

# STEPPING UP

Spring 2021 edition

## Vaccinating Stockport

- The value of vaccines
- Infection lead takes top nursing honour
- COVID-19 study success
- New CT scanner
- Support for our charity



# CONTENTS

The value of vaccines	Pages 2-3
COVID-19 Study success	Page 4
Safety on site	Page 5
Belongings to loved ones	Page 5
Infection lead takes top nursing honour	Page 6
Keeping on caring for carers	Page 7
Making A Difference with Thank You February	Pages 8-9
Sensational scanner	Page 10
Stay safe - Call 111 first	Page 11
Introducing Stockport NHS Charity	Pages 12 - 13
New Nurses from India and Nepal	Page 14
Meet the new execs	Page 14
New Governors	Page 15

# GET IN TOUCH

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## The value OF VACCINES

**Since early December we've been busy vaccinating people in priority groups in the fight against COVID-19. We've already succeeded in vaccinating over 21,000 people with many more to come.**


**Our COVID-19 Vaccination Hub team continue to work tirelessly to ensure we can give out the vaccine as swiftly and safely as possible.**

Stepping Hill Hospital was chosen as a key centre and hub for local vaccinations, one of the first in Greater Manchester. The first groups to receive the vaccinations were those over 80, care home workers and front line NHS staff, with those in vulnerable groups prioritised.

The vaccine being used is the Pfizer vaccine. We have also played a key role in the development of the new Novavax vaccination, which has recently been shown to have an effectiveness rate of 89.3%. Our research and development team and many other staff members, together with over 700 volunteers, have contributed towards this important study.

Vaccinations play an absolutely vital role in keeping the public safe, turning the tide of the pandemic and saving lives, and we are very proud of our role in this.

2




## EARLY VACCINE VOLUNTEERS

Some of the first people in the country, and indeed the world, to receive the vaccination had theirs at Stepping Hill Hospital. They included...


### The patient over 80

The very first patient in Stockport to get the vaccination at Stepping Hill Hospital was Shirley McConnell, 86 from Romiley. Shirley received the vaccine whilst at the hospital for a routine eye clinic appointment. Shirley said "I think it's a wonderful thing the hospital are doing in giving these vaccinations, and I was very happy to have the vaccine to help keep me safe."




### The care home worker

The first care home worker to receive the vaccine was Sara Lydon who works at the Bramhall Manor residential home. Sarah said "I was happy to be one of the first to get the vaccination. I think it's very important for people working in care homes to get vaccinated to keep themselves safe and help get life back to normal."




### The frontline NHS worker

Among the first frontline Stockport NHS staff to be vaccinated was Polly Begum, a senior ward sister at the hospital. Polly had personal as well as professional reasons for being one of the first volunteers. Polly said "This was a very emotional moment for me in receiving the vaccination, as I have lost several close family members to COVID-19. It has been quite overwhelming for me. It is so important to me that as many of us as possible get the vaccine as soon as we can."



### The vulnerable NHS staff member

NHS staff in vulnerable groups were among the first to take priority. One of these was Jo Gardiner, a specialist physiotherapist who is clinically vulnerable having had lymphoma, a form of blood cancer. Jo is familiar to many of us from her appearance with son Sam on the show 'Race Across the World' which was TV hit early in 2020. Jo is in recovery from lymphoma and has been working carrying out consultations from home while shielding. Jo said "I'm so looking forward to work becoming a bit more like normal, It will be lovely when I can finally see patients in person again, as well of course as seeing family and friends. Of course it will be a long time before everyone can have a vaccination, but there's light at the end of the tunnel now which is fantastic."



3



# COVID-19 Study success

As well as being a major site for vaccination, we've also played a key role in two recent medical research projects, both of which have recently published important findings in the ongoing fight against coronavirus.

Our research team, together with other staff and patients in both the hospital and community, have contributed toward both the GenOMICC study into the relationship between human genes and COVID-19, and the SIREN study aiming at greater understanding of how far individuals who have recovered from COVID-19 are protected from future infections.

Patients seriously ill with coronavirus in our Intensive Care Unit (ICU) took part in the GenOMICC study ('Genetics Of Mortality In Critical Care'), a national genetics research project led by a partnership between the University of Edinburgh and Genomics England.

The GenOMICC study has now successfully identified five genes within DNA that were markedly different between ICU patients and volunteers who did not have COVID-19. This discovery will help to identify those most at risk, and may assist in fast-tracking new therapies into clinical trials to improve recoveries, helping more patients survive.

The SIREN study, led by Public Health England, aimed to study and understand whether prior infection with SARS-CoV2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) protects against future infection with the same virus. Over 100 of our staff members came forward to help with this.

The SIREN study found those infected are likely to be protected against reinfection for several months, but could still carry the virus in their nose and throat and transmit it to others. The study shows a person being infected accounts for an 83% rate of protection against being re-infected themselves, but not against passing the virus on.



## SAFETY ON SITE - keep it covered

With the ongoing pandemic, sadly most visits to Stepping Hill Hospital are still restricted. (See our website for more details of any visits allowed.) Those visitors who are allowed on site, together with patients, staff and volunteers, must wear face masks and follow the important rules of social distancing and hand hygiene. Masks are provided at hospital entrances.

We ask that everyone respects these rules so we can all play our part in preventing the spread of the virus. If you have picked up a copy of this newsletter from the hospital please remember to take it home with you, and not leave it lying around the site.



With visiting to the hospital still restricted due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, we're now offering a new service to support relatives, carers and friends to get property to inpatients.

The new service is based in the hospital's voluntary services offices, who are able to take personal items to inpatients on request. Relatives, carers and friends can drop goods off at the office without going further on site.

To access the service, please call 0161 419 5780 9am-4pm, Monday to Friday, or 0161 419 4600, 9am-4pm Saturday and Sunday.

Since the pandemic began, our patient family liaison service has been helping patients keep in touch with their loved ones to ensure family contact is maintained, helping patients to avoid them feeling isolated whilst in hospital. The new service supports this in helping inpatients receive what they want or need, from family and carers; whether this is clothing, photographs, cards, a favourite book or anything else which helps them with their stay.



# Infection lead takes top nursing honour

Our lead nurse for fighting infections has received a top national nursing award for her outstanding dedication and commitment.

Nesta Featherstone first qualified as a nurse 32 years ago and has been based at Stepping Hill Hospital throughout her career. Since 2010 Nesta has headed our Infection Prevention team, which leads on keeping patients safe from all kinds of infection in both hospital and community services, including MRSA, C-difficile, E-Coli and others.

With the coronavirus pandemic, the last year has seen the biggest challenge Nesta and the team have ever faced. They've worked hard to keep wards and departments infection free, encouraging vigilance and best practice in reducing the spread of COVID-19, and helping to get services up and working again following the first lockdown, from children's services to surgery.

Nesta was nominated for her award by colleagues for her hard work and ongoing commitment during this extremely busy time. She was described by colleagues as always being on hand to take responsibility and offer the support needed, and having the unique ability to find solutions even when they seem limited. Nesta has kept up her commitment during a tough year which has also seen her face her own personal loss with the death of her father.



# Keeping on caring for carers



As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the second wave with it's high number of cases has been placing huge pressures on our workforce. Their response has been incredible. But while caring for others it's important not to lose sight of caring for ourselves as well.

Since the pandemic began we have launched several new forms of support for our staff, including mental health first aiders, staff sanctuary areas, and a new Greater Manchester-wide resilience hub offering psychological support where needed.

Recent months have seen even more initiatives; including:

## New training support for leaders and check-in sessions for all

Staff leaders are now offered additional training and mentoring sessions with the support of the North West Leadership Academy, helping them provide more specialised nurturing and support for those working in their teams. All staff are being offered 'check ins' to let the trust know how they are feeling, and where they feel more help can be given, helping our resources go to the right places.

## Stand Together

A new campaign helping to reinforce the message there is no place for racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, prejudice against disability or any other form of prejudice and intolerance against any of our staff.

## Mindfulness sessions

Mindfulness sessions for staff have been introduced. Studies show that mindfulness can relieve stress, improve resilience and help you sleep better. Virtual taster sessions are open to staff.

## Reward hampers

Charitable funds have helped us provide much deserved gift hampers for staff in both the hospital and community. For more on this see our Charity info on page 12.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE Thank You February

We've been devoting February to thanking our staff for the outstanding work they are doing with a series of awards to show our gratitude and appreciation. For more on these see page 8.



You can find out more on this and many other areas of staff support including counselling, healthy eating and drinking advice, physiotherapy, and financial wellbeing, please look up the Health and Wellbeing microsite section of the staff intranet, or email [healthandwellbeing@stockport.nhs.uk](mailto:healthandwellbeing@stockport.nhs.uk)





# MAKING A DIFFERENCE THANK YOU FEBRUARY

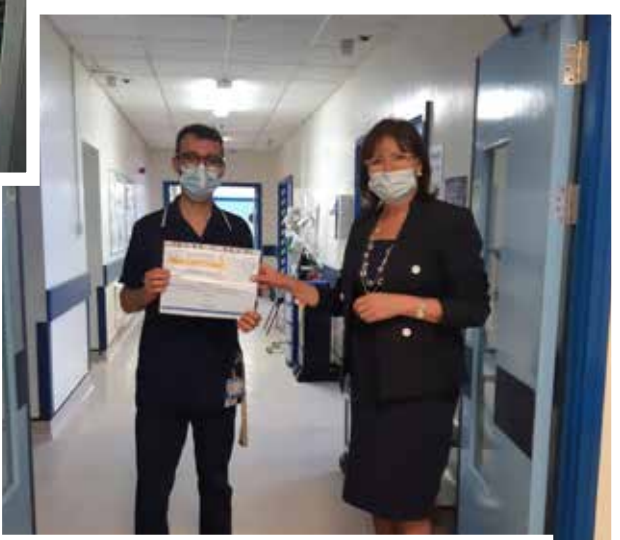
This February has been *Thank You February* for staff at the trust. We've been *celebrating* and *rewarding* teams and individuals who have been *going above and beyond* during the trying times of the pandemic.

Our Chief Executive Karen James OBE has been visiting teams across both Stepping Hill Hospital and community locations to thank those who have been performing excellently and providing outstanding care. From the frontline to the back office, we've been letting staff know about the incredible job they do, and a new wall board outside the restaurant is showcasing teams and individuals who have gone above and beyond.

Award winners have been presented with specially baked delicious cakes from the trust's catering team, healthy fruit and a certificate thanking them for 'Making A Difference.'

We know that everybody across the organisation has worked hard over the past 12 months, so we've been sending out Thank You badges and postcards to all our staff in recognition of their efforts.

Our roll call of those honoured during the month has included many hard working teams and individuals; you can see just a few of them here."







# SENSATIONAL SCANNER

Our diagnostic services have received a boost with a state-of-the-art new CT scanner on the hospital site.

The new building and scanner are now up and running and helping our radiology team run more scans.

CT scanners are used by our radiology department to scan for signs of cancer, as well as on other conditions such as blood clots, strokes, tumours, bone fractures and surgical emergencies. We carry out over 50,000 CT scans a year.

The new scanner joins two existing units on the hospital site, improving waiting times for both inpatients and outpatients, including those with suspected cancer.

Over £1.5m has been invested in the new scanner, which is also helping us reduce the waiting times for radiology procedures which were postponed following the first lockdown.



## Stay safe and avoid waiting in A&E - Call 111 first

We're supporting the NHS 111 First campaign, and asking people who need urgent NHS care to call NHS 111 before they decide to walk into A&E.

To ensure social distancing in the emergency department (A&E) waiting areas people who do not need an ambulance should contact NHS 111 before attending. The service will then book them into the emergency department at Stepping Hill Hospital or at the most appropriate health service for the patient.

The new approach ensures that patients can access the clinical service they need, first time. Patients who need to be seen in A&E will be able to be seen and treated quicker.

Nationally, around 70% of people attending emergency departments had just walked in and the majority of those could have been seen through other services such as the urgent treatment centres, GP or even pharmacy.

Anyone who attends A&E without an appointment from NHS 111 will still be seen but could be directed to other services for treatment. Those with appointments from NHS 111 will also be given priority unless there is a medical need.

People with life threatening conditions that need emergency attention should still call 999. If the condition is not serious, they should seek advice from their pharmacy or make an appointment with their GP.



# JUST THINK 111 FIRST







At the end of last year our official charity got a new look, a new manager and a new name – Stockport NHS Charity. The charity is committed to providing enhanced services and medical equipment, advanced research and development opportunities to improve staff and patient health and wellbeing in the community we serve. In each edition of Stepping Up we'll share some of our key achievements and information about how you can get involved.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

All funds donated to Stockport NHS Charity make a real difference - here are some recent highlights.

### Enhanced Endoscopy Experience



Over two years of fundraising has finally enabled the hospital's endoscopy department to purchase new state-of-the-art 'Scopeguide' machine for their patients, which is now in use.

The Scopeguide enables lower bowel procedures such as a colonoscopy to be carried out easier, quicker and with more patient comfort. It will be used on around 7,000 patients per year, supporting patients with many different conditions including bowel cancer, ulcers and growths. The Scopeguide cost £40,000 and was the work of many different donors, both individual and group donations – all of which were very gratefully received.

The department is now fundraising for a second Scopeguide which would allow more patients to experience the benefits this can offer. If you'd like to find out more about supporting the appeal please email [charity@stockport.nhs.uk](mailto:charity@stockport.nhs.uk)

**Want to know more?** Sign up to receive our Charity e-newsletter with updates about our work and opportunities to get involved by emailing [charity@stockport.nhs.uk](mailto:charity@stockport.nhs.uk). You can also see more at the charity pages on our website at [www.stockport.nhs.uk](http://www.stockport.nhs.uk)

### County Step Up for Stepping Hill



Patients at Stepping Hill Hospital who need lung exercise tests now have a new specialist medical treadmill to enhance their care, thanks to generous support from Stockport County FC.

The local football heroes have donated almost £95,000 to Stockport NHS Charity so far, with £12,000 going toward the treadmill, which will boost the exercise equipment area in our chest clinic.

Our physiology team carry out exercise lung function tests for patients with many conditions, including cancer and respiratory problems. The new treadmill forms a key part of these exercise tests, which help to both diagnose and show what level of care will be needed during surgery and recovery.

### Hampers for Heroes



Staff across Stepping Hill Hospital and Stockport's community NHS services received a large selection of luxury Christmas hampers over the festive season thanks to generous donations from the public. We received £50,000 from the national NHS Charities Together organisation which was put to good use providing hampers and will also go toward staff health and wellbeing over the coming year.

## FANTASTIC FUNDRAISERS

We were overwhelmed by the generosity of supporters in 2020. Here are some of our favourites.

### Team Effort

Inspired by other active challenges, Barrie Williams set his team at Offerton Park JFC a challenge of walking, jogging or dribbling to contribute to a team marathon in April - keeping fit and supporting Stockport NHS Charity at the same time.

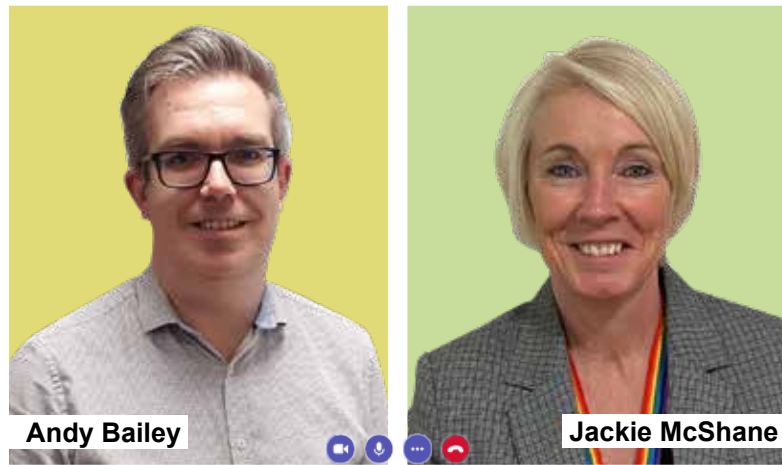
The idea proved very popular, with five other teams from the club, plus friends and family also getting involved to eventually cover the equivalent of 6.9 marathons (181.99 miles) and raise an outstanding £2,435. "At a difficult time for everyone it was a fantastic team effort" said Barrie, "we were really proud to show our support for the amazing work our local NHS has been doing."

### Taking the plunge!



Amber Owens decided to take on a swimming challenge in memory of her father who passed away in 1990 and was treated at Stepping Hill Hospital. Amber trained hard for and completed an impressive open water swim from end to end of Coniston Water in the Lake District this September – covering 5.25 miles and raising over £2,100 in the process. Recalling the feeling on the day Amber said "I loved the swim itself as I trained hard for it. I was very emotional at the end having swum 5.25 miles knowing and being so thankful for all the support from my friends and colleagues".





**Andy Bailey**

**Jackie McShane**

## Meet your new execs

We've had two new Executive Members join our Trust Board in recent months.

Here's a little about them and their background.

You can read about our full executive team  
[www.stockport.nhs.uk/board](http://www.stockport.nhs.uk/board)

### Andy Bailey – Acting Director of Strategy and Planning

Andy joined us in 2015 as Head of Planning having previously worked at the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust, and has taken up the acting director role since January this year. He has over 15 years' experience in acute sector NHS roles which have covered operational service management, service development, programme management and strategy & planning.

### Jackie McShane – Director of Operations

Jackie took up the role of Director of Operations in December last year, having previously held the same post at Tameside & Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust. She has over 12 years senior management experience in acute sector NHS roles across a number of North West trusts. Prior to joining the NHS Jackie worked within the private sector in the logistics sector.

## New nurses from India and Nepal

Our nursing numbers recently received a boost with a group of 10 new nurses joining us from India and Nepal.

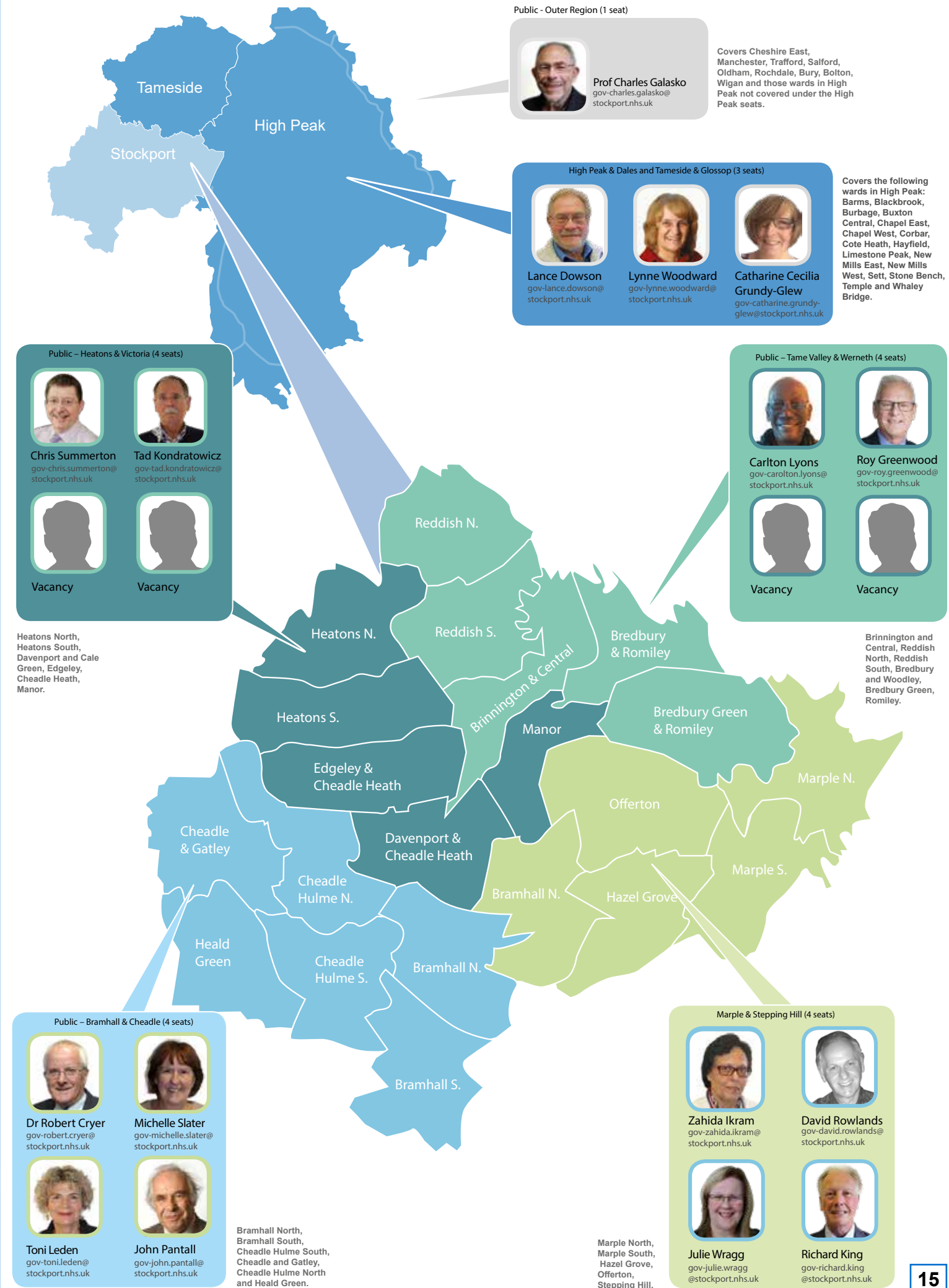
Following the required period of quarantine and extensive training they are now busy caring for patients at the hospital in areas including surgery, medicine and urgent care.

Since January 2020, 41 international nurses have joined the trust, with India being the top country for recruitment. Around 9% of our staff are from overseas, and after India other top countries for recruitment include Ireland, Nigeria, Spain, Italy, Poland and many others.

The new nurses are a valued part of our team as we continue to provide the best possible care during the period of the pandemic.



## YOUR GOVERNORS







Stockport  
NHS Foundation Trust

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