



2022 - 2023

# SOCIAL VALUE REPORT



# Welcome

Welcome to our annual Social Value Report for 2022–2023 – a testament to all we've done **over the past year to support and improve** the wellbeing of our patients, our staff, and our communities.

As I introduce this report, I want to acknowledge the challenges faced by our staff, and the commitment they have demonstrated throughout.

Together with the challenges that we have specifically encountered at MCH, the NHS as a whole has faced **escalating demands**. The pressures placed on healthcare systems across the country have required **creative solutions and a collaborative spirit** to ensure the wellbeing of our communities.

As a provider of NHS services in Medway and Swale, we have stood on the frontlines, facing these challenges with determination and resolve. This Social Value Report shines a light on the invaluable connections we continue to nurture locally to improve the places we live and work within.

Our commitment to social value is a driving force that shapes our actions and a core part of who we are organisationally. It's seen in the collaborative projects that enrich lives, (like our ASPIRE project); the partnerships that help us to grow and learn, and the innovative solutions to challenges we face locally (like our innovative single-handed training approach). It's reflected in the stories shared by our staff, who have gone above and beyond to ensure that our services embody our values of working in partnership, delivering quality and value, and being caring and compassionate.

As 2022–2023 unfolded, our focus moved through and beyond COVID–19 recovery; addressing the impact on our operational capacities and the wellbeing of our patients. Our staff demonstrated unwavering dedication, and I want to express my gratitude and pride to be a part of MCH alongside them all.

Our staff's adaptability, innovation, mutual support, and embodiment of our core values continue to show through in everything they do.

Thank you for joining us in reviewing a year that has reinforced our status as a social enterprise and our determination to innovate and excel against all odds. I hope that this document provides insight into who we are at MCH– an organisation driven by a commitment to social value and compassionate, high quality care.

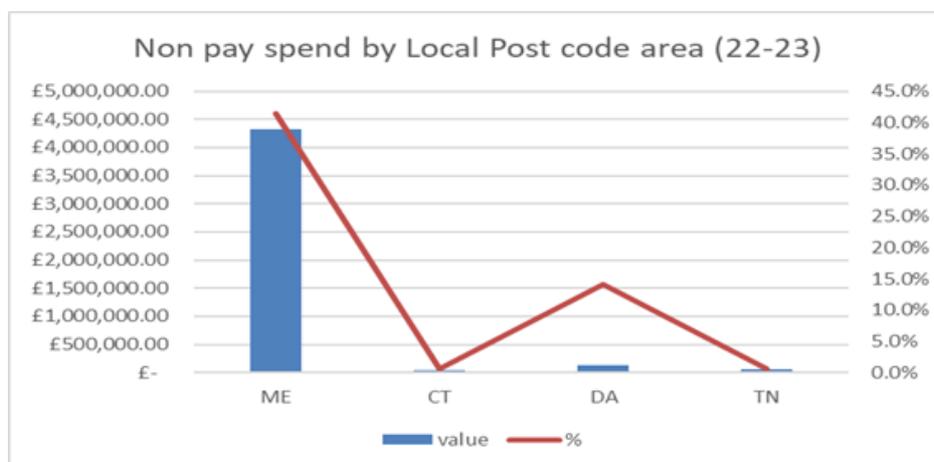


**Martin Riley**  
managing director

# Our year

## In 2022/23 we:

- Received **9176** Friends and Family Test (FFT) surveys which was an increase on the previous year by **3,158** surveys returned.
- 89% of service users felt that they received a very good experience of MCH services which is an increase on the previous year by **2%**.
- Made approximately **677,503** individual contacts with patients
- Received **616** unsolicited compliments from the people we care for, surpassing the number of complaints received **284**. Our commitment to listening to our patients and responding to feedback helps us learn and improve our services for the people we care for.
- Continued to prioritise spending with local businesses wherever possible; buying **42%** of our non-pay goods and services locally (services with an ME postcode); **44%** overall within Kent (including ME postcode). The majority of our clinical consumables are purchased from NHS Supply chain, based locally in Maidstone. We have contract agreements with local suppliers for Milk and morning goods, dry food goods, Fresh meat and poultry, Fresh vegetables, Frozen foods, catering disposables, Drinking water machines, Staff Occupational Health Service, Window cleaning and External audit. We spent **£4,552,781.53** with local Kent-based businesses.



- **4** existing members of staff completed their apprenticeships. We look forward to seeing them at the Celebration Event on the 15th of September.
- And in this same period:
- **22** existing members of staff have started their apprenticeship and are on programme.
- Provided jobs for **266** new members of staff.



# Our social enterprise



MCH is an **£75m** business with **1,349** staff and in our 12 years as a social enterprise, we have developed our local reputation as a provider of high-quality community health services, and negotiated contracts and partnerships to deliver over **40** different services.

We have a strong history of collaborative working with local GPs, Medway NHS Foundation Trust, Medway Council, SECamb and other local stakeholders and we are committed to remaining a key partner in the delivery of health and care services in Medway and Swale. This includes continuing to take a leading role in the development of the Medway and Swale Health and Care Partnership (H&CP) and the wider Kent and Medway Integrated Care System (ICS).

Our staff (both substantive and those on bank / zero-hour contracts) are key to our success, providing a wide range of planned and unscheduled care services in local settings such as schools, care homes, healthy living centres, inpatient units and people's homes. MCH services span across all ages from birth to end of life. They range from preventative and proactive support to keep people as well and independent as possible; through to complex care and support in individuals' own homes to prevent admission to hospital, or to support people following discharge from hospital.

By working together, we ensure the provision of a consistently high quality patient experience, achieving our vision to be a successful, vibrant Community Interest Company that benefits the communities we serve. Our purpose is to provide community health and social care services principally across Medway and the surrounding areas. Our commitment continues to be to 'lead the way in excellent healthcare' and we are proud of our employees, many of whom have chosen to be shareholders in MCH, directly influencing the business decisions we make. Our staff play a key role in delivering our commitment to the communities we serve, and their reputation for going 'above and beyond' what is required of them is well deserved.

Being a social enterprise makes us different:

- Our staff have a say in developing our business plans for the future and reinvesting any surplus funds;
- Our patients, service users, our staff and members of the local community have a say in designing how we provide services;
- We are flexible and able to adapt to the changing needs of the people we care for;
- We are committed to delivering added social value and wider benefits to our communities, alongside offering high quality health and social care services.

In 2022-2023 we provided care in local community settings such as Healthy Living Centres and Children's Centres; as well as our inpatient services at Darland House, the Wisdom Hospice, our rehabilitation units at Amherst Court, and in people's homes.

Social value is at the centre of our business culture and we support our staff to identify opportunities for improvement and develop plans for change, ensuring the people we care for are at the heart of everything we do.

# Our values

Developed with the help of our staff and stakeholders, our values underpin everything we do and support us to work together with a shared understanding to help us achieve our vision:

- We are caring and compassionate
- We deliver quality and value
- We work in partnership



Our values are embedded into our recruitment programme and the ongoing career development of our staff and help shape our quality priorities each year.

## Award winning care

### NIHR Clinical Research Network Kent, Surrey and Sussex Research Support Awards

Natasha James, Senior Respiratory Practitioner, Community Respiratory Team, was the winner of an award in the 'Community' category. Natasha was nominated by Chris Gedge, Head of Research, for providing excellent support to a COPD study.

More than 70 individuals and teams were nominated across the region, from 20 different organisations, from NHS trusts to care homes.

Run by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Clinical Research Network (CRN) Kent, Surrey and Sussex, the awards are designed to recognise people and teams who don't work directly in research delivery, but provide essential support to research activities.



## Local Care Recognition Awards

Our Local Care teams held the 'Local Care Recognition Awards' in early 2023. Local Care staff nominated colleagues for an award. The awards were to recognise and highlight the individuals that contribute to our various valuable services.

The winners were:

### Caring and Compassionate

- Debbie Knight, Wisdom Hospice
- Hazel Overton Henry, Wisdom Hospice
- Viv Garvin, Wisdom Hospice
- Sarah Thompson, Wisdom Hospice
- Emma Hart, Neighbourhood Nursing – Gillingham Team
- Louise Crookes, Respiratory Team
- Debbie Gawler, Respiratory Team
- Sandi Sidhu, CHC Team
- Stephanie Whyatt, Wound Clinic Gillingham
- Stephen Jobson, Dynamic Mattress Service
- Bethan Yeo, Neighbourhood Nursing – Rainham Team
- Donna Forbes, Neighbourhood Nursing – Rochester Team
- Toni Lynch, Neighbourhood Nursing – Chatham Team
- Laura Witherden, Neighbourhood Nursing – Gillingham Team
- Jesse Vincent, Walter Brice Rehabilitation
- Louise Zehntner, Cardiology Team
- Anne-Marie Wheeler, Anti-coagulation Team
- Natasha James, Respiratory Team
- Cay Carlow, Diabetes Team
- Jodie Mann, Wound Clinic North
- Ted Inns, Wound Clinic (Volunteer)

There was also one additional nomination from local care senior management for 'valued contribution to local care': Jo Constant, Tissue Viability

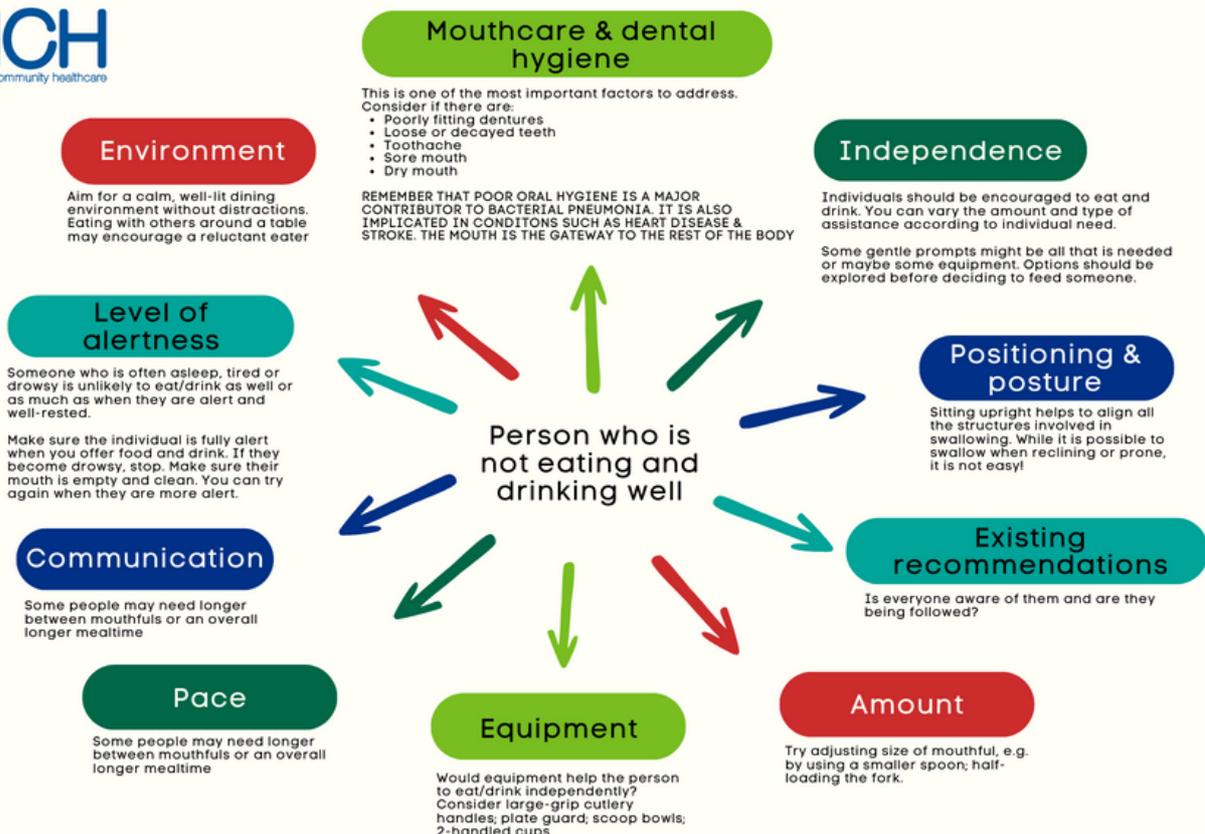


# People we care for

Our staff regularly identify opportunities to improve our services and introduce new activities that complement and enhance the care we provide. Further to this we use patient feedback and quality data to focus our development areas. Below are some of the opportunities we've taken forward in 2022-2023:

- Palliative care are taking forward a Namaste approach to patient care. Namaste Care is a structured programme that integrates compassionate nursing care with individualised activities for people with advanced dementia care needs but can also be used in palliative care. 'Namaste' is an Indian greeting which means 'to honour the spirit within'. The care programme is multi-dimensional, including physical, sensory and emotional elements. The purpose of Namaste Care is to give comfort and pleasure to people with advanced dementia/palliative care through sensory stimulation, especially the use of touch. Namaste Care increases the length of time that healthcare staff spend engaging and connecting with individuals and provides a possible solution to meeting the sensory and emotional needs by enriching their quality of life.
- A new 'one stop shop' service launched at Medway Maritime Hospital for patients with learning disabilities and autism who require medical procedures under a general anaesthetic. The project aims to improve healthcare outcomes, allow patients to have a combination of important treatments such as blood tests and vaccinations (for patients with severe needle phobia), dental and podiatry work, and endoscopies or colonoscopies, while they are sedated and following a best interest decision, (usually these procedures are completed while a patient is awake, but for people with learning disabilities and autism they can be traumatic and overwhelming without a general anaesthetic). Patients are cared for by specialist multi-disciplinary teams from Medway NHS Foundation Trust and MCH. Read more about one of the first patients to trial this new service here: <https://www.medway.nhs.uk/news/new-one-stop-shop-for-patients-with-learning-disabilities-and-autism/619935>.
- Urgent Response are the first in Kent to join daily South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAMB) site calls, to pull patients who have been waiting hours for an ambulance to be seen by the team within 2 hours in their own homes. This avoids a long ambulance wait and/or a busy Emergency Department, and busy hospital ward.
- The School Health Nursing team initiated ChatHealth for young people. Chat Health is a secure NHS approved text messaging service. All Medway young people aged 11 – 19 can text 07480 635 786 to start a conversation with a School Nurse. Anything from relationships, mental health, bullying, alcohol, self harm, healthy eating, drugs and smoking. Young people can chat about a mental or physical health worry or question and the team will answer questions and offer confidential support and advice. ChatHealth received 888 messages from young people between March 2022 and April 2023, and sent over 1000 messages, the majority of these multiple messages within conversations – signifying quality contacts with these young people.

- Change of service name from continence to bladder and bowel to fit in with National Guidance.
- Bladder and bowel service changing the way they deal with new referrals. Initially screening / triaging these and then booking into a new telephone clinic or face to face clinic depending on clinical need to reduce the waiting time for patients requiring a bladder and bowel assessment.
- Tissue Viability worked jointly with Cardiology to develop a heart failure oedema pathway to aid senior community staff to manage oedema in patients with heart failure
- Tissue Viability developed a haematoma pathway following soft intelligence that there was a lack of awareness and knowledge to know how to manage this cohort of patients in practice
- Tissue Viability commenced having a link for each Neighbourhood Nursing team to aid the supervision and support for the Neighbourhood Nursing teams
- The Intermediate Care Team have continued to roll out system wide training for single handed care and have provided training opportunities to Medway Community Healthcare, Medway Council, and Medway Foundation trust where over 60 clinicians have been trained in single handed care with support from Medequip who supported with provision of a training venue and equipment to support the training. A further 7 clinicians were given training in train the trainer to ensure that the model was sustainable, and manual handling leads from all organisations were also provided specialist training in single handed care.
- This work continued with 4 carer engagement days which were lead by MCH supported by partner organisations to engage and upskill local care providers to provide single handed care, which not only provides cost savings across the system but assists our patients in Medway having reduced stays in hospital as they can be discharged wither under our own Home First pathway or through reduced care pathways via the local authority. As a result of one of these days, our Speech and Language Therapy team created an 10-point infographic for local homecare providers to support with caring for people who are not eating or drinking well.



# Our community

Along with the difference we make for our patients, we continue to develop and expand the ways we deliver additional benefits to the wider community. We do this both through our own initiatives, and by working in partnership with local charities and community groups to make a positive difference for local people. In 2022-23 this included:

- The 'Holding Hands' page was set up, linked via the MCH website. This has been widely advertised to parents to be able to look up different activities/clubs as well as additional support and resources.
- A tuck shop for staff was set up at Snapdragons Children's Centre to raise money for future improvements to the children's' and families' experience.
- A handmade bench was bought and donated to Snapdragons Children's Centre to commemorate and remember everyone and everything we lost and sacrificed during COVID-19.
- Children's services received a cheque from the charity, Children With Life Threatening Illnesses (CWLTI), to purchase three picnic tables for our sensory garden at Snapdragons Children's Centre. The benches have been well used, with one consultant quoting: "How lovely it is to take a child out in the garden for his appointment, the child in question was much calmer". Our garden is becoming a much more welcoming place for therapy for the children and a place for parents to sit and chat.
- Two more volunteers have joined Snapdragons Children's Centre. Gill and Ian offer their time for gardening.
- A new large planter of sensory herbs was installed at Snapdragons Children's Centre for the garden, including chocolate mint, which children with additional needs are enjoying touching and smelling. The planter was bought using funds raised through the centre by parents.
- Money raised through children's services' second-hand corner at Snapdragons Children's Centre from donations of good quality children's clothes and toys will be ring-fenced for the next project at Snapdragons.
- School uniforms were donated over the summer holidays which benefited parents of children's services' patients who could purchase them for a small donation to Snapdragons, saving money on full price costs.

- Once again, our Children's Services Team was able to support families in need with Christmas presents. Families were nominated by our health care professionals from Children's Services. Staff took time out of their busy days to deliver presents, as well as giving gifts to families who attended Snapdragons and our other sites for their children and not missing out siblings. We had a lot of families this year struggling more due to the financial crisis and were delighted to receive the gifts for their children. We were sponsored this year by The Salvation Army in Chatham, Met Police MO11 VRES Car Pounds and Greenwich Police Cadets, Medway Rugby Club, friends and neighbours for the huge amounts of gifts. All our families were delighted.
- Medway Cares fundraising through EMF events. This included the January Step Challenge, to promote activity and movement after the Christmas period, which looks set to become an annual event due to its success.
- Tissue Viability commenced joint working commenced with the homeless team within Medway to offer support and treatment to patients with wounds that had been unable or unsure how to access wound treatment.
- Stop the pressure awareness last November for care agencies, voluntary agencies, carers to offer more awareness and support for patients at risk of pressure ulcers
- Legs matter day for MCH staff to make them more aware of lower limb conditions for prevention of ulceration and treatment options.
- Community Nursing working in partnership with Mid Kent College (drama students) to deliver a scenario around good and bad communication on their READ Training.



# Supporting employment

Our commitment to our communities includes supporting local people to gain employment and some of the ways we do this are:

- Working with a number of local schools to support careers events including careers fairs aimed at years 9 and visiting local schools to talk to years 12 and 13 about careers within Physiotherapy
- This year we launched a Careers Carousel event for years 8 and 9. 8 local schools were invited to attend the event, which included 10 stall holders from a good mix of career options within the health profession: eg Dental, Cardiology, Therapies, Tissue Viability and an NHS careers stall when pupils were able to complete the NHS Careers Quiz and learn more about their career preferences. This was a very interactive event, with the stall holders not only providing activities so that the students could learn more about the work of Physio or Dietitian but also talking through their career journey and the challenges and triumphs of their chosen career.
- Urgent and Intermediate Care have expanded their support for local College students, this year welcoming back two second year Btec students, who had previously joined MCH for a work placement when they were first year Btec students. Additionally this year U&IC supported 4 T levels students and now established a rolling programme of supporting these Mid Kent college Students.
- Teams from Nursing and AHPs have been pro-active by attending University and College recruiting days talking about MCH and what they offer as an employer
- Work experience continues to be a fixture of our relationship with schools and colleges with a small but significant number of University students asking for Shadowing opportunities during their summer vacation.
- MCH are expanding their opportunities to support Mid Kent College students: with students from the Performing Arts faculty supporting inhouse training programmes through acting out scenarios and filming these scenarios for learning purposes.
- In June 2022, the local care pillar held a recruitment open day at the Bridgewood Manor Hotel in Chatham. This was a new approach to attract new talent to MCH, and was timed to coincide with third year nursing students coming to the end of their degree and looking for employment. Of the 20 candidates invited to interview on the day, 9 attended. Another 6 people attended throughout the day. In total, we interviewed 10 people and made conditional offers to 9 external candidates; 5 registered nurses and 4 unregistered. Following the success of the day, local care, urgent and intermediate care and planned services held a joint recruitment open day at the Bridgewood Manor Hotel on in January 2023. 59 candidates were invited to the day. We had 19 potential nursing candidates and 33 for additional clinical services attend on the day; a total of 52. Some people were interviewed on the day, whilst others were offered later interview dates suitable for them. We made 20 offers of employment for both registered and unregistered roles.
- Intermediate Care has also continued to offer work experience placements to health and social care students from Mid Kent college with placements in both the Intermediate Care Therapy and Enablement team and the Integrated discharge team, allowing students the opportunity to hone the skills that they are learning in college to support their future career aspirations. This valuable relationship has also afforded further opportunities whereby we have approached the college to support with the media studies students to support with creating videos to promote our services at MCH whilst again providing students opportunities to practice the skills they have learned in college.

# Our Staff

Our staff are our biggest asset, we are proud of their achievements and we recognise them in a number of ways:

- 3 Heads of Service are participating in the Medway Leadership Programme–A great opportunity for senior leaders of public and voluntary services in Medway to develop a multi-sector professional networks including representation from Medway Council, MidKent College, Royal Engineers, Housing, Schools, NHS, National Citizen Service, Universities, Fire & Rescue, Voluntary Sector, Police and other Medway delivery partner organisations. The aim of the programme is to gain a clearer understanding and wider perspective of Medway and its key challenges and opportunities giving insight to finding solutions using a joined up collaborative approach.
- Our staff e-newsletter is currently fortnightly and celebrates staff and their good news; and our e-bulletin is twice a week.
- We take part in awareness weeks such as International Nurses' Day to recognise our colleagues.
- Continued to embed our Health and Wellbeing Strategy, listening to our Health and Wellbeing Steering Group as well as Inclusion Ambassadors.
- Ran menopause information and training sessions to help staff understand what to expect, offer guidance for coping with symptoms and educate managers on how to support staff who are struggling with menopause.
- Our emotional and mental wellbeing offers included opportunities for staff to access mindfulness and reflexology training, as well as a resilience workshop to help staff stay in control and avoid burnout.
- Employing over 1,000 local people living in Medway and Swale, which equates to over 80%of our workforce.
- As a social enterprise, our staff can choose to become co-owners and take part in making decisions for our future; we are pleased to have welcomed approximately 99% of staff as co-owners so far, influencing how MCH develops and grows;
- Our Elected Members' Forum (EMF) of co-owners works to help improve communication and engagement between our Board and our staff, playing an active role in representing the views of staff across our organisation. Our EMF Chair is our Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) Guardian who supports staff to raise concerns, and fellow EMF representatives also act as FTSU Guardians.
- We are a registered Disability Confident Employer with the Department for Work and Pensions, in recognition of our commitment to the employment and career development of people with disabilities.
- We are registered supporters of Step into Change, delivering opportunities for the armed forces communities.
- Our volunteers are an integral part of our teams, bringing energy and compassion and helping us to deliver care and make a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of our patients, our staff and the volunteers themselves. We have over 100 volunteers offering a wide range of support to the Wisdom Hospice and our other services.



# Participation in research

"We are research active"



**368**  
studies  
reviewed for  
eligibility



**6**  
open  
studies



**7**  
studies in  
set up



**10**  
studies in  
follow up



**8**  
clinical  
specialities  
involved in  
research



**3**  
new  
studies set  
up in year



**185** research recruits

**123%** of our recruitment  
target

# Research in action



## **NIHR Portfolio Studies**

MCH has continued to deliver clinical research activity during 2022–23 further establishing itself as a “Research-active” organisation within the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Clinical Research Network. The number of participants that were recruited during that period to participate in research approved by a research ethics committee was 185 across 8 different clinical specialties.

## **European Projects**

MCH has remained an active member of the Health and Europe Centre, which has afforded opportunities to be involved in a number of large-scale pan-European research and innovation projects. All 4 projects have either been completed or are entering the final stages of project closure.

The outputs and results of the individual projects have been reported below but further information is available at The Health & Europe Website:

[www.healthandeuropencentre.nhs.uk/projects](http://www.healthandeuropencentre.nhs.uk/projects)

## **DWELL (Diabetes and WELLbeing)**

People with type 2 diabetes are offered a holistic 12-week programme which provides individual, tailored support, motivating each person to make long-term lifestyle changes necessary to manage their condition successfully.

It aims to improve the lives of people with type 2 diabetes and reduce their risk of developing long-term complications.

DWELL was approved in 2016 and finished at the end of March 2023 following an extension and additional funding from Interreg 2 Seas. The 12 week programme has been well received by people living with type 2 diabetes and the initial results demonstrated significant impact on a range of metabolic and wellbeing measures.

There has been significant interest in the project and the MCH DWELL Programme Lead has presented at Diabetes Professional Care at Olympia (16/11/22) and more recently participated in a documentary to be shown in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and parts of the Netherlands.

Conversations have been held with Medway and Swale Health and Care Partnership Population Health Management Team and funding has been agreed to extend the project by a further year, whilst piloting the programme within Swale, and developing of a future business case.

Further information: [www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/about-us/get-involved/european-research-projects/dwell](http://www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/about-us/get-involved/european-research-projects/dwell)

## **TICC (Transforming Integrated Care in the Community)**

The project has come to an end as of March 2023 – but that does not mean our work has finished! The new model inspired by the research and Buurtzorg continues to be implemented across community nursing teams, redefined as our “Neighbourhood Nursing” teams.

The principles of the model have also been applied across all our teams within Local Care. The blueprint for how this model could be implemented across the UK, and the final publication can be found here: [www.publicworld.org/ticc-project-results](http://www.publicworld.org/ticc-project-results)

This a journey that will continue to involve cultural change within not only the services but the organisation and the NHS to bring the wider benefits of improved outcomes for our patients, their families and the health and care economies.

Watch our video of what our staff say: [TICC - Keystone \(shortened\) – YouTube](#)

Further information:

[www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/about-us/get-involved/european-research-projects/ticc](http://www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/about-us/get-involved/european-research-projects/ticc)

## **CASCADE (Community Areas of Sustainable Care and Dementia Excellence in Europe)**

Following the recommencement of the Cascade project in April 2022, the Cascade model of care was reintroduced at Harmony House. The project parameters were adjusted and a period of staff training was undertaken with the in-house rehabilitation team.

Following the guidance as set out within the developed training manual, this enabled the team to develop their knowledge, skills and competence around the management of dementia and its impact on the individual and their family. One floor of Harmony House was then used to support patients living with dementia who would also benefit from a period of rehabilitation and enablement.

The project continued until September 2022 with a final conference held online in February 2023.

This showcased the achievements of the project including the newly built Dementia-friendly facility; staff training manual; and increased education and awareness around supporting individuals living with Dementia, and their families, to live life to the full and as independently as possible. Conversations are ongoing about continued use of the excellent facilities.

Watch our video about Harmony House: [HARMONY HOUSE with DUTCH SUBS – YouTube](#)

Further information:

[www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/about-us/get-involved/european-research-projects/cascade](http://www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/about-us/get-involved/european-research-projects/cascade)

## ASPIRE: (Adding to Social capital and individual Potential In disadvantaged Regions)

MCH was successful in recruiting a talented team to deliver ASPIRE in Medway.

Alongside participants, they were involved in the design of an innovative programme to support people in Medway over 18 and not in full time work or education to improve their health, wellbeing, opportunities and reduce social isolation.

Elements were delivered at several locations across Medway and an ASPIRE hub was developed at Shaw Memorial Hall at St Augustine's Church in Gillingham. The team has worked closely with local organisations including Octopus Foundation, Paramount Foundation and Gillingham Street Angels to deliver the programme. ASPIRE was co-created to produce an innovative model for holistically combining healthy weight and employability services that will be applied by hubs in disadvantaged communities.



Although the project finished at the end of June 2023, discussions are underway to maximise the benefits already realised from the programme from the ASPIRE kitchen, allotments, greenhouse, employability workshops and various exercise and wellbeing programmes.

Further information: [www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/ASPIRE](http://www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/ASPIRE)

# Research Working in partnership

Working in partnership is one of MCH's core values.

Our Research Team has continued to foster relationships within the health and social care system and these links have enabled the sharing of good practice, development of research processes and opportunities to engage in clinical research.

Kent, Surrey & Sussex Clinical Research Network

MCH is an active member of the local clinical research network, meeting regularly with the local Research Delivery Manager and various specialty leads and managers. MCH currently has representation at the following KSS forums:

- Partnership Board
- R&D Collaborative Forum
- Finance and Operation Group
- Strategic Funding Group
- Regional Research Communications
- PPIE (Patient, Public Involvement & Engagement) Forum

Through these forums MCH has partnered with two local Community trusts: Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust, and Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust to form a local Community Providers forum. We share good practice and provide a platform for sharing studies.

MCH also works closely with the Research Design service who provide research design and methodological support to health and social care researchers across England to develop grant applications to the NIHR and other national peer-reviewed funding programmes. They have also supported Early Career researchers to develop their research skills and ideas.

### **Local Partnerships**

MCH continues to work with our local acute hospital provider Medway NHS Foundation trust (MFT) to explore opportunities to work together on studies and projects that span across acute and community care. The Reduce 2 study (described above) is a good example of this.

MCH and MFT have also recently submitted a joint application for funding to KSS on a project supporting “Underserved Communities” to more readily access research opportunities.

### **Academic Partnerships**

MCH is pleased to have been able to work with local academic institutions including the University of Kent, Canterbury Christchurch University and Bournemouth University on our projects such as DWELL and ASPIRE.

A local project was recently completed in conjunction with University of Greenwich, Kent & Medway Partnership for Enterprise, Food and Health, Kent County Council and Medway Council.

The aim of the project was to understand ethnic minority groups' perspectives on healthy eating and how we can change the trajectory in obesity through healthy eating.

The final report can be accessed here under [Published Studies: Research : Medway Community Healthcare](#)

MCH is a co-applicant with the University of Kent and Pilgrims Hospice on a bid for research funding under the “Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB) Programme: NIHR205406 – Primary care and hospice engagement with communities to think, talk or act on current or future end of life needs: Realist Evaluation of THINK, TALK, ACT (TTA)”. This application has reached the second stage of the process.

March 2023 saw the first meeting of the Kent and Medway Research Networking meeting at the newly established Kent and Medway Medical school. This collaboration between health, social care and academic partners will bring about new opportunities for developing research ideas, clinical academia and partnership working across the system.

## Other Partnerships

MCH is also an active member of other forums and collaborations across the Health and Care system, all with similar aims of actively promoting and supporting research activity; growth of ideas and 'home-grown' studies; sharing of good practice and supporting research that meets the needs of our local population.

These include:

- Medway & Swale Health and Care Partnership Population Health Management Steering Group
- Community Healthcare Alliance of Research Trusts (CHART)
- Transform Research Alliance: [www.transformresearchalliance.org.uk](http://www.transformresearchalliance.org.uk)
- Health & Europe Centre Board

## Future plans

MCH remains as committed as ever to deliver on its vision for research, in order to be able to offer the patients and families we care for, and staff, the opportunity to participate in clinical trials and projects.

A number of future priorities and plans have emerged during 2022-2023 which will be carried forward into 2023-2024:

- Continue to be a "Research Active" organisation and support the delivery of NIHR approved portfolio studies.
- Review and update existing research strategy in line with locally developed priorities identified through the Medway and Swale Health and Care Partnership.
- Embed our Research Active culture across the organisation, providing staff with training and education on research and "growing our own" staff and studies.
- Further develop our partnerships with academic institutions including the new Kent and Medway Medical School.
- Work with "hard to reach" or "underserved communities" to ensure equal opportunities to research are available.
- Ensure we celebrate our achievements
- Ensure published studies are embedded into clinical practice.



# Our charity, Medway Cares

Medway Cares supports projects and activities that enhance the health, care and wellbeing of local people and aims to address health inequalities in the local community.

Established in 2012, so far Medway Cares has awarded **£298,605.29** in funding to support local people. We are proud of the positive impact Medway Cares has had in the community and of the positive outcomes the charity has achieved for local people.

In 2022-23 Medway Cares awarded **£4,454** to new projects nominated by our staff – just one of the ways our staff and co-owners have a say in how our surplus is reinvested for the benefit of the local community. These awards include:

- **£765** for a memorial plaque to remember those lost to Covid
- **£55** for special needs toys at Snapdragons Children Centre
- **£2,624** for knee exercise machine for use in the physio department
- **£453** for speakers and diffusers for patient rooms at Wisdom Hospice
- **£105** for 1:2:1 trampolining sessions to aid rehabilitation for a disabled child



*Medway Cares*  
*Doing small things that make a difference*

# Our environment



We take pride in respecting the environment, and continue to seek ways to ensure that we reduce our impact on the world we live in. During 2022/23 we:

- Continued reducing the use of single use plastics by altering our purchasing rules; and encouraged the use of recycled, paper cones instead of plastic cups.
- Used filtered mains water in our coolers, avoiding the use of large plastic bottles.
- Sought local suppliers of key products and services, to reduce delivery miles and carbon footprint.
- Continued staff using remote working technologies to reduce travel, energy consumption in our buildings and commuting.
- Continued using online appointment booking and text messaging reminders where possible and set up a project to increase this to reduce reliance on paper documents, and save wasted journeys.
- Continued the rolling programme to replace lighting with energy efficient, LED bulbs across our estate.
- We advertise electric and hybrid vehicles under our lease car scheme and two of our MedOCC fleet and one of our Dental fleet are hybrid vehicles.
- Implemented a recycling scheme for used toner cartridges.
- Began a communication programme regarding reduction of carbon – eg please do not send copy all and thank you emails as every email is 50 grams of carbon.
- For our own buildings, we are looking to invest in electric charging points for cars.
- Enrolled EMF to support our carbon reduction and develop our organisational targets for reduction to compliment the national ones.
- Suppliers are now assessed on their green credentials as part of the procurement process.

# Looking ahead



We are proud of our success in embedding social value into our business culture. Continuing to make a positive impact for our patients and our communities is fundamental to our plans for the future. Ideas being incorporated into our plans for 2023–24 include:

- Our palliative care team is planning to offer and deliver a degree / masters level qualification in end of life care, in conjunction with Canterbury Christ Church University, building on the work started by the tissue viability team, to improve patient care.
- In children's services we are starting to take on qualified doctors as part of their rotation scheme, to learn about community paediatrics. We will also be supporting clinical psychologists in their PHD research programmes.
- In June 2022, we implemented ChatHealth within the school nursing service. ChatHealth is a secure and confidential text messaging service for young people and parents/carers of school aged children to speak to a health professional. We plan to promote and expand upon this service to support local young people.
- As part of our Caring For You staff wellbeing work we are creating spaces to help our staff to thrive at work by providing benches, picnic tables or anything else that staff feel would improve the staff area at our locations.
- We will be applying for menopause accreditation via the Kent & Medway ICS which will enhance our current support to staff and further our commitment to our staff's health and wellbeing. Our stroke services team is reintroducing guest lecturing for a local university physiotherapy programme.
- We are recruiting externally for clinical degree apprenticeships, providing opportunities for local residents to become registered clinicians via the employment route.
- We will deliver careers events for students in Year 5 and beyond.
- We will launch our newly designed Leadership Framework and revised leadership and management (LEAD – Lead, Empower and Develop) programme to support this.
- We will do more to share the apprenticeship levy funding, to enable local businesses to train, develop and retain their staff.
- Tissue Viability is planning to offer and deliver a degree / masters level qualification in wound management , in conjunction with Canterbury Christ Church University to improve knowledge and skills of our existing staff, whilst continuing the lower limb degree / masters course.
- Tissue Viability to promote their pathways and work Nationally and internationally to show the work performed within the service and share practice.
- Community Nursing Clinical Lead working with Canterbury Christ Church University to develop an Community and Primary Care Module to be added to the Adult Nursing training from this year but will be undertaken by students in the 2nd year of training.

**THANK  
YOU FOR  
READING**

