

Wellington TODAY

February 2005 | Issue 01

£14 million major refurbishment and expansion begins at the Wellington

Work has started on the biggest expansion and refurbishment programme the hospital has seen for many years. Chief Executive, Keith Hague, said the intention is to meet the needs of the community over the next few decades.

“The first tranche of £14 million has been released for us to completely modernise the whole site. This will include a major refurbishment of all facilities across the site and it will also include a rationalisation programme,” said Mr Hague. “In the past many services have been scattered around the Wellington with split site working - it’s really to rationalise that and to bring them all together. We are also going to expand the Rehab Unit from 27 to 44 beds and that will help to remove the waiting lists for neuro-rehabilitation that we have had for some time.

“Apart from the physical building projects, we have set up an Enquiry Helpline where would-be patients and their medical advisors can enquire about anything from costs of treatment, availability of beds and even about the condition of patients” he said.

Mr Hague said that he and the new management team at the Wellington had deliberately gone out to ask the medical profession what they and the community needed. “We want to work more closely with our neighbours and to listen and

communicate more effectively. This newsletter is the beginning of the process.”

“We are looking at tertiary services including diagnostics; we now have two MRI scanners; there’s a new 64 slice CT scanner soon to be installed as well and all of this means faster access to diagnostics for local patients.

“We are adding additional theatres and modernising existing ones and we are looking to install a third angiography suite mainly for electro physiology studies and ablation studies. Before long we are going to open a rapid access chest pain clinic and acute angioplasty for patients willing to come straight in. Anyone with chest pain will be seen immediately and diagnosed. Treatment can begin there and then, rather than go through a period of pain and anxiety and waiting!

“Of course our cardiac surgical services will remain and the trend for more ‘off pump’ and minimally invasive procedures will continue. Robotics



Keith Hague
Chief Executive Officer



is an area we are looking at right now. This hospital has always been known locally and internationally for the high standard of its cardiac surgery and that will continue” said Mr Hague.
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Wellington People

SARAH FISHER - Chief Nursing Officer and the Wish that Came True!

When Sarah Fisher was driven to London by her parents when she was in her teens, the route passed the Wellington and she used to look at the distinctive buildings and think to herself, "I would like to work as a nurse in that place."

"It looked as if it would be a terrific environment for a nurse," said Sarah. Later, she qualified as a nurse and found herself a sister in orthopaedics at Kings College Hospital in the early 90s. She joined the private sector in 1996 as a kind of trouble-shooter in four different hospitals.

"When I came here in 2002, there were a whole raft of challenges," said Sarah. "The Wellington was run as three separate sites and to some degree with

separate management teams. That didn't help the cohesion of the whole hospital. We now have a new structure and new clinical governance procedures and other auditing systems have been put in too."

"There are very few areas of acute medicine that are not practised here and the most complex procedures are being carried out. We have a very large rehab unit too. Unusually we have intensivists on site 24x7 and 15 critical care beds. We can, and do, cope with any eventuality," said Sarah.

As Chief Nursing Officer, she has been concerned to improve communications with patients and their referring doctors and consultants. "In the past most patients had no contact with the hospital before they arrived. We now try to see as many people as possible before they are admitted. It lowers anxiety levels and speeds up the admission process," said Sarah.



Pre-assessment also gives time to arrange specialist therapies patients need during their rehabilitation. Disciplines include dietetics, speech and language, occupational therapy, neuro-rehabilitation and physiotherapy.

"There is always so much happening, so many innovations and improvements going on that it is a very exciting time. So many changes since I first saw the hospital all those years ago!" said Sarah.

The New External Counter Pulsation Unit for Angina treatment



The External Counter Pulsation (ECP) Unit at The Wellington is now open and treating patients suffering from all grades of Angina. The head of the Unit, Dr Peder Bagger, said the new unit had shown some remarkable results.

"Some patients have been able to stop medication altogether and some lowered their dosage," said Dr Bagger. "Overall, the improvement in the patient's quality of life has been excellent with greater tolerance of exercise and in some cases patients have returned to work and normal life," he said.

Dr Bagger said the new Unit had recorded results that equalled or exceeded those observed by the Mayo Foundation in their major study published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology in 2003.

ECP is particularly appropriate to patients who cannot or do not wish to undergo surgery through reasons of unsuitable coronary anatomy or multiple previous cardiac surgery.

External Counter Pulsation is delivered using three pairs of pneumatic cuffs, wrapped around calves, lower thighs and buttocks and are similar to those used for taking blood pressure. These inflate in time to the heart cycle triggered by electrocardiograph (ECG) signals. The treatment is normally given in one-hour sessions, once or twice each day for up to 35 sessions.

For more details on ECP, please telephone the hospital's Enquiry Helpline on 020 7483 5148.

The Wellington Hip Unit opens

Our new Hip Unit has opened with a team of distinguished surgeons carrying out the full range of procedures. One of those surgeons, Fares Haddad, tells us about the unit.

Our unit encompasses all facets of the assessment, prevention, and early and late management of hip disorders. A number of us have come together to provide expertise in both the non-operative and operative management of hip disorders of varying severity. A quality service can therefore be provided at every level from the young adult with a hip sports injury or early dysplasia, all the way through to the complicated multiple revised or infected hip replacement that needs a sophisticated revision operation.

By having a unit that specialises all the way through from early to late disorders, we can ensure that we both understand the later problems, so that we can avoid them, and also that any surgery undertaken in the early stages of the patient's disease, does not prejudice their care in ten, twenty or thirty years' time.

We are now treating conditions including the following:

- Hip impingement and hip dysplasia - often at early stages of the condition
- Hip arthroscopy to treat inflammatory disorders and dealing with loose bodies in the joint
- Minor tears of the hip labrum
- Realignment of the hip joint on both the femoral and pelvic side to improve biomechanics
- Hip resurfacing
- Hip replacement
- Minimally Invasive Surgery - we have evaluated and refined some of these procedures
- Bone replacement/transplantation.

Many of these are aided by the new imaging modalities that we have available which, for example, allow us to predict more accurately where implants are placed within the bone, thus providing a better functional result.

Hip surgery today encompasses a broad spectrum of interventions and procedures and is not focused purely on joint replacement, one of the many mistakes made in the past. We have access to the best practice in joint replacement including hip resurfacing, computer aided surgery, minimal incision surgery and new low wearing interfaces and our focus will be on providing the right operation for each patient's needs.

For more information, please visit www.thewellingtonhipunit.com



New Self Pay Care Package

The Wellington is launching this Spring a new Self Pay Care Package for patients. It follows several years where the trend has been for more and more people to pay their own medical bills rather than to subscribe to private medical insurance schemes. Self Pay is also very helpful when a patient's policy does not cover the particular procedure they need.

Hospital Chief Finance Officer Catherine Hanrahan said that, increasingly, patients want to agree a fixed price before they are admitted. "We are delighted to welcome people who want to pay their own costs and wherever possible, we give people a package price" she said. "It means they can plan better at a time when there's enough anxiety around without having to worry about bills!

"When patients enquire about the cost of treatment they mean the total cost - inclusive of all hospital and medical fees - everything. And we are planning to launch packages for a number of different procedures covering all specialities from the early Spring," said Catherine.

A new Enquiry Helpline - managed by Pat Bond and manned by trained enquiry handlers - is operational now. GPs, Consultants and patients need only call 020 7483 5148 between 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday or email: wellington.enquiryhelpline@hcahealthcare.co.uk Out of hours, or at weekends, callers will be forwarded to HCA-Connect, our central enquiry service.

If you need Helpline information cards for doctors or patients, just call Pat Bond.

We'll be featuring the New Self Pay Package for Patients in detail in the next issue of Wellington Today.

major refurbishment and expansion - continued

Mr. Hague outlined in more detail: “The tertiary side of our work we will strengthen and grow but we must recognise that the impact of new technology on medicine has been significant and we have seen lengths of stay over the last ten years fall significantly,” he said. “Because of this, we are installing a major ambulatory surgical unit in the South Tower at the Wellington. It’ll be equipped with three operating theatres and it will have short stay ambulatory beds and there’ll also be the traditional en suite rooms for longer daytime stays.

“We will be installing a major GI unit which will bring together physicians and surgeons in a ‘Chambers’ environment so they can provide a comprehensive and high quality service. More than 25 doctors have expressed an interest in working with such a unit and we should have this running in the late spring,” he said.



Wellington Hospital’s Imaging Department gets its second MRI - full details will be in the next edition of Wellington Today.

“There’s also a massive demand for out-patients’ services. People naturally want a fast access to consultants and we are developing a whole new 10 roomed consulting area, in the North building. Opposite the North building at 34 Circus Road we are looking at the potential for providing a large outpatients’ facility. The building could be five stories high and in the order of 30,000 square feet and we have made a planning application to cover this,” he said.

“This hospital places an emphasis on investing in the best staff and facilities - including the latest technology. In addition, the level of critical care provision that we offer means that we can deal with any eventuality. The Wellington employs 23 resident medical officers and intensivists - most private hospitals would employ one or two, maximum. So we have a very strong 24x7 medical cover backed up by consultants. We do take quite a few urgent admissions seven days a week - not many hospitals in the private sector can do this and the changes we are about to make will enhance our role as one of the leading hospitals of its kind in the country,” said Mr Hague.

In the next issue of Wellington Today

The New Rehab Unit at Wellington North

Imaging Department installs a 2nd MRI and there's more still to come

Evaluation of External Counter Pulsation as a Non-invasive Treatment for Severe Angina

Self Pay Care - full details of the Wellington’s new package for patients



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