

MWL Patient News

Your voice, your experience

Issue 05



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إذا احتجت إلى هذه المعلومات بلغة مختلفة أو بتنسيق ميسر، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لعمل التدابير اللازمة لذلك.

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ئەگەر پێویستت بەم زانیاریانە هەبێت بە زمانیکی جیاواز یان فۆرماتیکی دەستگەیشتن، تکایە لەگەڵ ئەندامیکی ستافەکە قسە بکە کە دەتوانێت پۆت رێکبخات.

Welcome



Dear patients, carers and family members,

Welcome to the fifth edition of MWL Patient News (your voice, your experience)!

In this edition, we invite you to meet the Pathology Team and we share some recent news, events, awards and accreditations that have taken place throughout January-March 2025, as well as patient stories and feedback.

We hope that you enjoy this edition of MWL Patient News.

Thank you,

Patient Experience & Inclusion Team

Patient Experience and Inclusion Team



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Meet the Pathology Team



What is Pathology?

Pathology is the study of diseases. It helps doctors understand what makes people sick and how to make them better. The laboratory looks at things like blood, tissues, and other body fluids to find out what's wrong. Pathology has many different departments working together to help do this: Haematology & Blood Transfusion, Biochemistry, Microbiology and Cellular Pathology.

MWL Pathology service



The team performs approximately 17 million tests per year. These include checking blood for diseases, looking at tissues under a microscope, and finding out if there are any germs causing infections. These tests help doctors figure out the best way to treat patients and keep everyone healthy. Biomedical Scientists, Clinical Scientists, Pathologists and Laboratory Support Workers work very hard to give quick and accurate results to help people feel better.

Even though we don't often meet patients, we care a lot about your samples. Each sample is important because it helps doctors understand what's wrong and how to help. We work very carefully to make sure our tests are right, so our patients get the best care possible.

We have laboratories based at Whiston, Southport, Ormskirk and St Helens hospitals, providing laboratory testing to over 600,000 people, covering patients living in Cheshire and Merseyside, Lancashire and South Cumbria, the Isle of Man and North Wales.

Meet the team



“I thoroughly enjoy my role as a Senior Biomedical Scientist in Microbiology as every day is different. Our job is to identify microorganisms that cause infection and perform antibiotic susceptibility testing. This ensures our patients receive the correct antibiotics.”

Lydia Newhall: Senior Biomedical Scientist, Microbiology



“Every day presents new and interesting challenges, but working with fellow colleagues to overcome these challenges is very rewarding and ensures positive patient outcomes.”

Elliot Smith: Associate Practitioner, Clinical Biochemistry



“I love that my role combines detective work with science. The mix of intellectual stimulation, hands-on analysis, and the opportunity to create a real impact in healthcare is what makes Pathology such an incredible and rewarding place to work.”

Lydia Richley: Data Quality and Facilities Coordinator, Pathology



I love being a Biomedical Scientist in Haematology and Blood Transfusion because it allows me to make a direct impact on patients' lives by ensuring accurate diagnoses and safe transfusions.”

Obioma Okoye: Biomedical Scientist, Haematology & Blood Transfusion



One of the reasons why I like my job is knowing I have contributed to a patient's diagnosis for them to obtain any treatment required.”

Lindsay Lythgoe: Biomedical Scientist, Cellular Pathology



Every day I support our incredible nurses, doctors & consultants as they care of you. My job is all about providing health science services and I love it! It's rewarding to know I'm doing my bit for your care.”

Rufaro Jerahuni: Medical Laboratory Assistant, Pathology specimen reception





Your feedback



Over 38,000 patients, relatives and carers provided feedback during January - March 2025



Amazing staff, especially Lorraine and Laura who triaged me, and the rest of the staff who supported me throughout. The surgical team were fantastic, explaining everything beforehand. My experience here today has been so positive. All the staff are a credit to the NHS, and Rachel's cup of tea was fabulous too!

Holbrook Unit, Whiston Hospital



100%



of antenatal mums felt they were involved as much as they wanted to be in the discussions about their care and treatment.

99%

of patients felt they were treated with compassion by hospital staff.



I have to give credit where credit is due. I spent 3 and a half hours today waiting for various tests in haematology at Ormskirk Hospital, and although both waiting rooms were full and they were very busy,

I must say the staff were incredibly professional, welcoming, and understanding. They made the wait feel shorter and helped me feel more relaxed. The receptionist, the phlebotomist and the consultant were all fantastic. A credit to the NHS!

Clinical Haematology, Ormskirk Hospital

All the staff I came into contact with were cheerful, friendly and reassuring despite the department being so busy. I love that everyone introduces themselves by their first name. I felt that I received a very professional service and I'd particularly like to thank the HCA, the RGN, the ECG person, the absolutely lovely medical student Tom and the A&E doctor, Joe. I didn't at any stage feel rushed and I felt listened to. Thank you.

Emergency Department, Whiston Hospital



97%

of inpatients felt they received the care they needed when they required it.



98%

of patients felt they had a positive experience overall.

Midwives were absolutely wonderful at all my appointments and during the birth of my baby. Rachel, my midwife who was there when my baby was delivered was absolutely amazing. I had to have a lot of intervention and she was there every step of the way, ensuring I knew what was going on and why. She kept me very calm. I couldn't have done it without her!! Thank you to the other midwives who I saw

whilst on the Delivery Suite too!

Maternity Services, Ormskirk Hospital



99%

of outpatients felt they received enough privacy when discussing their care and treatment.



Everybody, from the reception ladies to the nurses, was absolutely lovely. There is nothing you could have done better. I would personally like to thank my cardiologist, Dr Sharef. He was very kind, helpful and informative. I want to express my gratitude to everyone for their efficient care from the beginning to the end.

Thank you so much.

Cardiology, Southport Hospital



I received excellent service and treatment. The nurses were very kind and polite and looked after me from the second I booked in. The surgery went very well and the surgeon and staff were absolutely fantastic. I would like to thank them from the bottom of my heart!

Sanderson Suite, St Helens Hospital



100%

of antenatal mums stated that all staff introduced themselves during their visit.



Themes & Focus



The top 5 positive themes during January - March 2025 (Quarter 4) are:

1

Staff



Care and treatment

2

3

Communication



Admission

4



5

Waiting time



MWL patient experience focus for Quarter 1:

1

Communication needs - staff to check the communication requirements of patients and ensure appropriate support is in place.



2

Communication -

#Hellomynameis - patients are unsure which nurse is in charge of looking after them on each shift

3

Written information - inpatients feel they do not receive enough written information about their condition or treatment.





Patient Stories



Our first story is regarding Naomi, a young mum of two children who shared her story of her unexpected cancer diagnosis and the areas of best practice and learning from her experience.



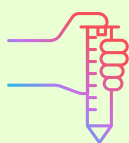
Naomi explained that having a point of contact to support all the planning and having timely communications left her feeling reassured and “being looked after by somebody and being on their radar”. Naomi felt relieved with the urgency of investigations and that this was happening quickly to gather further information, which meant that she wasn’t experiencing ‘an agonising’ wait for her treatment to progress. The ability to continue breastfeeding was very important to Naomi, and she was supported to do this with the support of the Oncology Team.



At the time of sharing her story, Naomi was in remission and was being monitored very closely. On asking Naomi what she would say about the service, she said: “It’s not a department that you expect to deal with. Before becoming poorly, if I thought about what I would want, it would be regular contact, communication, honesty, comfort, and managing expectations. Which is what I received at such an awful time. Everything I wanted from a department I received, which gave me a lot of comfort.”



Our second story is regarding a 41-year-old patient who is registered blind and attended the Emergency Department at Whiston Hospital following an allergic reaction from an unknown source. This had happened previously to the patient and during this attendance, it was decided that the patient now needed to carry an EpiPen®.



The patient was introduced to one of the Emergency Department pharmacists (who coincidentally also carries an EpiPen), and the pharmacist was able to use personal experience to help her work around the patient’s sight restrictions. The pharmacist used a practice device and the patient was able to hold it and feel the difference between both ends of the pen to understand where the needle would be.



The pharmacist completed the EpiPen alert card (a simple and effective way to communicate a person's need for an EpiPen during a severe allergic reaction). Surgical tape was added to the card to change the texture so that it was easily identifiable by touch and the patient added braille to the card. A patient information video was provided to the patient so that they could listen at home and their partner was also able to learn how to administer the EpiPen in an emergency.



A few months later, the patient experienced another allergic reaction which required admission to hospital; the patient had been able to successfully administer the EpiPen to herself, potentially reducing the severity of the reaction.



National Cancer Patient Experience Survey



The NHS wants to make sure patients have a good experience of care. Getting feedback from patients helps us improve and give patients what they need. The survey is anonymous. Your personal data will be kept safe. For more information, visit www.ncpes.co.uk.

The National Cancer Patient Experience Survey (NCPES) asks cancer patients (16 years and older) about their experiences of care. Their feedback helps us to improve cancer services across England.



YOU'RE INVITED!

If you had treatment for cancer in the hospital as an inpatient or a day case and leave between April and June 2025, you may be invited to take part in the survey later in the year.

If you are invited, you will get a letter with more information. Please take part and share your experiences of cancer care. You may get other surveys about your cancer care, but we hope you will also take part in the NCPES. Your answers will help the NHS make cancer care better.



The survey takes around 20 minutes. You can take part online, on paper, or over the phone. If you need help or want to take part in another language, you can call the free helpline at 0800 103 2804 or visit the website..

The NHS and cancer charities use the results to find out what is working well and what needs to improve. National and local NHS teams can then work with patients to make changes.





Willowbrook Hospice Compassionate Neighbour Volunteer



Willowbrook is looking for caring, everyday people to join their Compassionate Neighbour Team. You'll be part of something truly meaningful - offering support to people in their final stages of life and to the loved ones around them.



You don't need to be a healthcare expert or have all the answers. You just need to be a good listener, show up with kindness and be willing to offer your time. Full training will be provided.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or want to learn more, you can:

- Register via the website - www.willowbrook.org.uk
- Telephone: 01744 453798 and ask for Emma or Ian
- Scan the QR code to register

SCAN ME!



Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance Accreditation



MWL has been reaccredited from the Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA) as a Veteran Aware Trust! The accreditation recognises MWL's support towards our armed forces community, as well as our commitment to the standards of being veteran aware, which are:

- Understanding and being compliant with the Armed Forces Covenant
- Having a veterans and Armed Forces Champion Team
- Knowing patient's veteran and Armed Forces community status to make sure that they receive the right level of care
- Training and educating staff around the needs of veterans and the Armed Forces community
- Having established links to appropriate nearby veteran and Armed Forces community services
- Referring veterans and Armed Forces community patients to other services as needed
- Raising awareness of veterans and the Armed Forces community
- Supporting the Armed Forces as an employer



If you or your spouse/partner have ever served in the UK armed forces, please let us know!

Having it recorded in your NHS medical record will help us make sure that you can get access to specific veterans' health services. As all veterans are entitled to priority access to NHS care for conditions linked to their time in the armed forces and their service.

Please note that this will not entitle you to be prioritised ahead of someone with a greater clinical need.



Patient Participation Group



At MWL, we are committed to engaging with patients, carers, relatives and the public to enhance the care we provide. The Trust has a Patient Participation Group, where it actively seeks the views of people in the local community and is looking for new members who have experienced care across its sites to join.



Francine Daly, Patient Experience Manager at the Trust, said: "We are committed to engaging with a diverse range of patients, carers, relatives and the public to help us enhance the care we provide. The Patient Experience and Inclusion Team work in collaboration with patients, the public and staff to improve care, develop services and ensure our services are person-centred. As a patient or carer you may have different views from those of healthcare staff and your participation and involvement is important to help us make sure that our services meet your needs. The views of people in this group have helped us significantly over the years and we are always looking for more people to support us."



The group meets quarterly and is a mixture of online and face-to-face meetings. If you are interested in being involved or would like more information, please contact us via email or webform.



patientexperienceandedi@merseywestlancs.nhs.uk



<https://www.merseywestlancs.nhs.uk/patient-participation>



Louby Lou



This year, MWL was awarded funding from MedEquip4Kids to support visits to the Children's ward at Ormskirk Hospital from Louby Lou, a children's entertainer. The funding was provided to support visits for 6 months with the first visit was in February.

Louby Lou is a friendly, fun-loving Children's Entertainer, who has spent over 25 years spreading smiles, laughter, and a little bit of magic to children and families across the North West. Following her first visit, a play worker on the ward stated:



I have welled up more times than I can count and my cheeks are really hurting from smiling non-stop for 2 hours! She was really engaging to those patients who were open to a visit and with those who were initially hesitant or declined, she managed in a magical way to gently encourage and entertain them. We have teenagers who became friends with the patient across from them and shared things about themselves with each other, all facilitated by Louby Lou. The parents and carers were extremely encouraging and supportive; they were grateful for the time she spent breaking up their day.



We are very grateful to have received funding for Louby Lou to visit and look forward to seeing her more in the future!



Aquablation Therapy Procedure

Whiston Hospital is the first NHS site in the North of England to offer the Aquablation Therapy surgery which helps men who have a non-cancerous, enlarged prostate known as benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) which affects up to three million men in the UK.



Graham Gordon recently underwent the procedure and said: "I have suffered from prostate problems since 2009 and although I have been on regular medication which has helped, the problems were still controlling my life. I knew I had to get something done and I am so glad I met Consultant, Mr John McCabe, who told me all about Aquablation Therapy and its benefits. I had the surgery about two months ago and the difference it has made is incredible".

Mr John McCabe, Consultant Urologist and Surgical Division Medical Director at MWL said: "Aquablation Therapy is a game changer and is a fantastic step forward for our patients and MWL. We all know the challenges the NHS faces and by harnessing innovative procedures such as Aquablation Therapy, we can reduce waiting times for treatment and make sure the patient gets the treatment they need sooner".

Plastic Surgery Day Case Unit at Southport Hospital

In January, Southport Hospital opened a new Plastic Surgery Day Case Unit (PSDU) to support local patients needing minor plastic surgery procedures.

The unit will mean the Trust's Plastic Surgery Team can now treat more patients currently on their waiting list for minor plastic surgery procedures, such as the removal of skin lesions and will mean people from the Southport

and Ormskirk areas will no longer have to travel to Whiston or St Helens hospitals for treatment.



New equipment for breast cancer surgery unit at St Helens Hospital

The Burney Breast Unit at St Helens Hospital received a new piece of cutting-edge equipment that will be a huge boost to patients, thanks to our very own MWL NHS Charity and a gift in will from a former patient.

The 'Faxitron' provides our breast cancer surgical team with immediate access to high-resolution imaging and biopsy reporting during an operation.

Miss Leena Chagla, Lead Clinician, said: "The 'Faxitron' machine enables us to take an X-ray and assess the specimen of the cancer we remove surgically. Having this machine with us during an operation saves time, both in theatre and in clinic, as well as improving patient outcomes. A big thank you to all those who made it possible, especially the Charity Team and Miss Sonia Bathla, Consultant. This will make a huge difference and benefit many patients in the local community."



To find out more about MWL NHS Charity and how you can get involved, contact hello@mwlnhscharity.org.

MyPorter Awards

The MyPorter Awards recognise the vital contribution made to patient care by portering and cleaning professionals across the NHS.

Alan Sutton, Portering Supervisor won the prestigious 'Lifetime Achievement' Award for his fantastic service to the Trust.

Brian Kennedy, Senior Portering, Transport and Logistics Manager was shortlisted in the 'Leader of the Year' category which is fully deserved for his hard work, commitment and dedication to his role.



Diabetes & Endocrinology Department receive accreditation



In March, the Diabetes and Endocrinology Department at St Helens Hospital received the highest level of accreditation for their patient education programmes.



The team currently runs seven programmes covering topics such as insulin management and carbohydrate education which have gained national accreditation from the Quality Institute for Self-Management Education and Training (QISMET) – ensuring they have received the national 'gold standard' for self-management education programmes.

The final QISMET report was full of praise for the team stating: "The commitment and understanding shown by staff interviewed to the concepts of self-management was high. There is a clear commitment by the organisation and staff individually to continually improving the programmes."

Lifetime Achievement Award for Cardio-Respiratory Manager

Congratulations to Gina Rogers, Cardio-Respiratory Manager and Lead Healthcare Scientist for MWL, who has won the Lifetime Achievement Award at the NHS North West Healthcare Science Awards.

Gina was nominated by fellow colleague John Jones, Specialist Biomedical Scientist, who sung her praises in his award entry. He said, "Gina has flown the flag for healthcare scientists for many years, at the Trust, across the system and nationally. Her enthusiasm is infectious and her impact is always positive.



She has encouraged and inspired me and so many others to make healthcare science shine bigger and brighter every year and to top it off she is a truly lovely person. We are very lucky to have such an asset on our team."



Share your feedback



We would love to hear your feedback, you can share your feedback with us in a number of ways:



You can email the team -
patientexperienceandedi@merseywestlancs.nhs.uk



You can complete one of our webforms
Send a thank you form: <https://sthk.merseywestlancs.nhs.uk/thank-you>
Patient Feedback form: <https://sthk.merseywestlancs.nhs.uk/patient-feedback>



You can complete the Friends and Family Test:
<https://www.merseywestlancs.nhs.uk/mwl-fft>