

Covid-19: A book of reflections from Team UHD



A time to pause, reflect
and mark this moment in history

March 2024

Introduction

Covid-19 impacted us all. It changed the way we lived, the way we worked, and the precious interactions we had with each other.

While it was a pandemic globally felt, the spotlight in the UK was very much on our NHS. For healthcare workers, Covid was a challenge, a test of our skills, our courage, and our ability to provide care under the most extraordinary circumstances. And it was a challenge we rose to despite every obstacle thrown in our path, and despite the very personal toll it was taking on everybody in our UHD family.

Overwhelmed intensive care units and wards, shortages of PPE and oxygen, guidelines changing overnight, patients dying with only our teams there to hold their hands.



An NHS poster titled "Coronavirus Isolate your household Stay at home". It features the NHS logo at the top right and the HM Government logo at the top left. The text says: "If you or anyone in your household has a high temperature or a new and continuous cough – even if it's mild". Below this are three bullet points: "Everyone in your household must stay at home for 14 days and keep away from others.", "Go to NHS.UK to check your symptoms and follow the specialist medical advice. Only call NHS 111 if you can't get online or your symptoms worsen.", and "Protect older people and those with existing health conditions by avoiding contact." A fourth point with a red 'X' icon says "Please DO NOT enter this building". At the bottom left, a black box says "CORONAVIRUS PROTECT YOURSELF OTHERS & THE NHS". On the right side, there are two images of a coronavirus particle, one small and one large.

It was a far cry from the very early news reports of a new virus originating in China, something that felt very far away. Even as it started to spread further west and across Europe, these cases still weren't in England, weren't in Dorset.

We'd dealt with viruses before. SARS, MERS, even swine flu. We had tackled all of these. And so we set about to tackle coronavirus - or Covid-19 as it then was officially named. Teams from across our hospitals met daily to discuss this new virus and what it meant for us here in Dorset. Would we get a case? How could we contain it? How might it spread? Could we have a testing pod? What PPE should we wear if we suspected a case?

Just a few weeks later, the meetings became virtual, the testing increased, the cases started to rise. New pathways were set up to support patients with and without Covid, and our teams had to change the way they worked. We had to socially distance, and change the signage around our sites so everyone 'kept left'.

Many had to isolate or work from home, often juggling childcare. Procedures were cancelled, colleagues moved around different departments to support where they could. Surgeons who could no longer perform planned operations were doing tea rounds, or helping turn patients who were very poorly in intensive care. And our own staff were getting Covid. **It did not discriminate. We lost colleagues, friends.**

As the nation clapped for carers, our carers faced a very new reality that would change the face of healthcare forever.

But where there was tragedy, there was hope, where there was pain, compassion. With research and the vaccine, there was light at the end of a long tunnel.

Our NHS held true to its values. It continued to care in the face of all adversity. And we will forever be proud of the part we all played in this moment in history.

Team UHD





STOP

Covid-19: No entry



To help us protect our patients and staff from coronavirus, visitors are no longer allowed into our hospitals.

For more information, including any exceptions, see www.uhd.nhs.uk



Joanne Starkes, deputy sister

“In December 2020, I was asked by the officer of Boscombe Salvation Army to pray for NHS staff as a contribution to a YouTube Sunday service. I found this prayer...”

The Nurses' Prayer

Dear Lord,

Help me to be the best nurse I can be.

Bless me with the words to impart knowledge with gentility,
patience and a kind bedside manner.

Give me the vision to see those who are struggling with their
illness and the ability to help them understand it.

Show me how to provide expert care while making
my patient comfortable.

Let me be a source of strength for my patients and their families.

Let me be a constant help to the providers
and the other nurses with whom I work.

Lord, fill me with the energy to open each day
with a smile regardless of how tired I am.

May I be a true sign of Your love to every person under my care.

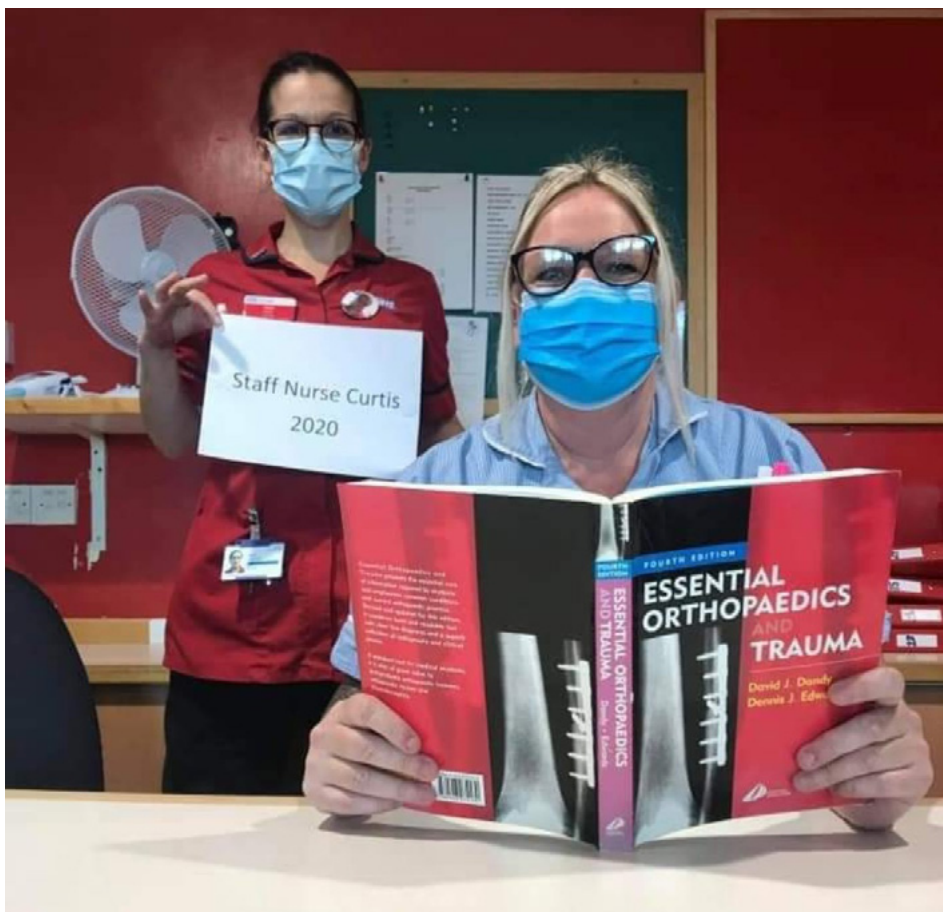
As I care for my patients today, Be there with me, Oh Lord I pray.

Make my words kind - it means so much,
and in my hands place Your healing touch.

Let Your love shine through all that I do.

So those in need may hear and feel You.

Amen.



Jesusa L. Azares-Lingad, clinical endoscopist

“As an immunocompromised person following cancer treatment, my husband and I were one of the many sent a letter of advice to stay home for our protection. I was grateful for this, however I felt I needed to do something as well.

“While at ‘stay home’ situation, I joined a small group of ladies in Dorset (a few were professional tailors). Through a local charity group, we sewed scrubs (tops and trousers) for adults and children, masks and scrub bags. The fabric materials were donated in the form of old duvet covers and similar materials which we washed, dried and ironed to use for the project. Some church friends from Bournemouth lent us an extra sewing machine and donated sewing thread/ cotton.

“The scrubs, masks and bags were distributed across the local nursing homes and practices. We were asked if we could make some clothes for the homeless and refugees via a local charity. We made clothes for both children and female adults. Some of the materials were donated some we used our own unwanted clothes, linens, curtains, etc.

“We’ve done this for a few weeks and we felt we made a difference even with just a small thing. Both projects helped with our mental health and wellbeing. It also helped us to continue to have that ‘connection’ with our local community.”





NHS

Coronavirus

If you have a cough, or fever, or shortness of breath and have been to any of these places in the last 14 days:

• Cambodia	• Italy*	• Malaysia	• South Korea*
• China*	• Japan	• Myanmar	• Taiwan
• Hong Kong	• Laos	• Republic of Korea	• Thailand
• Iran*	• Macau	• Singapore	• Vietnam

* If you have travelled from these areas please inform a member of staff even if you don't have symptoms

Please inform a member of our staff straight away and do not walk through the hospital

You may be asked to go home and call NHS 111.

We understand this may cause anxiety, but this is just a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of any possible infection.

For more info and the latest list of at risk areas:

[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)



Aneta Kopacka, ICU Covid patient

It came from a far land
Out of the blue
Created miserable type of flu
Caused pain and separation
That broke people's hearts
Broke their faith and sane minds
Was begging my lungs to inhale the air
But they couldn't take much in there
Suffocating my brain
Shirking my veins
Life was going away
Every day was a fight
For one more night
To wake up
To stay up
To not to say goodbye...





Drive Through Swabbing Centre Directions

To get to the drive through swabbing centre located in Car Park B, please follow the below directions:

- From Castle Lane turn onto Deansleigh Road, turn left into the hospital grounds, then go straight on at the first roundabout.
- Follow the road to the next roundabout and turn into Car Park B.

- At the barrier take a ticket, the first 20 minutes is not chargeable, but if you are here for longer than that, then the swabbing team will issue you an exit ticket. You will not incur any parking fees.
- A member of the swabbing team will greet you and the swab will be completed while you are in your car.



Emma Jenkins, senior diabetes dietitian

Leaving home with a quiet, peaceful air

Enjoying silent roads

Pleased for easy parking

Into work with a more intense concern

A keen focus to keep supporting our patients

Embracing new technologies so patients access
our care remotely

Still being there for them

Adopting the new ways for the future

So proud

We got through

David Stephenson, healthcare assistant

Covid Ward

Asked to volunteer

yes I did

Worried for myself

but more for my family

Dark times filled with fear

Patients struggling to breathe

Staff replacing loved ones

Wondering if it would ever end

Struggling under all the PPE

At the end of the shift, we were drained

How many people have we lost today?

Will all this haunt me another day?

My wife asking if I'm ok

Back again the next day.

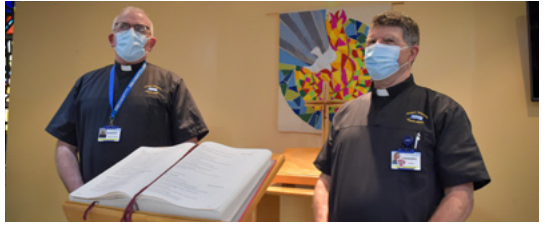
Month after month we the staff

we all wanted to stay

None of us thought ourselves as heroes,

We were the NHS,

Caring is what we do and what we did.



Michele Whitehurst, governor and volunteer

“Voluntary work changed from March 2020. With the outbreak of Covid-19, volunteers were requested to stay at home. I remember saying to my husband on a Thursday night ‘Clap for the NHS’, “You must let me help when the hospital calls for support”.

“So in June 2020, when the call for help came, I took on the role of handing out masks and hand gel to all visitors entering the main entrance of the hospital. Unbeknown to me this role would continue until early 2023 in addition to wheelchair duties, supporting individuals, and providing conversation and comfort in sad times.

“Many volunteers were not allowed to return to the hospital due to their age and risk to health. Sadly, many passed away and I miss them dearly. I remember seeing the military in their shiny uniforms helping around the hospital, and thinking, “this is an unprecedented and scary time”. This fuelled me to want to help more. I took shifts going back and forth with swab samples between ED and the SAMBA Lounge, helped to support staff with weekend booster vaccination clinics, cleaned corridor touch points, undertook six hour Friday shifts to help around the hospital and ED, and volunteered in the Outpatient Assessment Clinic at Beales as it opened its doors to try to reduce waiting lists. I was also a Novavax clinical trial patient.

“I continue to wear my NHS t-shirt with pride which on the back says: “Here to Help”. I am proud to be a public servant, and value and believe in the NHS for all it stands for. I am proud to be an NHS volunteer and to work alongside and represent a group of caring and giving individuals.”







Covid-19

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Visiting restrictions

To help us protect our patients and staff from coronavirus, visitors are no longer allowed into our hospitals. The few exceptions below apply:

Advocates - visitors who are required to make decisions on behalf of patients who do not have capacity to do so themselves.

Compassionate reasons - where a patient is nearing the end of their life, up to four visitors will be able to spend time with their loved one. Please speak to the ward.

Carers - please speak to the ward if you care for someone with complex needs, a mental health issue or a learning disability.

Long stay patients - one visitor from a patient's household or bubble may visit a patient who has been an inpatient for seven or more days and has had two negative Covid tests.

Thank you for your understanding and support.



Social distancing

We want you to enjoy your well-earned break, but please help us reduce the spread of Covid-19 by sitting at least **2 metres** apart.



Thank you
← 2 metres →

CORONAVIRUS
PROTECT
YOURSELF
OTHERS &
THE NHS



We must keep on protecting each other



HANDS

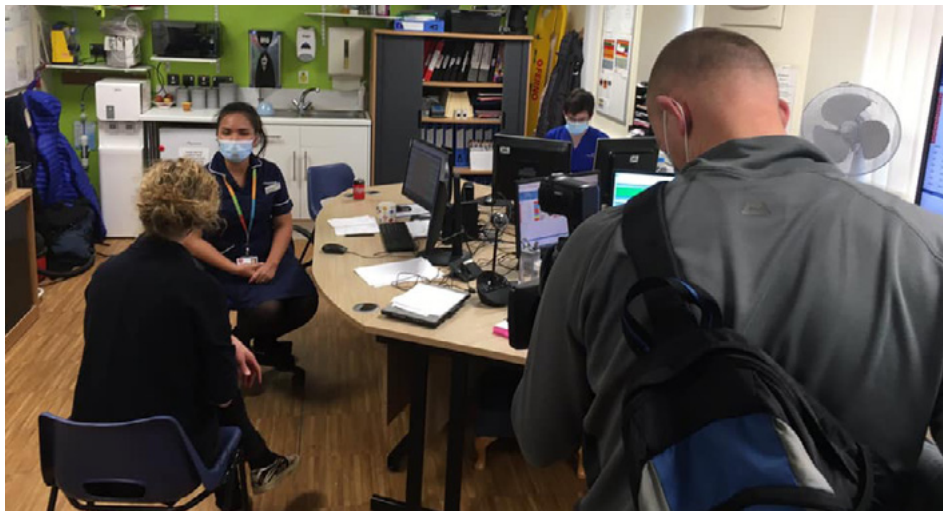


FACE



SPACE





Amanda Curtis, deputy sister

“I was due to qualify from university in 2020 as a qualified nurse. As Covid hit, we as students were asked by UHD if we would like to sign up to become aspirate nurses (Band 4) for four months before qualifying. I agreed and signed up to be one.

“I worked on a trauma ward with Covid positive patients, we were all scared on a daily basis what would the day hold for us. I felt totally overwhelmed and out of my depth at times. I felt that I could not do proper patient care. We had patients that were dying and were not allowed any visitors. So many of the patients died with no one holding their hands. I found this extremely difficult and I tried as much as I could to spend time with them, to be the one holding their hand as they passed.

“There were times when several patients were really poorly at the same time. How do you pick which patient to go to see first?

“Staff sickness was very high so we were working with skeleton staff. I often got to the end of the day not being able to update the handover on the computer or do my paperwork. I ended up in the staff toilet crying and being so overwhelmed feeling like I hadn't done my job properly. I often thought this is not what I signed up for and are we ever going to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

“Covid will never go away but I thank my lucky stars it is not as bad as it was. I truly hope we will never have to deal with something like that again.”













Matron Karen Fernley, children's unit

“We had such positive feedback from our staff that this small gesture of an image had a big impact. They were so grateful for the recognition of the part they played during Covid...”



“You are our Forever Hero”

Thank you from Poole Child Health and Neonatal Team 2020 - 2021

Masks

Masks need to be worn in the clinic rooms unless you are exempt.



You may sit in our waiting room without a mask if you wish.





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IN **OUT**

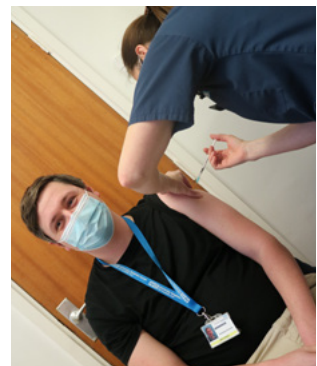
Don't hang about

We are working hard to maintain social distancing in our hospitals.

Please follow our infection control guidelines.

Thank you for your support.



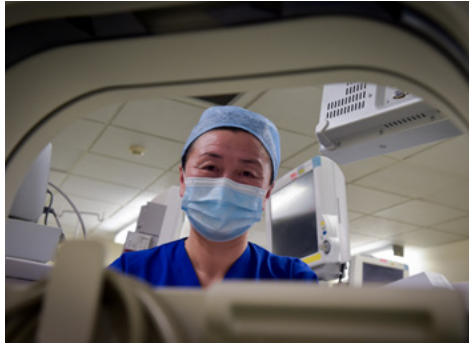


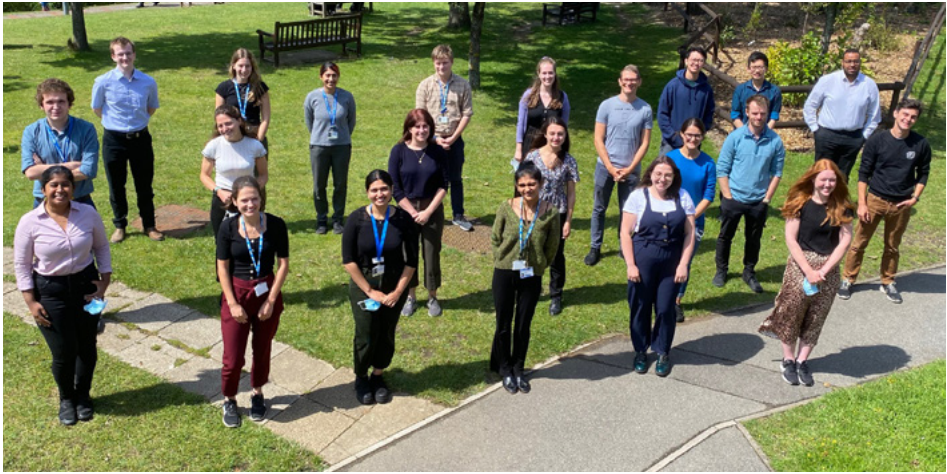

**Staff Covid
vaccination
this way**













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Updated
22 February 2022

Face coverings and social distancing are still required in our hospitals



As Covid-19 legal restrictions are removed across England, our advice to the public remains unchanged when visiting our hospitals



Visiting restrictions also remain for now

See www.uhd.nhs.uk for more information



Schwartz Round University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust

Long Covid

Friday 3 September 1-2pm

how it is affecting our staff

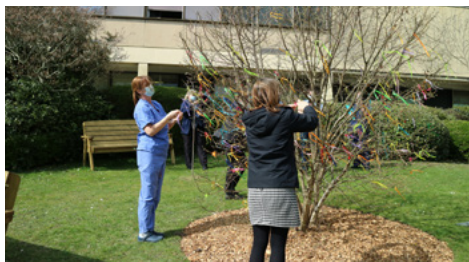
Face to face in the conference room at RBH and the lecture theatre at Poole Hospital as well as via Teams

Refreshments will be available at both sites. For the Teams link and more information, please visit the Schwartz Round page on the intranet and click on 2021 events.



Three overlapping posters for the 'Covid-19: Service of Reflection' event. Each poster features a DNA double helix graphic and the text: 'Covid-19: Service of Reflection', 'We are #TeamUHD', and the date. The dates are: Tuesday 23 March 2021, Wednesday 23 March 2022, and Thursday 23 March 2023. Logos for NHS, University Hospitals Dorset, and NHS Foundation Trust are visible.





April 2023

Face masks are no longer required in the majority of clinical areas.

A small number of clinical areas will continue to require face masks to be worn - please look out for our 'Face masks are still required' posters in these areas or ask a member of staff



Masks remain available for those who wish to continue to use them