

# Quality assurance and outcomes

We aspire to be the best, the safest and the most effective health and wellbeing provider there is – an organisation where our patients, members and customers have a truly exceptional experience.

To achieve this, our people must be highly skilled professionals; processes, practices and procedures must be evidence-based, and meet or exceed healthcare standards; and our technology must be cutting edge.

Our relentless focus on Quality in everything we do protects the organisation's financial sustainability.

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# A year of continuous quality improvement

## Quality Assurance Framework



### SAFETY

Meeting the highest possible standards by avoiding harm, upholding professional standards and acting responsibly



### EFFECTIVENESS

Providing evidence-based health and wellbeing expertise and services that lead to excellent outcomes



### EXPERIENCE

Being a trusted partner to our patients, members and customers by giving them a positive and reassuring experience

Quality has always been a key focus for Nuffield Health, and it leads the agenda for our Board of Trustees and Executive Board meetings. As we move into the post-pandemic world, with all the uncertainty that brings, everything we do will be evaluated against the three pillars of our Quality Assurance Framework – Safety, Effectiveness and Experience.

Good governance is at the core of continuous improvement and best practice. Throughout 2021 we remained true to our Quality aspiration and continued to apply rigorous analysis to everything we did. This was despite the changing and uncertain operating environment. Our Guiding Principles were regularly updated in line with evidence-based guidance, which translated NHS and government situations into the context of Nuffield Health.

Our steadfast commitment to Quality, and our decision not to compromise, gave us confidence that our care standards were being maintained, despite the changes in activity and service provision. Credit must go to our teams, in every corner of the Charity, for their perseverance and diligence in meeting the challenges.

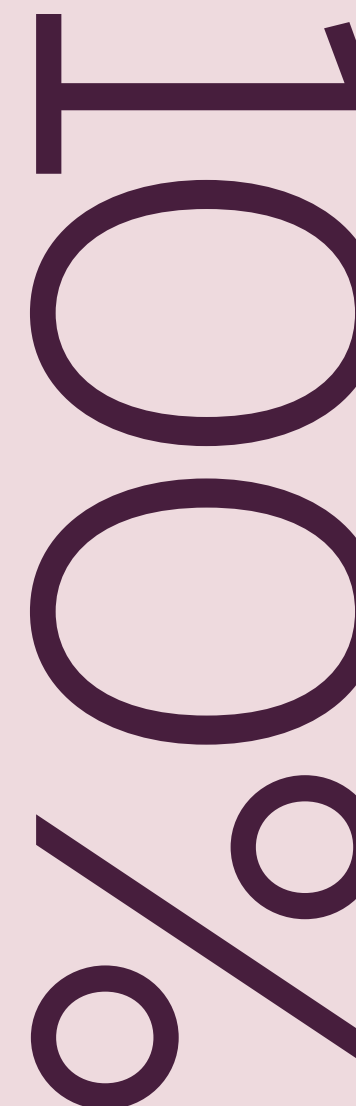
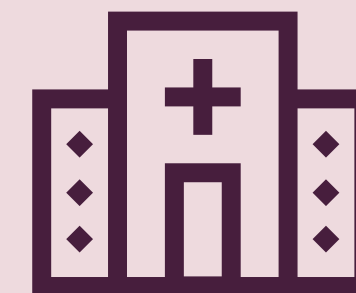


◆◆ We're proud to hold ISO standard certification in all key areas relevant to the Charity, demonstrating our commitment to quality. ◆◆

## Industry recognition

Delivering the highest quality care, in a safe environment, to our beneficiaries remained a top priority for us throughout 2021. We were, therefore, proud to receive industry recognition in a number of areas, including the following:

- Chichester Hospital received an Outstanding Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating, with patient care, safety and leadership highlighted
- Our cleaning team was presented with the British Institute of Cleaning Science Award for 'Excellence in Training & Assessment' for our accredited housekeeping training programme, an acknowledgement of our efforts to keep our people, customers and patients safe
- For the second year running, we won the prestigious Nursing Times 2021 Workforce Award for Preceptorship Programme of the Year, demonstrating our commitment to workforce excellence. This nine-month programme prepares newly qualified clinicians for professional success and the delivery of high quality care
- Our Preceptorship Programme was accredited by the Royal College of Nursing in January 2022 and, in March, was awarded the Capital Nurse Preceptorship Quality Mark by Health Education England.



**of our hospitals rated Good or Outstanding in 2022 by national regulators\***

\*This excludes Nuffield Health at St Bartholomew's Hospital, which opened in May 2022 and is yet to undergo CQC assessment



- All our hospitals in England and Wales received the National Joint Registry's (NJR) Quality Data Provider Award. The NJR monitors the performance of hip, knee, elbow and shoulder joint replacement operations to improve clinical outcomes primarily for the benefit of patients, but also to support orthopaedic clinicians and industry manufacturers
- Six Nuffield Health hospitals saw 100% of hip and knee replacement patients improve within the first six months following surgery.\*\* Patient outcomes across all hip and knee replacement procedures were 3% and 6% higher than the national average in achieving a better than expected result.\*

## Safety culture

Throughout the pandemic, effective incident management was a sustained focus, with all incidents thoroughly investigated and used as opportunities for learning and continuous improvement. We continue to prioritise patient safety and, during the year, put in place a number of improvement initiatives. These included the introduction of weekly incident appraisal

\* Taken from the latest NHS Digital publication available at Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) – NHS Digital (NHS patients only)  
 \*\* Taken from the latest PHIN publication released on 8 February 2022. Available at PHIN – Health improvement datasheets (private Patients only)

## Launch of PL:AN

Our Primary Care Professional Leadership and Assurance Network (PL:AN) was launched in October 2021, with the aim of maximising collaboration in leadership, clinical quality and governance within each of our primary service lines. These include mental health services, physiotherapy, GP, health assessment (physiology) and our newest primary care service line, clinical fitness. Adding clinical fitness to our service line network allows us to implement the same robust leadership and Quality Assurance Framework to our fitness and rehabilitation flagship programmes.

The PL:AN network is led by our Head of Quality for Primary Care, along with a multi-disciplinary leadership team comprising of national and regional leads for each service line. All of our leads maintain active clinical practice so that strategic decision-making is always beneficiary-led, and grounded in frontline service delivery. The PL:AN methodology ensures that Quality standards are visible across all primary care service lines, it also empowers connection - allowing clinicians regular and close contact with central clinical leadership teams.

### Benefits include:

- enhanced levels of clinical support to clinicians delivering services to our beneficiaries
- greater visibility of quality and clinical performance for all service lines
- improved communication at site and regional level
- direct local support for those responsible for operational delivery and management of services
- multi-disciplinary team to support a consistent approach to professional education and development strategies
- collaborative working on new service lines.

Since the launch, we've seen improvements in employee satisfaction and engagement, communication, and Continual Professional Development (CPD) activity.

◆◆  
**The PL:AN network improves our clinical quality, experience, and effectiveness across Primary Care, as well as helping to evolve and drive forward our connected health services.**  
 ◆◆

Marc Holl, Head of Quality for Primary Care

forums to facilitate expedient incident management and early identification of trends, themes, and preventative actions.

Our 2021 improvement plan focused on system, process, and cultural enhancement to help us embed a culture of openness and psychological safety, where all employees, irrespective of their level, are empowered to speak up. As part of this, a network of Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) ambassadors has been developed across the Charity. They will support employees with the appropriate escalation of concerns or feedback. In addition, we maintain a confidential, independently managed, Safecall hotline, which is accessible 24/7.

A designated Head of Safety Culture has been appointed to take the lead on FTSU strategy. They will be responsible for setting up and maintaining a robust Speak Up framework that facilitates openness, psychological safety, and constructive dialogue. Developing and embedding this framework will be a key priority over the next year.

Never Events are defined by NHS England as "Serious Incidents that are wholly preventable because guidance or safety recommendations, that provide strong systemic protective barriers are available at a national level and should have been implemented by all healthcare providers". (NHS improvement 2018).

Eight Never Events were identified in 2021 (an increase of three compared to 2020), with five relating to ophthalmology. Thematic analysis of the events identified several commonalities. There was a clear requirement to reset our standards following the adoption of unique ways of working during the early phases of the pandemic. In response, during the third quarter of the year, we launched an extensive, three-stage, Safety Incident Reset Plan:

### Stage 1 – review and reset

Review levels of knowledge, compliance, and effectiveness of safety incident processes, and reset these to organisation standards. A subject matter expert was appointed to appraise the three ophthalmology Never Event incidents, evaluate current pathways against best practice standards and consider opportunities for pathway optimisation.

### Stage 2 – reorientate

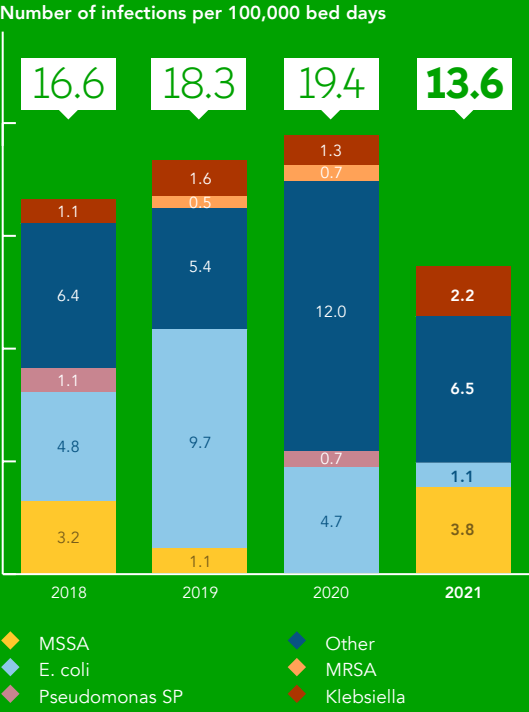
System and process initiatives, which reorientate teams to safety practices that are clinically effective, ensuring people are aware of, and adhering to, policies and procedures supporting the delivery of safe clinical care.

### Stage 3 – re-energise

Cultural initiatives that aim to re-engage teams with best practice, enhancing levels of safety culture, facilitating conscious competence and zero avoidable harm.



Bloodstream infections



Avoidable infections

Nuffield Health maintains high standards of infection prevention and control, which contributes towards the maintenance of a safe environment for our patients. 2021 saw a decrease in the overall number of avoidable bloodstream infections from 19.4 to 13.6 per 100,000 bed days, compared with 2020 (see chart).

- No cases of MRSA bloodstream infections were recorded, with only one case in the last 10 years
- E.coli infections continue to fall, with a further reduction by three quarters (4.7 in 2020 to 1.1 in 2021). The remaining cases were related to immune-compromised oncology patients, who are a higher risk cohort
- Other bloodstream infections decreased by a third
- Five cases of Clostridioides Difficile were identified. Four were classed as community-acquired (no Nuffield Health interventions); the remaining case was attributed to the hospital due to an extended course of antibiotics prescribed outside the antimicrobial formulae.

All infections are subject to rigorous investigation, with learnings captured by local and organisational improvement plans.

Hospital Sterile Services Units

In 2022, our seven Hospital Sterile Services Units (HSSUs) will celebrate 15 years in operation. Each plays an important role in the fight against infection as they safely disinfect, sterilise and deliver surgical equipment on a large scale. Our HSSU Quality Management System ensures each site manufactures and supplies products and services that consistently meet customer and regulatory requirements. In addition to servicing Nuffield Health hospitals, they provide services to other healthcare organisations, including the NHS, general practitioners and clinics.

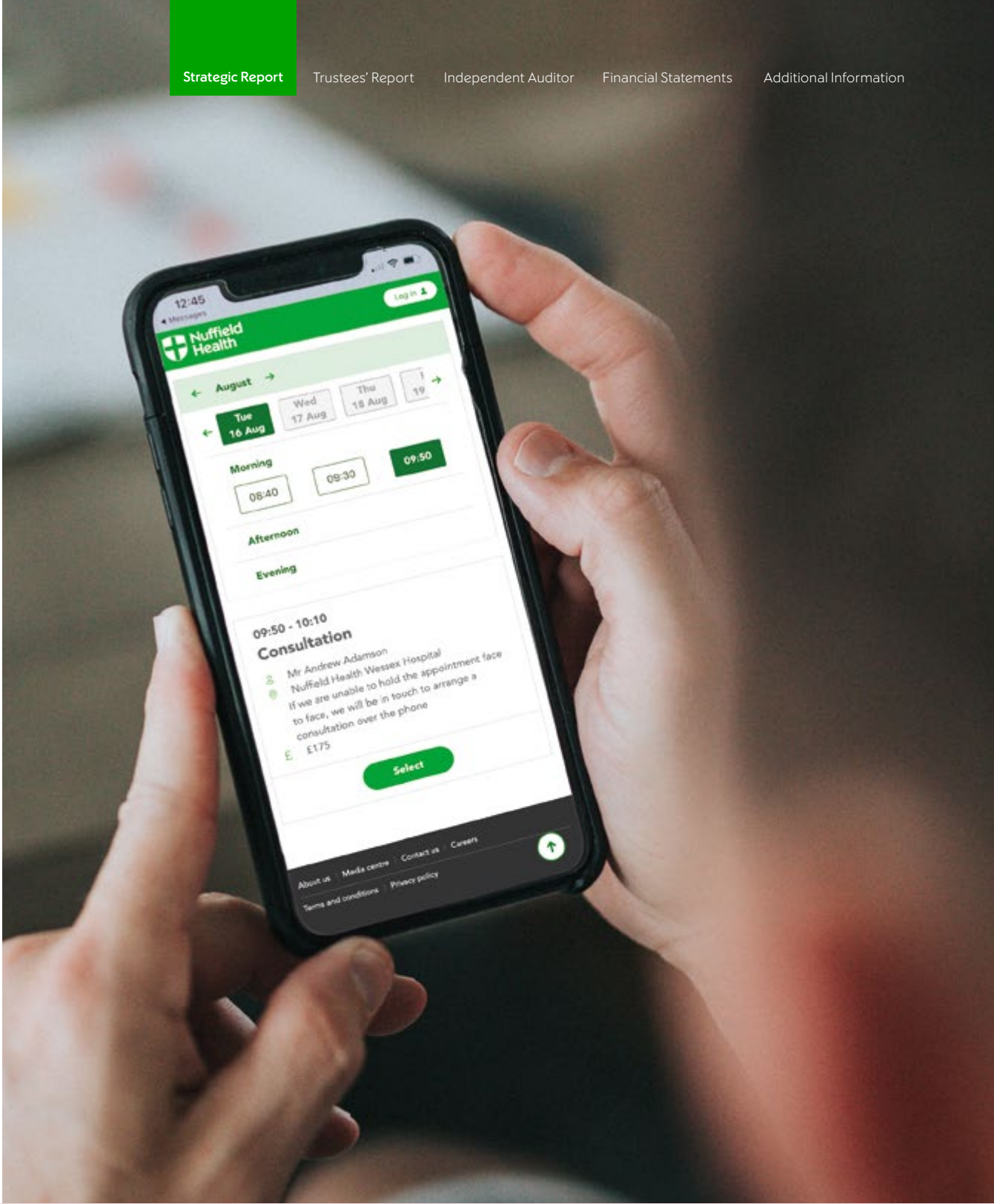
HSSUs are accredited processors of reusable medical devices and the British Standards Institute (BSI), monitors our registration and carries out annual surveillance audits. During 2021, our Wetherby HSSU became the head office for BSI ISO 14001 and was recertified to that standard. A further four sites were audited to the ISO 14001 management standard, and maintained accreditation. This means all seven HSSU sites hold this important registration.

BSI ISO 14001 helps identify improvements in recycling opportunities and measuring consumption of utilities including gas, electricity and water, thereby limiting our impact on the environment.

Our HSSU Statutory Compliance Lead successfully undertook the BSI ISO 14001 lead auditor course in 2021, and now has the skills and expertise required to conduct full Environmental Management System (EMS) audits to ISO 14001:2015 standards.

Online consultant booking

We're always looking to improve the experience offered to our patients. In September 2021, we launched an online booking platform to allow people to book appointments with their chosen consultant. Already, 48% of our consultants have made their diaries available to the system. More than 9,800 appointments have been made since the launch, with an average of 400 people using the online booking service each week.



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# An interview with...

Tracy Baxandall, Infection Prevention & Control Specialist Nurse,  
Nuffield Health at St Bartholomew's Hospital

## Describe your role

I'm the Infection Prevention Lead Nurse at Nuffield Health at St Bartholomew's Hospital, our new hospital in the City of London. In a nutshell, I'm responsible for ensuring measures are in place to prevent patients contracting infections when in our care, and for making sure all our people, whatever job they do, are aware of the part infection prevention and control plays in keeping our patients safe.

## What's your background?

I've been an infection prevention nurse for 27 years, and was one of the first to undertake a specialist three-year BSc degree in infection prevention and control following my nursing registration. In my early career I was a ward sister, specialising in cardiothoracics, so I'm excited that Nuffield Health at St Bartholomew's Hospital will be a centre of excellence for cardiac and thoracic surgery.

## What's your first priority?

Training. Everyone employed at the hospital must understand our processes and know just how critical infection prevention and control is, particularly when we're caring for immuno-compromised patients, and those undergoing major surgery. Everyone goes through an infection prevention and control induction, whether they're in clinical or non-clinical

roles. And then there are mandatory annual updates. Training is a mix of online modules, classroom sessions and practical assessments, which include hand hygiene and aseptic non-touch technique (ANTT), to ensure sterility is maintained when invasive procedures are carried out on patients.

## What sets Nuffield Health apart?

We've always been ahead of the game in respect of infection prevention and control. Strict processes are in place for policy development, staff education and training.

We also have an Infection Prevention help desk, which I think is quite unique and is accessible for the whole Charity. Plus a rigorous audit programme, which includes quality assurance reviews of hospitals and non-acute sites, to make sure standards of infection prevention and control are as we would expect.

Our training programmes promote best practice, and our policies underpin this, but it's our audits that monitor and ensure that our standards are high.

## What are you passionate about?

The pandemic highlighted the importance and necessity of our role and brought us to the forefront of patient and employee safety. I'm passionate that we maintain this recognition and value.

## What are you most proud of?

In England, there's a shortage of specialist infection prevention nurses. During my career I recruited, trained and mentored four, all of whom attained the BSc degree in infection prevention. I think that's an important contribution to the bigger picture.

## What excites you about the future?

Seeing Nuffield Health at St Bartholomew's Hospital operating at full capacity, and demonstrating our excellence through accreditation schemes such as ANTT, which requires the highest level of excellence in aseptic technique. The accreditation has three levels and we're definitely going for gold!

◆◆ The pandemic highlighted the importance and necessity of our role and brought us to the forefront of patient and employee safety. I'm passionate that we maintain this recognition and value. ◆◆







Healthcare needs are becoming more complex and we have to keep evolving our teams and services to meet those needs.



# Investing in professional development

Quality improvement is integral to everything we do and our physiotherapy team is no exception. During the year, they carried out over 633,000 sessions, often acting as the first point of contact for a patient, ahead of their GP. They assess, diagnose and manage the care of patients across a range of healthcare issues, including musculoskeletal and cardiothoracic.

In 2021, Nuffield Health's physiotherapists played a key role in our response to COVID-19, with many seconded to our hospitals as they supported the NHS in the fight against the virus. Others moved from face-to-face consultations to offer a virtual service, with a small team delivering the clinical triage component of our COVID-19 Rehabilitation programme.

During the year, we launched our first communication and engagement project to find out what team members felt could be improved. As a result, in September, we launched a clinical supervision pilot involving five sites. This gave teams in similar geographical areas the opportunity to engage in virtual discussions sharing clinical case studies, developments in physiotherapy practice, views and new ideas. Results from the pilot were positive, with team members welcoming the opportunity to discuss clinical cases, and learn from others. The model is now being rolled out nationally.

633,000  
physiotherapy sessions delivered during the year



CASE STUDY

## Working together to share best practice

Laura Mould is the national inpatient and respiratory lead physiotherapist, based at Nuffield Health's Leeds Hospital. During her time with the Charity, she's been involved in a number of national projects, where she's met physiotherapists from across the Charity. So she welcomes moves by the new senior leadership team to bring everyone together with monthly regional huddles, and new clinical supervision sessions.

"It's important to have experience and understanding of what's going on in other areas, and the huddles give us all the opportunity to work together and share best practice," she says.

Following a communication and engagement exercise to find out what people felt could be improved across the wider physiotherapy group, investment for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) has been

increased. "Healthcare needs are becoming more complex and we have to keep evolving our teams and services to meet those needs, so I think investing in professional development will benefit the Charity overall, as well as individuals," she says.

Laura has herself recently signed up for a three-year MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP) apprenticeship, which focuses on advanced clinical practice, leadership and management, and education and research.

"ACPs are widely used in the NHS as an efficient and cost effective way to offer experience and expertise, as they can expand their scope of practice in caring for and treating patients," explains Laura. "Although fairly new within Nuffield Health, they could be an important part of our future in standardising patient care and services. Nuffield Health is constantly evolving and provides lots of opportunities for people to get involved and help shape that evolution," she says. "CPD is one of those opportunities."

Our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) budget has been significantly increased and the application processes have been standardised. Take-up so far has been encouraging and, following conversations with the team, in future 10% of a physio's time will be dedicated to professional development and engagement. Nuffield Health recognises the impact of further education, training and clinical supervision, on clinical quality and personal and professional development. The increased CPD time will provide greater career progression opportunities, enhance job satisfaction, and drive Quality standards.

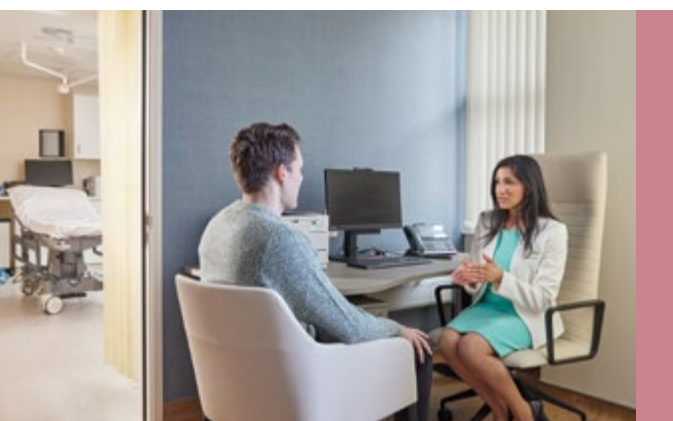
Over the coming year, we'll evaluate our CPD framework for other professional groups, with the aim of replicating the successes of this initiative.

Communication remains high on the Quality agenda, and monthly 'huddles' are keeping team members up to date with what's going on within physiotherapy and the Charity, as well as providing useful operational information and a chance for discussion.





# We built the City of London's first independent hospital



An exciting milestone was reached in May 2022, when we opened the doors of Nuffield Health at St Bartholomew's Hospital, the City of London's first independent hospital.

In 2018, Nuffield Health acquired the lease of the former St Bart's pathology and residential staff quarters, and invested £70 million into transforming the building into a state-of-the-art centre of medical excellence.

The hospital specialises in cardiac surgery, cardiology, orthopaedics, cancer care, and women's health. Twenty-six consultation rooms, four advanced operating theatres and a wide range of diagnostic and physiotherapy are just some of the facilities and services available. Operating theatres feature live streaming technology, providing opportunities for world-class training and the sharing of clinical knowledge.

Our unique cardiac care pathway includes rehabilitation where patients have dedicated specialist support from diagnosis, through treatment and then on to rehabilitation. Specialist fitness and dietary experts are on hand, with the aim of improving the patient's long-term health.

Emotional wellbeing services and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) are also available.

Nuffield Health at St Bartholomew's Hospital is part of a new health and wellbeing campus, giving connectivity to our recently opened fitness and wellbeing centre in the Barbican, as well as to any one of our medical centres, or fitness and wellbeing centres across London, and within the M25. (See pages 48-49)



**We are proud to be providing a unique connected cardiac care pathway that supports patients from diagnosis, through treatment and then onto specialist rehabilitation support.**



**Anthony Fitzgerald**, Matron  
Nuffield Health at St Bartholomew's

## £70m

invested to transform the building into a state-of-the-art centre of medical excellence

## 55

residential patient rooms, with en-suite, interpretation and translation services

## 26

consultation rooms

## 1


dedicated physiotherapy centre



# Quality awards for a quality year


During the year, we won a number of industry awards recognising the Quality of our approach to providing safe environments and quality outcomes for our beneficiaries, and excellence in our training and development programmes.

## Chief Nursing Officer Silver Award

 Presented to Chris Finch, Quality Lead for Infection Prevention, for leading all our infection prevention and control elements during the pandemic response. The Award is usually reserved for nurses and midwives within the NHS.




## British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICS) Award

 Award achieved for Excellence in Training and Assessment. Related to BICS-accredited training for housekeepers. The first to be awarded in the independent sector.




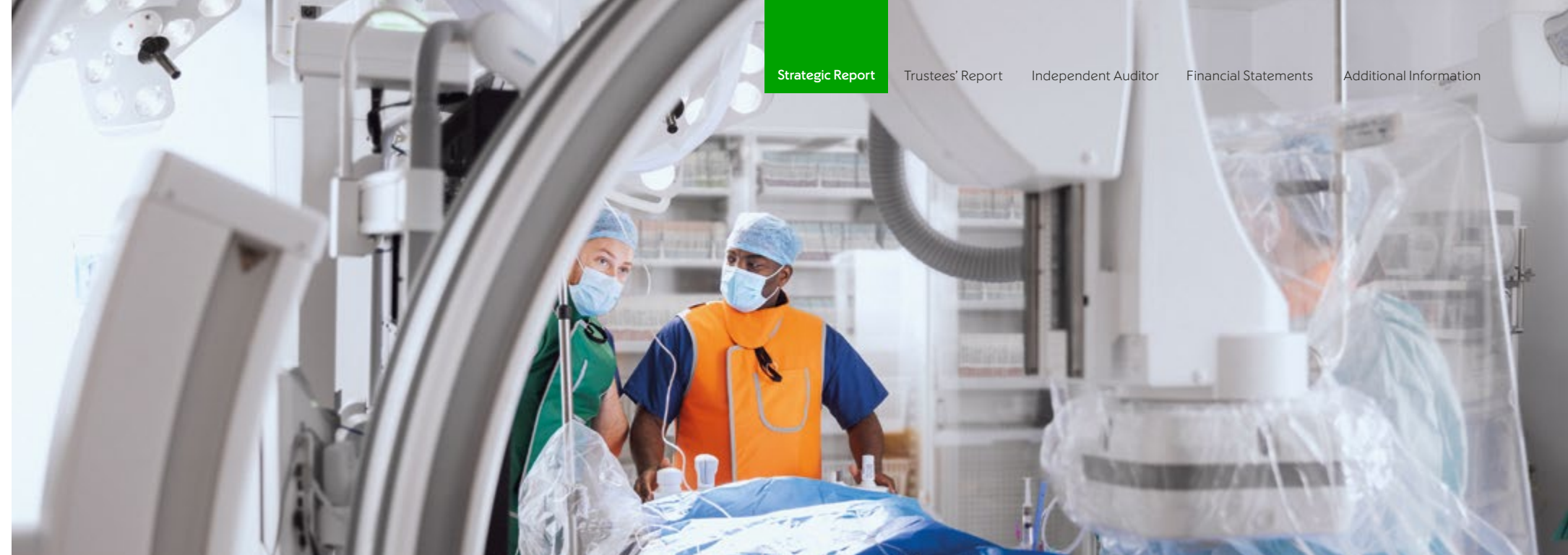
## Preceptorship of the Year Award

 Presented by the Nursing Times. Our second consecutive win in this category, the award recognises our long-standing programme and acknowledges our commitment to professional development and educational excellence.



## Healthy Communities Award

 Presented by ukactive, in recognition of our free-to-access COVID-19 Rehabilitation programme. Run by our experts, the programme helps those suffering from the effects of long-COVID, using a blend of physical therapy and mental wellbeing support.



## Quality improvement plan for 2022

### 1

#### Speak up and safety culture

##### What we plan to do

- ◆ Establish an Executive/Trustee lead responsible for 'Freedom To Speak Up' (FTSU). Focus on leadership role model initiatives that highlight compassion and facilitate increased levels of psychological safety
- ◆ Establish a Head of Safety Culture role. Create a network of operational FTSU guardians to promote a healthy culture and respond to local concerns
- ◆ Develop a new FTSU strategy, that enhances case management/ data collection, and triangulation of information, to ensure continuous learning and improvement
- ◆ Deliver a FTSU improvement plan to align with the National Guardian's Office (NGO) guidance and expectations of best practice
- ◆ Expand network of FTSU ambassadors/ champions in all settings and services, deploying the necessary support so these can be fully developed
- ◆ Establish availability of the NGO and Health Education England's FTSU training as mandatory for all employees.

### 2

#### Enhanced assurance across our hospitals

##### What we plan to do

- ◆ Develop an evidence-informed assurance tool that facilitates safe and effective care delivery and quality improvement through subject-matter-expert-led service appraisal
- ◆ Roll out a programme of Hospital Quality Reviews (HQRs) that evaluate core and specialty service provision, providing each site's senior management team with a benchmark of quality care
- ◆ Utilise learnings from HQRs to prepare sites for regulatory inspection, identifying innovative and outstanding practice and opportunities for enhancement, and providing support to facilitate full compliance with regulatory and best practice standards.
- ◆ Implement a new Quality and Risk Management System (RMS) that enhances the effectiveness of our current quality infrastructure through improved data capture, analysis, and automation.

### 3

#### Multi-disciplinary teams (MDT)

##### What we plan to do

- ◆ Enhance internal assurance relating to cancer multi-disciplinary compliance, through monthly auditing and the embedding of Nuffield Health's fundamental standards
- ◆ Pilot and roll out digital platform facilitating effective MDT discussions
- ◆ Evaluate MDT processes in our newly acquired hospitals, ensuring they meet or exceed our fundamental standards
- ◆ Continue to drive improvement in MDT management, through auditing and benchmarking activities
- ◆ Utilise learnings to improve the quality of MDT processes Charity-wide.

### 4

#### Workforce development

##### What we plan to do

- ◆ Launch our Green Healthcare Leadership programme, in partnership with the Florence Nightingale Foundation, and facilitate leadership development and nurse-led service improvements that provide sustainability benefits
- ◆ Continue to invest in vocational initiatives that evolve existing career pathways and enable us to 'grow our own' talent, and explore new opportunities to facilitate internal mobility, workforce development, and innovation
- ◆ Develop, pilot and evaluate advanced practice frameworks in line with established models and best practice, and assess impact on service provision
- ◆ Launch third cohort of our Theatre Managers' Programme, and equip theatre managers with best practice skills that nurture cultural excellence, operational efficiency and high quality perioperative care.