**, the radio station based at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury, is shortlisted in the 'Best Speech Package' category of the [National Hospital Radio Awards](#) on 13 April.

9. Oxford Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) news

An Oxford research team has found that vaccination against COVID-19 consistently [reduced the risk of Long COVID symptoms](#). While vaccines have proved effective in preventing severe COVID-19, their ability to prevent long-term symptoms had until now not been fully understood. The study, which was supported by the Oxford BRC, analysed primary care electronic health records of more than 20 million vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals from the UK, Spain and Estonia.

Researchers in Oxford have developed a cheap, easy-to-use technique for hospitals to contribute to the development of artificial intelligence models, without patient data leaving their premises. Pre-programmed micro-computers were used to train and validate a screening test for COVID-19 in Emergency Departments in four NHS trusts, including OUH. The use of inexpensive, pre-programmed Raspberry Pi 4 micro-computers made them easy to deploy without specialist technical support and cheap to scale up. The development of the new system, named [full-stack federated learning](#), was supported by the Oxford BRC.

An academic paper has revealed that areas of the human genome that are routinely overlooked in clinical tests may be the cause of some rare diseases. Assessing 122 patients with a range of genetic conditions, the study looked at areas of the genome often [considered to be 'junk DNA'](#) because they do not relate to the production of proteins. As a result of the study, supported by the Oxford BRC, clinical diagnoses were changed in six patients and treatments were adjusted for eight. For five of these patients this intervention was considered to be lifesaving. The authors say the research demonstrates the need to analyse the entire genome, not just those parts that code for proteins, to maximise the value of clinical genome sequencing.

A clinical trial has been launched in Oxford to determine the effectiveness of [delivering tuberculosis vaccines through inhalation](#). Researchers at the Jenner Institute, who are supported by the Oxford BRC, are giving BCG, the current licensed vaccine against TB, to people who have already had BCG vaccination once before. They will compare whether giving it by inhalation gives better protection than giving it through the skin.

The first participants have received doses of a new [vaccine against Nipah virus](#) in a clinical trial by University of Oxford researchers. There are no approved vaccines or treatments for Nipah, which can be fatal in up to 75% of cases. The vaccine is being developed at the Pandemic Sciences Institute and is part of the Oxford BRC's work to tackle outbreak pathogens. The new vaccine is using the same ChAdOx1 viral vector vaccine platform as that used to develop the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.

A new study has provided evidence that women who have been diagnosed with ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS) outside the NHS breast screening programme are around [four times as likely](#) to develop invasive breast cancer and to die from breast cancer than women in the general population. DCIS is a pre-invasive breast cancer, meaning that the cancer is contained within the milk ducts.

A study supported by the Oxford BRC has been named as the [BMJ UK Research Paper of the Year](#) for 2023. The study by researchers at Oxford Population Health into breast cancer mortality rates found that women diagnosed with early-

stage breast cancer today are 66% less likely to die from the disease than they were 20 years ago.

A trial to detect atrial fibrillation (AF) has been designed to include as many eligible people as possible, including those who rarely take part in clinical trials. Working with 27 GP surgeries, the AMALFI study, which is funded by the Oxford BRC, has recruited more than 5,000 participants. Its 'light-touch' design is aimed at making it as easy as possible for people to take part. There are no study visits – and no need to travel – making the study more accessible to people on low incomes, those with mobility issues, those living in remote areas and people with caring responsibilities. One of the aims of the trial is to inform a possible national AF screening programme.

Seven researchers from a wide range of disciplines have been named [NIHR Oxford Senior Research Fellows](#). These mid-career researchers – the fourth cohort of senior fellows to be appointed – were identified as having the potential to become future translational research leaders. As in previous years, the selection process was a coordinated effort by the Oxford BRC, the Oxford Health BRC and the NIHR Applied Research Collaboration for Oxford and the Thames Valley.

Eight OUH healthcare professionals – two nurses, five physiotherapists and a pharmacist – have completed their six-month [Oxford BRC internship](#) by presenting the findings of their research projects. The internships are the first step on the BRC's clinical academic pathway and are aimed at nurses, midwives, allied health professionals, pharmacists and healthcare scientists with little or no previous research experience.

A three-year NIHR Oxford BRC citizen science research study looking at treatments for non-alcoholic fatty liver disease entered its final stages with a final visit from a European evaluation team. The study by the Oxford BRC and the Oxford Centre for Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism (OCDEM) at the Churchill Hospital is part of the European Commission Step Change project. Funded by the Commission's Horizon 2020 programme, the aim of the project is to use citizen science to make science more socially robust, inclusive and democratic, and develop tools and recommendations to cement this approach in research institutions.

The Oxford BRC's latest public talk was given by Professor Michele Hu, who explained how research has shown that people with REM sleep behaviour disorder often go on to develop Parkinson's. [Watch the talk](#).

10. Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley & Oxford Academic Health Partners news

10.1. Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley news

[An OUH collaboration with PRO-MAPP to ensure patients are better prepared for surgery](#) is shortlisted in two categories of the *Health Service Journal (HSJ)* Partnership Awards 2024 – winners will be announced on 21 March.

The initiative, which is supported by Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley, is a finalist in the 'HealthTech partnership of the year' and 'Most effective contribution to clinical redesign' categories.

[Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley is hosting an annual regional maternity and neonatal shared learning event](#) at Unipart in Cowley on 27 March, with significant contributions from OUH staff. It will celebrate 10 years of innovation and service improvement through regional collaboration.

Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley is recruiting a new Chair to replace Nigel Keen who is retiring having performed the role since the organisation's formation 10 years ago. Interviews are due to take place in May.

10.2. Oxford Academic Health Partners news

The Annual Report, Annual Return and Annual Accounts of the OAHP Charity #1174725 for the 2022-23 financial year were prepared, reviewed and submitted by the due date of 31 January 2024.

All these documents are available to view on the [Charity Commission website](#) and the Annual Report and Accounts are also available on the [OAHP website](#).