

# The Brief

January 2021



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# Our University Hospitals Dorset

Happy new year everyone and welcome to your first edition of *The Brief* for 2021 - a year that should see us coming out of this pandemic. Clearly, since we welcomed in the new year, things have become even more challenging, with the recent rapid spread of coronavirus and the latest national lockdown. Under such conditions, it's hard to stay positive. Nevertheless, we must hold on to that remarkable team spirit that has become such a feature of our trust, and hope that over time, 2021 will become a great year for all of us.

Despite the busyness, we have done really well in maintaining safe care throughout the Christmas/New Year period. I would like to say a huge thank you to all those who worked over the holiday period, and hope that everyone managed to get some well-deserved time off.

Of course, we are now even more worried about the increasing numbers of Covid-19 infections within the community, and the impact on our NHS. Within our hospitals, we have never been so busy, and none of us has seen anything like the recent spread of this virus. As I said in my email last week, it is right that a new national lockdown has been introduced, and we should see the numbers come down again. However, we know things are likely to get even tougher before they get better.

It is therefore really good news we are now vaccinating against Covid-19 within UHD. We were able to start this in a limited way in the midst of the holiday period, and are now providing this service on both acute sites.

We have found that offering the Pfizer vaccine is completely different to our normal flu vaccine programme; it has been extremely challenging to introduce. The numbers involved have been truly eye-watering, and of course, the top priority has been to avoid wasting any of the precious vaccine, which has such a short shelf life once defrosted. I am so grateful to those who worked so hard to find the space required to run these enormous clinics, and to all those staff who volunteered to help; finding sufficient staff when the trust is under such pressure has in itself been no mean feat! Nevertheless, by pulling together, we have been able to make this happen.

The programme - which involves vaccinating care home staff and other NHS staff across Dorset - is a huge team effort requiring the skills of so many of our staff in different roles, from pharmacists and vaccinators to administrators and clinical trainers. By the end of this week, we should have vaccinated 30% of our staff, starting with those most at risk and/or in working in the higher risk areas. You can read more about the programme on page 4.

I should like to say a huge thank you to all those who have worked so hard to set up the new service and make sure it works well. Seeing the programme up and running is hugely encouraging - indeed, it is a clear signal that there will be an end to this current lockdown and the pandemic.

Sadly, when things are so very busy, there have been some unhelpful reports on social media about empty corridors and low patient numbers. Of course our corridors are quieter and there are fewer patients in our waiting rooms, but this is mainly due to the hard work of our teams in doing things differently. Huge numbers of appointments now take place online or over the phone, while tests and procedures are organised very differently to avoid crowded waiting areas or patient-to-patient transmission. I would like to say a huge thank you to all those who have changed their practice in order to maintain safe services in the midst of this pandemic. We have been able to achieve so much as an organisation, as a consequence of your innovation as well as your ongoing hard work.



▲ Photograph taken before social distancing rules when our overseas nurses joined us.

I'd also like to recognise those who joined our trust during the pandemic, not least our overseas nurses who have just passed their Nursing and Midwifery Council exams to achieve their status as a UK registered nurse. What should normally take three months has taken many more due to lockdown and the exam centres closing, but their professionalism in these challenging times is something for us all to be proud of. Thank you.

Looking ahead, there is certainly a lot to be done! Of course, we shall need to continue managing Covid and all that this entails. It's not just about treating and caring for large numbers of patients, it's about so many other things that may not be so visible - for example, increasing our laboratory capacity and constantly expanding our testing for both staff and patients, and of course, continuing to do everything we can to reduce the risk of infection.

As we learn more about this virus and how best

to manage it, we are constantly introducing new initiatives, at both a national and a local level, so 2021 will definitely be another year of change and innovation. And don't forget - we shall be seeing many new developments introduced as part of our ambitious capital programme and strategic transformation plan - read more on page 10.

For me, one of the most important tasks for 2021 is to continue to look after each other, ensuring that we "live out" the values that we have developed together, that make UHD such a great place to work and to receive care. This has been a very difficult start to the year and things are still very uncertain looking ahead. Nevertheless, whenever I meet with staff across UHD, they always tell me that it's working with such great people that makes all the difference - it is this that keeps them going.

We must also take heart in knowing our work is so much appreciated by our patients, our colleagues and the public. Whatever your role, you are playing a vital part in this country's response to the pandemic. We should all be really proud of the fact that every single one of us - whether working in one of our hospitals,

working out in the community or working from home - is really making a difference during these unprecedented times.

Thank you once again for all that you do. We will get through to brighter days.

**Debbie Fleming,**  
chief executive



## All-staff briefing

The first all-staff briefing of the new year will be held on Wednesday 10 February, 12.30-1.30pm. Debbie Fleming will be joined by our chairmain, David Moss, as well as fellow executives to provide the latest on managing

the Covid-19 pandemic, an operational update and development plans for the year ahead.

Please join us if you can, or a recording of the briefing will be available afterwards on our intranet. The Teams link will be sent out nearer the time.

### Home First

Discharge from hospital  
and recovery at home



**Our  
Dorset**  
Your Local NHS and Councils Working Together

## Home First - helping patients recover at home

We have joined NHS colleagues and social care services in Dorset to help people out of hospital more quickly and recover in the comfort of their own homes.

A new system, called 'Home First', is now in place to help reduce the length of patient stays in local hospitals. A range of support materials have been created including a dedicated [website](#) and the creation of a [short animated film](#), highlighting the benefits and progress on the project.

## Covid-19 update

# Covid-19 vaccine rolled out at UHD

Covid-19 vaccinations started at Poole Hospital this week, part of our efforts to support the national immunisation drive.

As part of that push, we are now able to significantly increase the number of people vaccinated. From this week, our efforts will look like this:

- Poole Hospital: UHD staff only
- RBH: UHD, care home and Dorset Healthcare staff

As before, staff will be seen in this broad order:

- 1 those who are personally at high clinical risk
- 2 peripatetic front line staff (those that move between wards and departments as part of their role)
- 3 other frontline clinical staff, starting with those working who are working within our blue (Covid-19) areas

We aim to offer a vaccine to all of the above groups within the next two weeks, after which the vaccine will be available to all other staff.

The underlying messages remain:

- do not phone or 'drop in' to the bookings or vaccination service without an appointment
- if you are a priority staff member, you will be contacted
- please continue to treat colleagues with courtesy and respect at all times

We are working hard to bring you the vaccine, in a safe, fair and methodical way, and will keep you updated with news as we have it.

**Dr Matt Thomas, deputy chief medical officer for UHD, said:** *"The vaccine rollout is a really proud milestone moment for us all in what has been an incredibly challenging time for the NHS and the communities we serve. So many of our dedicated staff are involved in this vaccination programme and I'd like to thank them all for their commitment and hard work."*



## Self-testing with a lateral flow device

We continue to distribute Covid home testing kits to all staff at UHD, with 8,000 in use already.

Our Covid intranet pages have all the key information you need, including a video of how to do a swab, a picture guide to swabbing, FAQs and roles and responsibilities for this project. [Just click here.](#)

### Please note:

- You must only collect **one box** at a time so we have enough for all staff.
- If you have any symptoms of Covid-19, please make sure you self isolate and arrange a PCR swab from our swabbing team (see page 5).
- You must record all your results using the dedicated web portal: **mytest.uhd.nhs.uk**.
- Managers must complete the registration form on Teams when issuing the testing kits to staff.



# Covid-19 update

## Staff swabbing service

If you or your family/household members have any symptoms of Covid-19, you should book a PCR swab with our staff swabbing team by emailing [staff.swabbingrbch@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:staff.swabbingrbch@uhd.nhs.uk) or [Staff.SwabbingPoole@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:Staff.SwabbingPoole@uhd.nhs.uk)

You, or your manager, need to provide the following details:

- name (as it is on your clinical record)
- date of birth
- mobile number
- symptoms
- start date of symptoms
- if household member, their name and date of birth, symptoms and contact details



Covid-19 guidance



IMPORTANT: Latest update

Action cards 1a, 3a, 4a, 5, and 5a have now been added.

Clinical information

Infection prevention and control

HR and wellbeing

Covid-19 areas in our hospitals

Latest patient figures

Covid self-testing

Covid symptomatic staff and HR Q&As

Covid-19 staff vaccinations

## Our hospitals in the Echo

This week the *Bournemouth Echo* ran a three-page report on the increasing number of Covid patients across our hospitals. Thanks to all who spoke to Andy Martin, their journalist, to give a very valuable insight. With so much misinformation about the current situation, it was a great opportunity to illustrate what is happening and our preparations. A longer version of the report was also published online and we have been sharing this to emphasise to the public the importance of following the national lockdown.

### 600 beds could be needed for Covid



The Bournemouth Echo ran a three-page report on the increasing number of Covid patients across our hospitals. Thanks to all who spoke to Andy Martin, their journalist, to give a very valuable insight. With so much misinformation about the current situation, it was a great opportunity to illustrate what is happening and our preparations. A longer version of the report was also published online and we have been sharing this to emphasise to the public the importance of following the national lockdown.



### Relentless Covid



### takes a huge toll



## Keep informed

Our [Covid-19 intranet pages](#) have lots of helpful information and updates, including the latest HR FAQs, vaccine information, visitor guidance, wellbeing advice and instructions around staff swabbing. We are also increasing the frequency of our staff bulletins to keep you up to date with this ever-changing picture. If you have any questions, please email [communications@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@uhd.nhs.uk)



# You matter

Wellbeing and emotional support



## Are you feeling overwhelmed?

If you're feeling overwhelmed or frustrated, please know - you are not alone. It's so important during this time to take care of your mind as well as your body.

Everyone will be reacting in their own way. You might be stressed, lonely, concerned about your finances, your health or safety of your family. You may also be feeling down, worried or anxious.

It is okay to feel like this. These are normal reactions to uncertainty and to challenging events both at home and at work.

Covid has impacted on many of the normal coping

strategies we use to deal with stress, such as taking holidays, going to the gym or seeing our friends.

During this time, we may need to be more imaginative and thoughtful about how we look after ourselves. Check the You Matter: Wellbeing and emotional support intranet or website pages for practical information about things you can do now to look after your emotional

health and wellbeing, and how you can support others.

I want you to know it's okay to ask for help. Sometimes it's simply about voicing your feelings to your peers or team, but further support is there, so please ask for it and point it out to your colleagues and friends. We are all in this together.

**Alyson O'Donnell**,  
chief medical officer

## Support is out there

Guidance and help is available for you and your colleagues. Remember - you matter - we're here for you.

### Care First, our employee assistance programme.

At any time, day or night, you can talk in confidence to a qualified adviser to help you plan the highs and support you through the lows. You can receive free professional counselling, mediation or information and advice on financial, legal, family, health and wellbeing and personal issues. Call **0800 174319**.

**Samaritans support for NHS staff**,  
7am-11pm, 7 days a week: **0800 069 6222**  
or text **FRONTLINE** to **85258**

**Filipino wellbeing support helpline: 0300 303 1115**

**Our emotional wellbeing support service run by occupational health** can also help. Monday-Friday, 9am-4.30pm: **occupational.health@uhd.nhs.uk** or call **0300 019 4217**

## Inclusion Calendar 2021

We're so pleased to bring you your 2021 Inclusion Calendar, packed with actions and ideas you or your colleagues can take to help create happier and more inclusive teams.

The calendar includes information on key national and local campaigns and events and gives you an idea of how you can get involved in UHD organised events, but also how you can get involved independently if we cannot support anything centrally. Email any event ideas to **organisational.development@uhd.nhs.uk**



# Upcoming network and inclusion events and dates

We try to support key campaigns and events throughout the year. There may be occasions when we cannot commit to hosting an event, but we encourage you to show support through individual and team actions. Here's what's coming up in the next few months:

## January:

There is no specific event UHD is organising, but we will be giving thanks and support to our EU colleagues throughout the year as the UK leaves the EU.

- **World Religion Day:**

**17 January**

- **Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh:**

**20 January**

## February:

- **LGBT+ History Month:**

We may raise the flagpole with the LGBT+ flag and share stories of what it means to be LGBTQ+ in the NHS. You can also get your LGBTQ+ lanyard and make a pledge of how you'll support.

Get involved: Share your LGBTQ+ story with us. We'd love to hear from you. Email [communications@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@uhd.nhs.uk) to take part.



- **Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week:**

**1-7 February**

- **Time to Talk Day: 4 February**

- **Chinese New Year: 12 February**

- **Random Acts of Kindness Day: 17 February**

# Our staff networks - your New Year gift to yourself

If you're looking for a New Year's resolution, why not join one of our staff networks? The networks are there not only to listen to staff and advocate on their behalf, they are also a great source of support and friendship. Allies are always welcome! We have six networks at UHD: **EU Network**, **Armed Forces Support Group**, **LGBTQ+ Network**, **Pro Ability Network**, **International Doctors Initiative** and **BAME Network**. Make a difference this year and sign up. You can find out all about our networks on our intranet and website.



# EU colleagues - support is out there

Now the UK has left the EU, please remember how valued your contribution across all areas of our hospitals continues to be. You can access help and support in a number of ways:

- It is free to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme. Our community partners, Dorset Race Equality Council can help with applications as can a local team at Citizens Advice
- Support from our HR teams: Kelly Taylor - ext. 8674, [kelly.taylor1@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:kelly.taylor1@uhd.nhs.uk), and Caroline Gibbs - ext. 5620, [caroline.gibbs@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:caroline.gibbs@uhd.nhs.uk)
- The European Staff Network can offer further support. Email them at [European.Network@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:European.Network@uhd.nhs.uk)
- You can also speak to our Freedom to Speak Up guardian and ambassadors, email: [freedomtospeakup@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:freedomtospeakup@uhd.nhs.uk)
- Our chaplaincy team can also provide a confidential listening ear.



Meanwhile, if you or any of your colleagues are experiencing any inappropriate comments or behaviours, please do report these immediately. You can do this either with your line manager, your HR department or through the LERN system at RBCH or the Datix system at Poole.



**EU Network**

# Social media; join in the conversation

***“Twitter and social media is changing healthcare. It’s a very significant tool we have to use now.”***

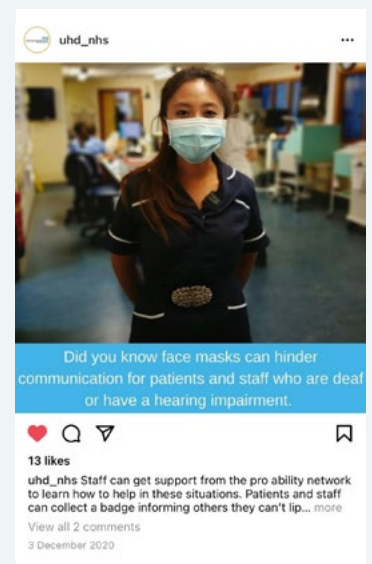
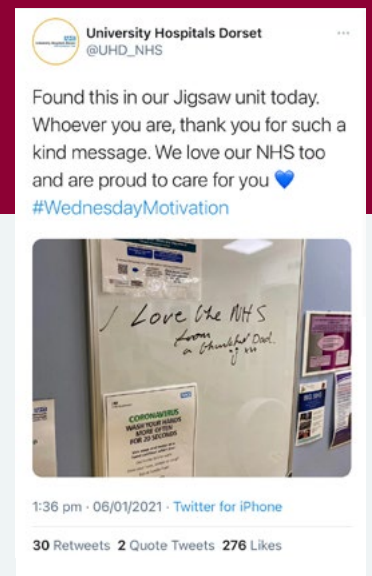
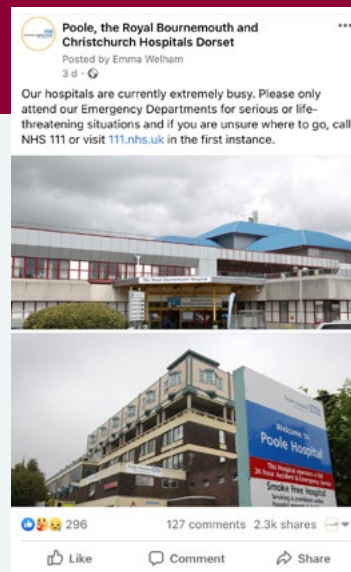
Professor Juliet Beal; Director of Nursing:  
Quality Improvement and Care for NHS England.

While the comment was made several years ago, it’s arguably more pertinent than ever before. Social media is a brilliant way to connect with each other, our patients and the public. We use it in lots of ways, from sharing best practice and promoting events, to celebrating achievements and delivering public health messages. Keeping staff, patients and the public informed and engaged throughout the pandemic meanwhile has been vital, and with more people turning to their phones and other devices to access news, our social media platforms have been used more than ever over the last year to deliver updates.

As a trust we have a significant following, with a combined total of over 12k people across our four main social media channels; Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Linked In. UHD therefore has a captive audience to share meaningful content with, and you can be a part of the conversation. Why not take up tweeting or give us a follow on Facebook? Part of our role in the communications team is supporting the effective and safe use of social media, so if you have any questions, need some advice, or fancy being part of a ‘Twitter takeover’, please get in touch with us via [communications@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@uhd.nhs.uk). You can also read our social media policy [here](#) which is particularly helpful if you are considering starting your own account.

We can be found on...

- Twitter: [@UHD\\_NHS](https://twitter.com/UHD_NHS)
- Facebook: [@UHDTrust](https://www.facebook.com/UHDTrust)
- Instagram: [@UHD\\_NHS](https://www.instagram.com/UHD_NHS)
- Linked In





# Alyson's Blog

Alyson O'Donnell, chief medical officer

It is a long time since I have allowed my inner geek to show. To be honest it is never that far away but as we bid farewell to 2020 and look forward to a better 2021, I can lever in a Star Wars reference - there does truly feel like there is a new hope. Hopefully with fewer ambushes and less need for light sabers.

I know I won't be alone in having spent a rather unusual Christmas this year. It was certainly strange not to be able to have all those I love the best around me and it was odd trying to make it special even when we were apart. Food parcels and Zoom calls certainly took the edge off but it isn't the same. Talking to many of you this was true for you too but I hope you were able to have some time with your families, to enjoy what you could and perhaps to plan for next Christmas - only 350ish sleeps to go.

It may not feel like it at the moment with the number of cases of Covid still rising and our hospitals feeling very challenged but there is light on the horizon. We were able to start vaccinating

staff between Christmas and New Year. It was an incredible effort by the team to make this happen at very short notice and over a four day bank holiday. I really want to thank them so much. The national priority is to ensure care home staff and residents are protected first but we will be vaccinating increasing numbers of staff. We will vaccinate staff who are the most vulnerable, who are mobile around the hospital and in the highest risk areas across the whole of UHD no matter which site they work on. Please remember people's risk are not always visible to us should you feel someone has been vaccinated ahead of you. As the vaccine is so precious, and our allocation so limited, we also don't want to waste any so have been giving unused doses to available frontline staff who are able to attend towards the end of the day.

The availability of the vaccine is going to increase significantly over the next few weeks, as we have seen with the opening of our Poole Hospital clinic, and with much more community

vaccination becoming available. It won't be quick and we will all need to be sensible. Hands - Face - Space is not going anywhere yet. But in combination with the new national lockdown, which will help to decrease spread while we get people vaccinated, I am hoping that those undelivered presents might get to meet up with their intended owners by the spring!

I know these further restrictions will be really difficult for many of you, whether you have started to shield once more, are juggling home schooling or for any of a hundred other reasons. As ever it is really important to look after our physical and emotional wellbeing. The best ways to do that are about eating well, getting enough sleep, and being physically active. I know all of those are challenging at the best of times but please look at the resources available on the intranet if you need support or ideas to keep strong. We all need to be here for each other so I will be asking 'How are you doing?' on a regular basis to those I meet.

For me I am getting my resilience from the furry hope on the horizon - with a little chocolate coloured bundle of joy heading our way. Very excited.

## Ask Aly...

Alyson will be holding monthly virtual drop-in sessions on Teams, giving you an opportunity to ask questions about what's happening in the trust, raise issues or share your experiences via the 'raised hand' function or chat bar. This follows a really successful session in December, where 70 people from different professions across our hospitals

came together to talk all things covid, as well as how we're managing hospital pressures.

John Holloway, one of our consultants, said the session was "very useful, gives staff one to one access with the bosses which is not possible for all - excellent initiative!".

Alyson's first 2021 session will be at 1pm on **29 January - [join here](#)**. Save the date for future sessions and please share with your teams.

- 17 February
- 24 March
- 15 April
- 20 May
- 17 June
- 14 July
- 19 August
- 22 September
- 21 October
- 23 November
- 22 December

# Transformation update

As well as showcasing the changes planned across RBH, Poole and Christchurch hospitals we have been speaking to colleagues at the trust to find out their role in these exciting plans.

**This month we are looking at**

## 'A day in the life of...'

**Rich Callaghan,**  
capital estates  
project manager.



### I started my career...

Working as a structural engineer, designing buildings all over the world. This was extremely rewarding, seeing my designs come to life as tangible structures, many of which will outlast me. In my current role, my days are varied and sometimes include unexpected developments. I attend a lot of meetings, pore over drawings and programmes and explore options for capital building projects; some of which get progressed and I manage this process to completion.

### My alarm goes off at...

6.30am and I prepare quickly and quietly, dressing in the dark (a reasonable excuse for my fashion choices) to allow the family a while longer in bed. I have a pleasant 40min brisk walk to RBH where I can shower and change ready to start around 7.45am.

### Top of my to-do list today is...

Unsurprisingly, the Maternity, Children's, Emergency and Critical Care Centre (MCEC) and, more immediately, the enabling projects to prepare for the construction of this. The new retail pharmacy and patient affairs project around orthopaedic outpatients is one of these which will commence very shortly. Additionally, the main

hospital road works around the main entrance at RBH will also be starting very soon.

### The biggest challenge in my work area currently is...

A pretty obvious one; Covid-19. It has had such a profound effect on everyone, both professionally and personally. While the effect on my role in estates is fairly insignificant compared to so many others within the trust, it certainly hasn't made the job easier. However, I am encouraged that during such a challenge, the response within the trust has been, and continues to be, fantastic.

### I keep motivated by...

The wealth of knowledge and experience in the estates team, which motivates and drives me to improve myself. There are no passengers in the department; everyone has a genuine drive to achieve the absolute best for the trust as a whole, and ultimately improve staff wellbeing and patient care.

### The most rewarding part of my job is...

Delivering the improvements for the patients and one of the main reasons I wanted to work for the NHS. Most of us have friends and family who at one time or another have relied on the services provided by this, or another trust, and the importance of meeting the ever-changing requirements for our local population is a comforting thought when we experience the inevitable long, difficult days.

### Away from work...

I spend most of my time with my wife and two-year-old daughter (plus another on the way). When I have some personal time, I like to play golf in the summer, and snooker, pool and darts when the weather isn't so good, as well as watch Tottenham Hotspur clinch defeat from the jaws of victory yet again. Once an aspiring musician, I still strum my numerous guitars when I get a few minutes with a hope that one day, I will pen some semblance of a song I can be proud of.

# What's happening and where

## At RBH...

**West entrance:** As part of the reconfiguration of some of the hospital services to facilitate the MCEC construction, the current main entrance will be closed for approximately 40 months. To re-provide this service, a new build project to amalgamate the current Eye Unit and Jigsaw Building entrances will take place. This will consist of a new single entrance, reception area, small café and will feed into the Eye Unit, Jigsaw Building and the west side of the main hospital building.

## Retail pharmacy and patient affairs:

The retail pharmacy unit (Boots) is moving from its current location in the main atrium to a new extension built next to the orthopaedic outpatients' department. Also, within orthopaedic outpatients, a refurbishment of some of the administration area creates a new space for the patient affairs department, which also moves to facilitate the MCEC construction. Alternative access arrangements will be managed as the project progresses.

**Car parking:** It is important to note that car park A will be closed permanently with the first quarter of 2021 as part of the MCEC scheme; this will no doubt influence wayfinding and routes around the

site and into the main hospital building for patients and visitors. However, temporary signage will be visible, and information will be accessible across our communications channels.

**Timetable:** Initial construction on this element is planned to start in February 2021 with an expected completion in July 2021.

**At Poole...** Work is about to begin to transform Poole Hospital into east Dorset's major planned care facility. We've been working to make sure patients in our Acute Medical Unit have something amazing to look at during the building works.



## Education and training news

The BEAT VLE (green brain) has been successfully launched at Poole, meaning all of us can now complete our eLearning online in an easily accessible and manageable system via personalised accounts.

Lisa McManus, head of education, said: *"Thank you for the team that have worked so hard to get this launched*

*on time, despite all the current pressures."*

Due to hospital pressures some January training has been cancelled at both Poole and RBH - please see below.

However, most mandatory training and face to face induction is currently still going ahead, for example resus and

moving and handling, and the rest of your mandatory training can be accessed on the BEAT VLE.



Information governance	Poole 14 January	Can be completed on the BEAT/VLE
Infection, prevention and control level 2	Poole 14 January	Can be completed on the BEAT/VLE
IT (unless it supports the vaccination clinics)	All	
Male catheterisation	RBCH 20 January	
HCSW update	RBCH 27 January	

Our web and communication teams are busy working on a new joined up UHD intranet for this year. Many teams have already brought their pages together, and key sections - Covid for example - are already joined up.

Once we have our UHD intranet up and running, we'll be offering training to staff who would like to edit their own pages.

**Watch this space!**

