The many faces of NHS Tayside Healthcare Academy

Issue 46
February – March 2010
Dear spectra readers,

The spectra team welcomes you to the first edition of 2010 and what a start to the year it’s been! With Scotland seeing the coldest winter months since 1914, we’ve all had to struggle with plunging temperatures, heavy snowfall and, for our A&E departments, orthopaedic wards and community services, a huge increase in injuries and illnesses caused by the arctic conditions.

Our voxpop this issue gives members of staff the chance to tell us all about some of their winter woes and how they coped during the cold snap.

NHS Tayside’s Healthcare Academy has been running for three and a half years now and continues to go from strength to strength, helping more and more people to gain experience in the health service and get back to work. Our special feature in Learning Together focuses on some of the most recent highlights, and some of the many faces of the Healthcare Academy have even made it on to our front cover this issue.

Also in this edition are features on Better Together - NHSScotland’s programme to measure and improve patient experience – and the new national staff uniform which is being introduced for NHS staff in Scotland. There is also our usual round up of news, health and staff achievement/education stories from across Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross in our News2u, Healthwise and Learning Together sections.

The TREATS team are taking a break this issue but will be back next time with a bumper edition of their newsletter so look out for some great new offers and discounts. In the meantime, you can always check out the TREATS site on Staffnet.

Remember we are always looking for articles and stories from across NHS Tayside so if there’s anything you’d like us to cover please get in touch with the editorial team (contact details below).

See you next time!

spectra editorial team

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Festive fun for Ninewells kids

Roll out of new national staff uniforms

Better Together - NHS Scotland’s Patient Experience Programme

Snow Joke! - How did the recent cold snap affect you?

Mouth Cancer Action Month

NHS Tayside IT team wins national award

Dr Finn Romanes discusses mixing medicine with mechanics!

Scottish Standard Time System (SSTS)

Triathlon raises £8100 for Ninewells

Farewell to our colleagues

It’s your magazine so share your news & views

We’d like to hear about what you and your department are doing. Maybe you’re just starting out on a new project or you’re welcoming a new member of staff. You and your colleagues may be organising an open day or fundraiser. Whatever you’d like to share across NHS Tayside, just let us know.

We also welcome your views and opinions so if there’s something you’d like to get off your chest or a topic you’d like to debate with colleagues, get in touch.

Please send items for the next edition of spectra, issue 47 to the editorial team by Tuesday 2 March. The deadlines for future editions of spectra are as follows:

- Issue 48 June/July: Tuesday 4 May
- Issue 49 Aug/Sept: Tuesday 6 July

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A big thank you to NHS Tayside staff

Trustees of Tayside NHS Board Endowment Fund wish to convey their sincere gratitude to all staff and members of the public who have supported NHS Tayside hospitals and services during 2009.

Their committed and innovative fundraising efforts have made a valuable contribution to the services provided by Tayside NHS Board by enhancing benefits to patients in local hospitals and the community.

Organising a fundraising event can be very time consuming, whether it be a quiz night, a sponsored walk, a gala day, a raffle or even a bungee jump. Each event takes careful planning as well as committed application which requires the fundraisers to sacrifice precious personal time.

Trustees acknowledge and applaud the efforts of staff who, on top of their own work commitments, give so generously of their time and support in participating in fundraising events.

Beyond the Trolley launches in Angus

A new and innovative approach to volunteering in health was launched in Angus by NHS Tayside Chairman Mr Sandy Watson. been collaborating on Beyond the Trolley Service, a report that provides a vision for volunteering and health.

Susan Wilson, General Manager of Angus Community Health Partnership and Gary Malone, Manager of the Volunteer Centre Angus have

It focuses on strengthening and developing volunteering in health for the future and recognises the importance and the value of volunteers.

Alloway Centre unveils art project

A large sunflower mosaic created by clients of Alloway Day Centre was unveiled at the centre’s annual Christmas craft fair.

Art group member Ann Simpson and Clinical Nurse Manager Liz Drumm unveiled the 4’ by 5’ artwork which was made by the ladies art group, one of three art groups running at the centre at present. The sunflower, which took four months to complete, was produced by creating mosaic tiles from sweet wrappers and originally started off as a recycling project.

The Christmas craft fair raised £500 and was open to all service users in Dundee, their families, carers and staff. It featured stalls offering other items made by the art groups such as jewellery, Christmas cards and calendars, as well as home baking. The money raised will be put towards projects to further enhance the environment for the benefit of those who attend the centre.
The Brae looking for Volunteers

The Brae Riding Ability Centre in Dundee is looking for volunteers aged 50-70 who have passion and skills in all aspects of horsecare and working with disabilities, as well as handymen/women, cleaners, fundraisers etc.

Busy bees at Stracathro

When staff from the Radiology Department at Stracathro Hospital decided to raise money for the Earl Haig Fund they didn’t just stop at wearing a poppy, they went that bit further and the busy bees decided to create their own by getting their knitting needles out!

The end result saw them sporting a fine display of assorted knitted poppies and raising £60 to donate to the Remembrance Day Fund.

The Brae delvers a service to clients aged 2 1/2 to 70 years old, either horse riding or carriage driving, and volunteering with The Brae gives a wonderful sense of pride.

Anyone who is interested should call Alison Melville on 07885 851881.

news in brief

Angus

Living with arthritis in Forfar

Angus CHP in conjunction with the Angus Arthritis Forum organised an informal information evening at Whitehills. The evening was open to anyone living with arthritis, their families and friends.

Scottish Regional Treatment Centre (SRTC)

The independent healthcare provider Netcare’s contract has ended at Stracatho and all future surgical activity at the hospital is being delivered by NHS Tayside.

Healthier 2010 for Angus residents

Angus residents are invited to take the first step to better health in 2010 by joining a free walking group. The Angus walking project Steps Tay Health is supported by Angus CHP and is funded by NHS Tayside. Paths to Health Groups are up and running in Forfar, Monifieth, Carnoustie, Letham and Arbroath and are aimed at improving the public’s physical and mental health as well as increasing physical activity levels.

Angus See and Treat Service continues to work well

The See & Treat Service working with Scottish Ambulance Service continues to be a success. The number of Angus patients uplifted from category B and C calls to SAS and transported to Ninewells Hospital has dropped significantly since the introduction of the See & Treat Service with latest figures showing a 50% reduction.

New dedicated palliative care ambulance service

The Board of Trustees approved a sum of £55,880 from the NHS Tayside Board Endowment Fund to fund a dedicated palliative care ambulance service for patients across Tayside.

The Palliative Care Ambulance in Tayside is the only dedicated palliative care ambulance in Scotland. It was introduced to provide a flexible responsive service specifically for patients with palliative care needs, allowing the transfer of patients nearing the end of their life to their preferred place of care, usually their home.

NHS Tayside works in partnership to deliver this service with the Scottish Ambulance Service and Marie Curie Cancer Care as part of the Marie Curie Delivering Choice programme.

The vehicle is specially designed to ensure the comfort, safety and needs of palliative care patients and features a reclining chair, pressure relieving mattress, space for a companion to travel with the patient and supportive treatment equipment.
Festive fun for Ninewells kids

Patients in the children’s ward at Ninewells welcomed some very special visitors in the run up to Christmas.

Starlight Children’s Foundation brought some Christmas cheer to the ward with their new pantomime Dick Whittington.

Play Co-ordinator Margaret Deuchars said, “The children joined in the singing and interacted with the panto characters which helped the children forget about their illness for a short time, relax and have fun.”

Cast members from another pantomime, Arbroath’s Webster Theatre’s Aladdin, also popped in to Ward 29 to share some festive fun with the children and staff.

Another highlight was when Santa Claus took time out of his busy schedule to pop in to Ninewells to switch on the Christmas tree lights on the main concourse.

Staff and visitors joined patients from the children’s ward in some carol singing before Santa handed out some gifts to the children.

On the shoulders of giants

When the Cardiology Department in Ninewells lost its two senior cardiologists recently (Terry Pringle sadly passed away and Graeme McNeill retired), they thought it was an opportunity to hold a symposium in their honour to reflect on past achievements and future aspirations.

Our first local heroes Thomas Macclagan and Sir James MacKenzie both came from Scone. Macclagan achieved fame with the use of salicin for the treatment of rheumatic fever in the nineteenth century, and MacKenzie’s 1902 classic ‘A Study of the Pulse’, based on meticulous studies as a GP using sphygmograph and polygraph, was the start of a journey that was to take him to be the leading cardiologist of his day.

The first ECG machine at Dundee Royal Infirmary used by Dr WS Malcolm arrived in 1924; it was a far cry from today’s equivalent, but was sufficiently innovative to lead to publications in leading journals of the day.

Cardiac research in Dundee, however, really took off with the arrival of the dynamic Sir Ian Hill in 1950. Hill had worked closely with the leading American electrocardiographer and brought this expertise to the UK, explaining to doctors through a magisterial Lancet article the value of the chest leads still in use in every hospital in the UK today.

Hill recruited three outstanding cardiologists, Ken Lowe, Donald Emslie-Smith and Hamish Watson, whose work in the 1950s and 60s on intracardiac electrocardiography, angiography and congenital heart disease led to international recognition for the Dundee Unit. They worked closely with Sir Donald Douglas’ surgical department at DRI, which was one of the first to perform open heart surgery in the UK.

By standing on the shoulders of these giants, Graeme and Terry were able to build on their achievements and guide the Department in Ninewells through a time of rapid change in the investigation, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease.

Over the years, developments in coronary care, pacemakers, echocardiography, angioplasty, cardiac rehabilitation and multidisciplinary team working have led to a remarkable transformation in what can now be offered to patients. Indeed, they themselves have also become the shoulders on which their colleagues will take Tayside Cardiology into the future.

Colleagues were delighted that Dr Emslie-Smith was able to attend the symposium, and feel sure that Sir James and Sir Ian would have been mighty impressed too!
Dundee nurse highly commended

Marie Curie Development Nurse Elaine Gray has been very highly commended at a prestigious national award ceremony for leading the roll out of a project to support palliative care patients.

Elaine led the implementation of ‘Just in Case Boxes’ in general practices and district nursing teams across Dundee. The project was short listed for the Nursing Standard Nurse Awards 2009. Elaine was selected as category runner-up in the Best Practice in Medication Administration Award and received a certificate and a cheque for £500, which will be used by the Dundee district nurses for palliative patient care.

The ‘Just in Case Boxes’ are part of the Delivering Choice Programme, a joint venture between NHS Tayside and Marie Curie which helps to support palliative care for patients who want to be cared for at home in the end of life phase.

These patients can often experience new or worsening symptoms outside normal GP practice hours and Just in Case boxes can help avoid distress due to reduced access to medications out of hours and allow patients to remain in control of their care.

Young People’s Unit film

During the summer young people and staff at the Young People’s Unit (YPU) at Dudhope House had the opportunity to work with the local arts advocacy organisation Art Angel and Luna and make a short film.

Young people were involved in all stages of the film from writing scenes to acting, gaining skills and having “a good laugh in the process”.

The finished film, The M.A.D.S. was enthusiastically received in a screening to an invited audience of young people, their families and staff at Dundee Contemporary Arts.

News in brief Dundee

- New heart pump for Ninewells Hospital
  Members of the NHS Tayside Endowment Board of Trustees approved the purchase of a £55,000 heart pump for the cardiology department at Ninewells Hospital.
  The Intra-Aortic Balloon Pump is a circulatory device to support a patient’s ailing heart and can be inserted with relative ease and safety.
  This angioplasty service plays an important role in saving the lives of heart patients as well as shortening the length of time they need to stay in hospital with the majority of patients usually able to go home the next day.

- Time to Remember at Roxburgh House
  Friends and family who have lost loved ones in Dundee’s Roxburgh House were invited to remember them by placing a message in their memory on the Christmas tree at a ‘Time to Remember’ event.
  The Roxburgh House Chaplain Anne Finlay and other members of staff were there to greet visitors who were also able to meet other families over a cup of coffee.

- Working Towards Health
  The Working Towards Health (WTH) programme is designed to support individuals who are experiencing a health condition that is currently preventing them participating in work, education or training. It is open to individuals living in Dundee with a mild to moderate health condition and who are currently in receipt of a working age benefit.
  The WTH team work in a variety of community venues to ensure ease of access to the programme for members of the public including community centres in Ardler, Douglas, Menzieshill, Charleston, Whitfield and the Claverhouse Group.

Operation PinK

City Church Dundee collected toys for the Play Centre at Ninewells as part of an ongoing appeal called Operation PinK (Provision in Kindness) which aims to work in conjunction with local charities and agencies to provide essentials of a non-perishable nature to those in Dundee who are most in need.

The Play Centre on the Paediatric Ward at Ninewells provides patients with the opportunity to play in a safe, supervised environment, which helps them to deal with their illness and treatment through play.

1-r: Margaret Deuchars, Play Co-ordinator; Una Paton, Play Specialist; Heather Macauley, City Church Dundee; and Keri Gardiner, Play Assistant
Perth school hosts ST/ART display

Members of the Perth Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland (CHSS) group working with ST/ART, an arts project for Stroke and Acquired Brain Injury participants across Tayside, created a colourful display of portraits, drawings and printmaking at the Scout Hall at Perth Academy.

Chris Kelly, ST/ART Project Coordinator, said, "We have had a long and valuable relationship with local CHSS coordinators and Pam Murray in Perth has been a strong supporter of our work. This year Lead Artist Frances Law gave the participants a real challenge, as drawing faces is one of the most daunting assignments for someone who is untrained, but, as ever, the group responded enthusiastically and produced very strong work."

Members of CHSS group with Chris Kelly (centre back row)

Christmas art exhibition

A Christmas exhibition of patient artworks was held at the Centre for Brain Injury Rehabilitation at Dundee's Royal Victoria Hospital. It brings together a diversity of artworks of drawings, paintings and monoprints including a combination of abstract works, portraits and landscapes.

Staff and patients with some of the artwork

Honour for Perth Consultant

Dr Neil Dewhurst has been elected as the next President of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh (RCPE).

Dr Dewhurst is a Consultant Cardiologist and General Physician at Perth Royal Infirmary and Honorary Senior Lecturer in Medicine, University of Dundee. He is a highly regarded consultant with over 30 years of experience gained in both District and Teaching Hospitals in Scotland and England and is also currently the Medical Director of MRCP(UK). MRCP(UK) is the examining body which oversees the internationally-recognised Member of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCP (UK)) examination which enables doctors to enter training in order to become consultants.

Dr Dewhurst will assume the role of President Elect with immediate effect prior to taking over from the current President on 1 March 2010 and will serve for three years.

Dr Dewhurst said, "I am greatly honoured to have been elected to this role. The RCPE has been at the forefront of promoting and maintaining medical standards throughout the UK and internationally. As President my priorities will be to protect the interests of patients and physicians at a time when ever-greater demands are being placed upon the profession."

New Park+Ride bus service for PRI

A new bus service operating between Broxden Park+Ride site and Perth Royal Infirmary is now available. The service provides a park+ride option for people looking for a quick and easy means of accessing the hospital while avoiding the need to search for a parking space.

Service 444 operates Monday to Friday, running every half hour between Broxden and Perth Royal Infirmary from 0935 to 1515.

For more information about Service 444 please contact Smith & Sons on 01828 627310 or Perth & Kinross Council’s Public Transport Unit on 0845 3011130. Timetable leaflets are available on the buses and at Perth Royal Infirmary as well as on the Staffnet noticeboard.
Giving vulnerable patients a voice

In Tayside, independent advocacy organisations can support vulnerable people in having their voice heard and their rights protected. These organisations are independent of service provision and staff can refer patients to these organisations for support.

Independent advocacy can help patients when they find it difficult to speak, or are unable to express their views and wishes.

NHS Tayside has a policy which defines the roles and responsibilities of NHS Tayside staff about patients’ rights to independent advocacy. This policy can be accessed on Staffnet by following the path Staffnet Home / Safe & Effective Working / policies / finance & governance policies / independent advocacy policy.

Independent advocacy organisations can be found on the NHS Tayside website www.nhstayside.scot.nhs.uk under Your NHS Tayside / About NHS Tayside / Publications.

NHS Tayside marks World COPD Day

NHS Tayside marked World COPD Day by holding a free information event in the Caird Hall in Dundee. The event was organised by NHS Tayside’s Respiratory Managed Clinical Network and opened by Mr Sandy Watson, Chairman of NHS Tayside.

The day aimed to raise public awareness of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). COPD is the fifth biggest killer in the UK and is an umbrella term for a number of lung diseases such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

During the day the public were able to pick up information leaflets and chat to health and social care professionals about COPD as well as have their lung function tested.

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Vulnerable Families Pathway Project

NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (NHS QIS) is leading the development of a multi-professional and multi-agency framework for pregnancy and early years (0-3) to implement or enhance local pathways of support that meet the additional needs of children and families.

A multi-disciplinary steering group is overseeing the project and working groups have taken forward specific areas of work focusing on pregnancy, early years and common language approach to assessment.

A combined working group tested the first working draft of the framework against real-life scenarios. The draft framework will be widely distributed in mid-March 2010 for a three-month consultation period.

Further information can be found on the NHS QIS website (www.nhshealthquality.org) under Our Support Services, Practice Development, Vulnerable Families Pathway Project or contact Mairead Hughes, Programme Lead (Mairead.Hughes@nhs.net / 0131 623 4286) or Joanne McDonald, Project Co-ordinator (Joanne.McDonald@nhs.net / 0131 623 4350) for further information.

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A new national uniform is being introduced for NHS staff in Scotland to promote a professional corporate image and make it easier for patients and staff to identify which members of staff carry out which roles.

At the moment, the existing stocks of the old-style uniforms already held by NHS Tayside will continue to be issued. The new uniforms will be phased in over three years with all staff wearing the new uniform by 2012.

The new uniforms will be provided to all staff who currently wear a uniform. Staff who don’t wear a uniform at the moment will not be required to do so.

As you can see from the images, clinical staff involved in patient treatment will wear tunics in shades of blue with navy trousers. Senior charge nurses will wear navy blue. Pharmacy, technicians, healthcare scientists, admin & clerical and some dental care professionals will wear a different shade of blue. Facilities staff including porters, catering and domestic staff will wear shades of green with navy trousers.

The new uniform has been designed in national consultation with staff and has been tested for wearability and use. They will be manufactured in a lighter, more comfortable fabric and will be cool enough for the hospital environment. The improved style and fit will also make it more appropriate for manual handling needs.

Maggie Simpson, Director of Nursing for the Delivery Unit said, “Not only will the new national uniform help patients and members of the public identify staff and their respective roles more easily, but they are also made of a better quality material and have been designed in partnership with staff themselves to meet their needs.”

For more information visit the dedicated section on Staffnet under Our Websites.

www.scotland.gov.uk/nhsuniform
The GP surveys were rolled out in November 2009 with the inpatient programme being rolled out in January 2010. A selected group of patients who had stays in NHS Tayside hospitals between October 2008 and September 2009, will have received the surveys through the post and will have been prompted up to two further times by letter to respond. It is envisaged that the results of the full programme will be available by summer 2010.

Better Together sees patients, carers and staff as partners, with valuable experience to share and unique views to offer. NHS Tayside has a lot to give to, and a lot to gain from, Better Together, both in celebrating our successes and in helping us provide continually improving equitable, patient-centred care.

Through a postal questionnaire, Better Together asks service users their views on the care they’ve received. This information is then fed back into the health service, enabling best practice to be shared across NHSScotland, and areas for improvement to be quickly identified and acted upon.

In the first three programmes of work, Better Together will focus on GP services, inpatients and long term conditions.

The programme aims to:

- Build on and spread existing good practice
- Demonstrate local and national improvements
- Contribute to measurable progress in Scotland-wide, patient-centred care
- Test new approaches that build inpatient experience into service design and delivery
- Integrate and align these approaches with the other national improvement programmes and initiatives
- Generate evidence of how patients experience healthcare through the use of national surveys

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Professor Elizabeth Wilson, Nurse Director for NHS Tayside and lead for the Better Together project for the Board said, “NHS Tayside is committed to delivering patient-centred care which is respectful, compassionate and responsive to individual patient needs, values and preferences.

“Patients have a vital role in shaping the way we deliver care and we look forward to participating in this excellent programme which will build on the existing work we do to seek patient’s views.”

Further information on the programme and patient case studies can be found at www.bettertogetherscotland.com
Snow Joke!

The recent bad weather almost brought the UK to a standstill in certain areas and reportedly cost UK businesses an estimated £230 million.

During the coldest December and January that Scotland has seen since 1914 commuters were left stranded as trains and flights were cancelled, gas and grit supplies dropped to dangerously low levels, and many people were forced to stay at home as snow and ice blocked many roads and driving conditions became hazardous.

Our own staff saw the adverse effects of the cold snap with the A&E department and wards at Ninewells and Perth Royal Infirmary, and community services across the region, seeing huge numbers of injuries due to slips, trips and falls, as well as cold weather-related illnesses.

All of our staff have worked very hard under extremely challenging circumstances and as always have often gone the extra mile to ensure our services have continued to run smoothly.

Spectra has been out and about across Tayside (now that we’re able to travel again!) to find out how you were affected by the plunging temperatures and whether we need to be prepared for more freezing conditions in the coming years.

Ann Alexander
CASHIER
Support Services, Murray Royal Hospital

I often car share or walk to work so managed to make it in without much bother, although walking did take a lot longer than normal! It was very difficult to get cars out of our street though as no ploughs came round, we had to dig ourselves out.

I think that more salt supplies are needed and more gritters as they just seemed to stick to the main routes.

It’s also a bit scary that gas supplies got so low. It’s a good thing we only have electric in our house!

Joan Duffin
SAFETY GOVERNANCE AND RISK
Tayside Audit Resource for Primary Care (TARPC),

The worst thing was driving to Perth between Christmas and New Year as the Mackenzie Building in which I normally work was closed. I had to drive in blizzard conditions to Murray Royal and when I got to Perth some of the roads weren’t treated.

There should be a thorough reappraisal of logistics for bad weather conditions. One thing we could focus on is working from home. So many people go to work when they don’t need to.

June Osborne
DONOR TRANSPLANT CO-ORDINATOR
NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT)

Travel was difficult as I work in Perth, Dundee and Falkirk but luckily my work was flexible so I could take a bit more time and travel to work later.

Looking at a lot of the pavements, they are buckled and chipped away with big holes in them. We need better infrastructure and better drainage for when the snow melts away.

Maureen Dunbar
HOTEL SERVICES ASSISTANT
Support Services, Murray Royal Hospital

Our street never got cleared once as they were only bothering with the main roads. Everyone was struggling for weeks and there are a lot of elderly people on our street who were afraid to go out.

I think the councils should employ more people to deal with this quicker. They were too slow to clear the roads. We need to be more prepared to avoid problems like this in the future.
Gayle Culross
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER
Communications, Kings Cross

I have to drive out of Dundee to look after my two horses every day and the country roads were quite treacherous. Everything at the yard was frozen solid and I had to carry buckets of water from the nearby house to give the horses a drink. The horses weren't overly impressed with the snow either and after a short gallop round their field to stretch their legs, they were back at the gate demanding to be let in to the warmth of their stables.

I think the main problem is that people just don't know how to drive in bad conditions and our cars are generally not built to cope with snow and ice. I used to drive a 4x4 and had no problems in snow or mud, but my current car is hopeless. Perhaps if part of the driving test covered driving in poor weather conditions, then people might be more sensible when they took to the road.

Claire McCormack
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER
Communications, Kings Cross

With the adverse weather preventing flights from taking off, my boyfriend chose the worst possible time to move home from Australia. He was stranded when his plane from London to Glasgow was cancelled and I ended up spending a night in a luxurious hotel on my own… it's a hard life!

I think that more people should work from home if at all possible as too many drive to work no matter how bad the roads are and can end up becoming involved in an accident. Something needs to be done about the roads to make them more durable if we are set to experience even more extreme weather in the coming years. The potholes are worse than ever after the recent exceptionally cold spell.

Una MacQueen
RECEPTIONIST
Support Services, Murray Royal Hospital

We live out in Blairgowrie and are quite fortunate to have a good service with gritters out and about taking care of the streets quite regularly. A few of my colleagues live nearby so we swapped numbers in case of the need to car share. Over Christmas when the nurseries were closed we had to make additional plans for babysitters as my parents were snowed in in Pitlochry.

We need to give ourselves plenty of time for journeys and keep in touch with others to try and help each other out. I carry everything in my car just in case – a bit of carpet, warm clothes, a shovel etc. It may not be you that needs it, you could help out someone else who is having trouble on the road.

Ann Kaye
CLERICAL OFFICER
Support Services, Murray Royal Hospital

It didn’t stop me doing anything that I was planning to do but I did stay in a bit more. We were lucky enough to get the car dug out before the snow froze so were able to drive when we needed to. It took hours but was well worth it!

I think it’s a bit of a problem when the schools are closed and it makes it very difficult for workers to have to try and organise child care. I think the schools are sometimes closed too quickly and this can’t continue to happen every time it snows.

I also think that people who work and live locally could make more of an effort to plan in advance what to do in extreme weather. Who could manage to get in to work, who could work from home and so on.
Midsides hand hygiene co-ordinator Margaret Kennedy paid a visit to the Smile Design dentalsurgery in Perth to deliver a workshop on the importance of good hand hygiene.

Margaret was invited to meet with the surgery staff to provide up-to-date information on hand hygiene.

During the workshop, Margaret gave a short presentation and provided materials on good hand hygiene in order to raise awareness around the importance of when and how to wash your hands.

Questionnaires were provided to all staff to analyse their knowledge and expertise. They were then presented with certificates and badges on completion of the workshop.

Food 4 Life healthy cooking classes

A n awards ceremony was held on the 10th of December for participants of a cooking skills programme that offers a range of fun activities to encourage people with learning disabilities to eat more healthily and improve their diet.

The 'Food 4 Life' community-based course was set up by NHS Tayside and Dundee College with sessions held at Macalpine Road Fire Station.

For the first few weeks, the group, led by NHS Tayside Health Improvement Practitioner Paula Thomson who works with the Learning Disability Service at the Strathmartine Centre, was encouraged to think about diet and how they could make improvements. The group also took part in tasting panels, sampling low fat and low sugar foods.

Paula said, “This course gives a structured opportunity for people with a learning disability to learn about a healthy balanced diet and the benefits to health and wellbeing before applying this practically with cooking skills classes.

“Some members of the group are planning to move into independent living accommodation and this course will help give them the confidence to know they can prepare tasty, but inexpensive and healthy meals. It has been fantastic to watch their food preparation skills and confidence develop whilst working in the kitchen.”

Midwives help mums-to-be

Give It Up For Baby

A series of initiatives have been launched by NHS Tayside to offer support and help for pregnant women in Dundee to quit smoking.

Midwives from Ninewells will be offering advice to pregnant women attending antenatal clinics to help them to give up smoking. This initiative will see midwives promoting the Give It Up For Baby scheme, available to all pregnant women throughout Tayside.

Smoking cessation co-ordinators were also on hand with information on the scheme at an event at Asda Kirkton. Pregnant smokers were encouraged to join the Give It Up For Baby group that runs every Tuesday from noon to 1pm at Kirtkon Community Centre.

Fiona Anderson, NHS Tayside Smoking Cessation Co-ordinator said, “Women who smoke during pregnancy run a higher risk of miscarriage and are more likely to have babies that develop health problems in later years. Through Give It Up For Baby and our smoking cessation groups, we can offer encouragement and help to quit smoking for the good of the mother’s health and that of her child.”

Band night marks

World AIDS Day

A band night was held in The Bond, Dock Street Dundee organised by Body Positive Tayside, to mark World AIDS Day in December.

The event featured two local bands, The Jam Band and Mason and a free prize draw was held. Body Positive Tayside offered information on HIV and AIDS and the services they offer.

World AIDS Day 2009 focused on how HIV affects people living in the UK, as well as dispelling myths, misinformation and confusion.

For more information on HIV and safer sex, there is help available locally at Body Positive Tayside on 01382 226860 or visit the website at www.bodypositivetayside.org
Throughout the month of November, NHS Tayside’s Community Dental Service ran free mouth cancer check-ups for people in Dundee, Angus and Perth & Kinross to mark Mouth Cancer Action Month.

Mouth Cancer Action Month highlights that in the UK, mouth cancer is diagnosed in more than 5,000 people annually and kills almost 2,000 people each year.

Professional check-ups and regular self-examinations are the best way to detect mouth cancer as soon as possible. Early diagnosis saves lives, improving survival chances from just half of cases to more than 90%.

Early warning signs include mouth ulcers which do not heal within three weeks, red and white patches in the mouth and unusual changes in the mouth.

NHS Tayside Senior Dental Officer Gillian Elliott said, “We were delighted to be involved in Mouth Cancer Action Month in Tayside. It is vital that people are aware of the risks and are checked regularly for signs of mouth cancer – early detection saves lives.”

Mouth Cancer Action Month aims to raise awareness of a disease which has remained under-reported for too long. Prevention is crucial and lifestyle choices can help minimise risks.

For more information visit the website www.mouthcancer.org.

Forfar ‘C-card’ launched on World AIDS Day

NHS Tayside and the Pitstop Youth Café, Forfar, joined together to launch the C-card service on World AIDS Day on 1 December.

C-card is a service for under 25-year-olds offering access to a range of sexual health and wellbeing information and free condoms, with minimum embarrassment. Participants are asked to register for their C-card and are given the chance to have a confidential chat about condom choice and sexual health or relationship issues.

Richard McIntosh, Senior Health Promotion Specialist at NHS Tayside said, “It is important that we educate young people about the use of condoms and other issues relating to sexual health and well-being, to help reduce the high numbers of sexually transmitted infections and unplanned teenage pregnancies. These subjects can often be difficult to discuss with young people so any initiative that helps raise awareness can make a big difference.”

For further information and to find the nearest C-card outlet visit www.sexualhealthtayside.org

Healthy eating competition winner creates a ‘Desperate Dan-wich’

A collaboration between NHS Tayside, Dundee College and Dundee City Council, held their annual Desperate Dan-wich competition at Dundee Flower and Food Festival. The competition invites primary school pupils to create healthy sandwiches for famous cartoon character Desperate Dan as an alternative to his famous cow pies. Pupils were encouraged to use a variety of breads and fresh produce such as salad, fish, meat, dairy products and vegetables in their recipes.

From over 350 entrants, Hannah Waugh from Kirkmichael Primary School in Perthshire was crowned overall winner with her Dan’s Mighty Mouthful entry.

Each finalist received an apron, chefs hat and a goodie bag containing cookery equipment. Hannah also received a smoothie maker for her school.

Activity day to mark World Diabetes Day

Forty young diabetics from Tayside enjoyed a fun-filled activity day to build up friendships and give them an opportunity to socialise and work together with people of similar ages with the same condition.

The annual event coincided with World Diabetes Day on 14 November and was aimed at children aged between 12 and 16 years old.

The event was organised by nurses in the Tayside Children’s Diabetes Team. The team consists of two Consultant Paediatricians, Dr Steve Greene and Dr Vicky Alexander, Paediatric Diabetes Specialist Nurses Sue Bluff, Christine Sturrock, Leslie Mckenzie and Val Ramsay, and Clinical Psychologist Vicki Robinson.

The event was held at the BlueSky Experience in Methven and was funded by generous donations to the Paediatric Diabetes Education Fund.

For further information visit www.sexualhealthtayside.org

Hannah with her prize winning sandwich.
Smoking cessation team wins national award

NHS Tayside smoking cessation team, based in Kings Cross hospital Dundee, has been recognised in the No Smoking Day Event Organiser of the Year Awards in the Best Use of the Theme category.

The awards are the charity’s way of rewarding the creativity, determination and resourcefulness of the many people across the UK who organise events in support of the campaign, which took place in March 2009 around the theme of ‘Take the First Step’.

NHS Tayside organised a ‘Walk in the Park’ event in Camperdown Park to promote the day, which attracted over 50 participants. The organisers were keen to encourage those who were thinking of quitting smoking or who had already quit to feel the benefits of giving up by taking part in physical activity.

The award was presented at the No Smoking Day 2010 campaign launch held in the Queens Hotel, Dundee.

P.O.S.T offers weight management advice to families

The Paediatric Obesity Service Tayside (POST) is a Tayside-wide service led by experienced healthcare professionals which aims to support children and young people (aged 5-15 years) and their families to manage their weight.

The aim is to help establish healthy family lifestyles by offering a healthy weight programme that targets positive changes in family diet (traffic light scheme), physical activity levels and screen time.

The clinical service is open across Tayside and is now welcoming referrals into the service from health, social care, education and leisure professionals in Angus.

The programme offers:

- An individualised family childhood weight management programme delivered on a one to one basis
- A family centred approach where the child (and family) are enabled to take control of their own lifestyle changes
- Education on necessary positive changes in diet, physical activity and screen time
- Ten appointments with the parents ranging from 30-60 minutes in length over a four to five month period
- Concurrent physical activity consultations or sessions
- A group programme called Get Going was launched in Dundee in January 2010.
- A core function of the POST team will be training those working with overweight and obese children.

Further information including referral criteria is available on the Staffnet noticeboard or by contacting:
POST team, Dept Nutrition & Dietetics, 8 Western Avenue, Perth Royal Infirmary PH1 1NX 01738 473784 or email post.tayside@nhs.net

Palliative Care WHO visit

Dr Xavier Gomez-Batiste, Director of WHO Collaborating Centre for Public Health Palliative Care Programmes, visited Ninewells Hospital to speak to NHS Tayside staff on integrating palliative care into our local healthcare system and lessons that could be learned from the WHO.

The Scottish Government’s National Clinical Lead for Palliative Care Elizabeth Ireland also delivered a presentation on the shape of the national action plan.

Workshops took place in the afternoon focussing on home, nursing home and community hospital; hospice and acute hospital.
Best Use of IT in Primary Care

NHS Tayside was presented with a top award for the Best Use of IT in Primary Care at the recent Scottish Clinical Information in Practice 2009 (SCIIMP) conference held in Dunblane Hydra.

The NHS Tayside Applications Team submission was based on the MIDIS project, which went live in May last year.

MIDIS (Multi Disciplinary Information System) is a Scottish Government funded project for use in NHS Tayside, NHS Dumfries and Galloway and NHS Lanarkshire. The aim of the project is to deliver a core patient record system with a form builder facility to allow the addition of local service defined assessments, care plans and other forms as required.

The award recognises the work involved in developing and implementing the MIDIS system, currently in use by over 1700 staff across a range of services including health visitors, school nurses, district nurses, community mental health teams and a hospital based paediatric team.

MIDIS Project Manager Janice Caithness said, “The MIDIS implementation team are delighted to receive this award in recognition of the hard work that has gone into making MIDIS a success in Tayside.”

Angus pupils discover health careers

Schoolchildren from across Angus were given an insight into a range of health careers at an event organised by the Working in Health Access Network (WHAN) in partnership with NHS Tayside’s Workforce Directorate, Skills Development Scotland and local schools in Angus.

Held at Whitehill Health and Community Care Centre in Forfar, the event raised awareness of health sector careers among school pupils who might not have considered working for the health service.

Around 50 fourth and fifth year pupils from Arbroath High, Arbroath Academy, Forfar Academy and Brechin Academy visited Whitehill to chat with health professionals working in Clova Ward, Podiatry and the Minor Injury and Illness Unit.

New National Managed Clinical Network launched

The Familial Arrhythmia Network of Scotland (FANS) officially launched on Wednesday 3rd February 2010.

The Network is hosted by NHS Tayside, and involves clinical colleagues from a variety of disciplines from many Health Board areas throughout Scotland.

The aim of the Network is to provide co-ordinated care for patients, carers and family members whose lives are touched by Sudden Arrhythmic Death Syndrome as well as a number of other genetic arrhythmic conditions. Information will be provided in a number of ways, including a brand new website which is also anticipated to launch in February.

Pictured are patient representative Bob McConnachie of the Cardiomyopathy Association with NHS colleagues from throughout Scotland at the Network’s recent steering group meeting at Murray Royal Hospital in Perth.

New learning opportunities through education fund

A new fund to support the learning and development of NHS Tayside staff has been set up. This new resource will give staff the opportunity to apply for funding to undertake personal education and training. This will give staff who may traditionally not have had such learning opportunities the chance to pursue a new and worthwhile development activity.

Pat Millar, Head of Lifelong Learning for NHS Tayside said, “This is an excellent opportunity for staff to undertake non-traditional learning in areas that they have an interest in.

“Staff are asked to submit applications to the Education and Training Endowment Fund Group for consideration. Application packs and further information can obtained by contacting Lorraine Smith on 01382 527884 or lorraine.smith8@nhs.net

The application pack can be downloaded from Staffnet by following the path Home/Learning & Training/Your Lifelong Learning

For more information on the services and information provided by the Network, or to get involved, please contact Greg Fearn, Network Manager or Anna Cunningham, Network Administrator, Centre for Managed Clinical Networks, King’s Cross Health and Community Care Centre.
Established in August 2006, NHS Tayside’s Healthcare Academy aims to give unemployed people the chance to gain experience in the health service, and is going from strength to strength.

Here we focus on some of the most recent highlights.

Course Graduations

There have been three course graduations since October 2009, from Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross.

Courses in Angus and Perth & Kinross are delivered in partnership with the local authorities’ Social Work Departments. All courses are delivered with local further education colleges.

These students are committed to working within the care sector. Some move directly into employment, and some move on to further or higher education that will take them further along the health and social care career pathway.

The second 36-week Foundation Course delivered by Dundee College and Dundee Council Social Work Department commenced in September. At the end of the course, students will gain an SVQ 2 in Health and Social Care as well as practical experience in the care field.

Congratulations to Joan

Joan Laing, Administrator and Placement Coordinator, has successfully achieved her SVQ3 in Business and Administration.

Joan commenced a CMI Diploma in Management at Dundee College in January.
Placements for vulnerable young people

The NHS Tayside Healthcare Academy has been working with Barnardos to provide six-month work placement opportunities for vulnerable young people. The placements are to provide experience of the world of work for local young people who are furthest removed from the job market. During the placement the young person is expected to fulfil a designated job role, and contribute fully to the work of a team. They are fully supported by the Barnardos team and an identified key worker.

The young person will earn a salary whilst on placement; Barnardos pay half the salary costs. The NHS costs are approximately £1500 for the six-month period.

If you feel you would be able to support a young person within your department, please contact Debbie Donald – Associate Director Workforce ext 36993, or Alison Smith – Development Officer Healthcare Academy ext 71110.

Health Service Journal Awards

The NHS Tayside Healthcare Academy received national recognition for the contribution to Good Corporate Citizenship, by receiving a Highly Commended at the Health Service Journal Awards ceremony.

NHS Tayside were the only Scottish Health Board to receive recognition at the Awards.

The Academy was represented by Joan Laing, Placement Coordinator; Richard Muir, Healthcare Assistant, Mental Health Services; Debbie Donald, Associate Director Workforce Planning and Development; Alison Smith, Development Officer; Margaret Harper, Employee Director and Ian Wightman, Non Executive Director

New Appointment – Carrie Adams

The Healthcare Academy team welcomes Carrie Adams as their new Development Practitioner.

Carrie’s previous roles included Senior Nurse in the NHS Tayside Centralised Nurse Bank, and a District Nursing Sister for Dundee CHP. Carrie will bring a wealth of experience to the team.

The team is keen to link with any staff members who would like further information concerning the Academy, or who would like to become involved in the interview processes or in delivery of the programmes.

If you are interested, please contact:

Carrie Adams, Development Practitioner or Joan Laing, Placement Coordinator on 01382 424110 or ext 71110.
Dr Finn Romanes, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, tells spectra about mixing mechanics with medicine and dining with his daughter.

Name, designation and department
Dr Finn Romanes, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, Directorate of Public Health.

Personal history (an outline of yourself and how you came to be in this job…)
You won’t be able to tell from the pictures, but yes, I’m an Australian who has chosen to move to Dundee! Born and raised in Melbourne, medicine has taken me as far afield as Ethiopia, South Africa and on to Guatemala in Central America where I learned both Spanish and how to slow down. An obligatory Aussie year-off work included four days in Inverness where a Scottish romance was born and after two years of critical care medicine in the humidity and infectious challenge of Darwin in the Australian Top End, we moved to Scotland where I spent four years training in public health, all to prepare me for a consultant post in Tayside.

Like(s) about current job
It allows me to have a go at cracking big picture health challenges, especially around communicable disease and environmental health and emergency planning; the main one at present being pandemic influenza. Having a chance to influence all parts of the NHS and meeting people everywhere across the patch keeps me going. It’s actually fun.

Dislike about current job
If I say large amounts of email, do I get permission to stop using email altogether? Things that prevent me getting out of the office come in for attention under this heading, or long hours…

Most unusual thing asked to do at work
From my emergency doctor days, it would have to be surgically removing a full car bumper bar from the hand of a hapless DIY mechanic whose drill slipped whilst carrying out repair work on his four wheel drive. Ouch.

Achievement most proud of
Actually finishing 175km of cycling torture called The Marmotte; a one-day road race in the French Alps of which 70km is the same incline as Dundee’s Hilltown (I’m not kidding). For work achievements: anything I did to help everyone roll out the swine flu vaccination programme in Tayside.

Favourite writer
George Monbiot for being a genuinely challenging and radical environmental writer and critic.

Favourite music
If I’m truly honest, the Buena Vista Social Club (but only on Saturdays).

Favourite meal
Homemade cannelloni with fresh ricotta and spinach.

Most like to have dinner with
My one year-old daughter who laughs a lot. A close second would be Tony Benn.

Favourite word
Awesome

Top 3 frustrations
• Folk who insist it can’t be done
• Any car commute you can imagine
• Missing being with my daughter at bathtime

Most embarrassing moment
Without a doubt, forgetting what came next when playing a violin solo once in a concert, and having to walk off stage as there wasn’t anything else that could be done.

Irritating habit
Constantly blocking the sink with coffee grinds.

Do better than anyone else
Make a café latte. It’s a Melbourne thing.

3 wishes
• Firstly that one day a week, every week, everyone in Tayside could travel to work by bike, just to be active
• Secondly that all Scots have enough exposure and educational opportunity to speak a second language
• Thirdly that we learn to live within Earth’s means so that our children inherit a planet that is in better shape than the one we have now

insight
Over 5000 staff in NHS Tayside are now having their time and attendance at work recorded on SSTS. The data that is entered for staff is used for a variety of purposes, such as calculating and processing overtime and unsocial hours to be sent to payroll for payment, sickness absence recording, and manpower, time and attendance reporting. It is therefore vital that data is entered accurately and in accordance with the issued timetable.

Staff recording data on SSTS have a responsibility for the accuracy of data recorded; including basic hours, overtime, excess hours, and all leave entries ranging from annual leave, sick leave, mandatory training, etc.

Data, including all absence types, which is not entered accurately in SSTS, can result in over- or underpayment of salaries and inaccuracy of reports and statistical information.

All data should be checked, verified, confirmed and authorised by the relevant staff who have been assigned with the appropriate system user permissions.

Roles

The role of the Rosterer is “to input basic hours and any overtime and excess hours worked.”

The role of the Rosterer+ is “to input basic hours worked, overtime and excess hours and also to record absences and attach an absence reason to that absence.”

The role of the Confirmer is “to confirm all shifts worked, enhancements due, overtime, excess hours and any absences input.”

The role of the Authoriser is “to authorise all overtime and excess hours worked as well as authorising any payroll notes”.

Whilst carrying out the duties attached to the above roles, the SSTS Timetable must be strictly adhered to. This is especially important for the authorisation of overtime and excess hours, as failure to authorise by cut off dates will result in underpayment in staff salaries.

SSST Staffnet site

There is a dedicated SST Staffnet site which has information and guidance on various aspects of SSTS. Also, the current timetable and all documentation associated with SSTS are available to download. The site can be accessed by following the Staffnet path Home > Our Websites > IT Implementation and Training > IT Projects/Systems > SSTS.
An ABBA musical tribute ladies’ night held at Arbroath Artisan Golf Club has raised £660 for Tayside breast care patients.

The money was raised for the Ninewells Breast Care Fund through donations and a raffle at the event held in August and to which around 100 ladies attended.

Club Lady Captain Lynda Birse and committee member Jean Cargill presented the cheque to Macmillan Clinical Nurse Specialist Gillian Little.

Gillian said, “We thank the ladies for this very kind donation which will benefit breast care patients receiving treatment at Ninewells.”

Pitlochry patient says thanks to PRI

Pitlochry woman Margaret Rose presented a cheque for over £1000 to the haematology unit at PRI following a series of fundraising events.

Margaret was diagnosed with aplastic anaemia nearly two years ago and has been receiving treatment at the haematology unit ever since. She previously donated £400 to the unit after asking for donations instead of gifts for her ruby wedding anniversary last year.

In the summer, Margaret and her husband, entertainer Eddie Rose, held a Scottish night in Pitlochry Town Hall which featured a concert, a quiz and a raffle, raising £1020 for the unit.

Margaret also donated £70 to haematology, ward 34 at Ninewells and £160 to Maggie’s Centre.

Donation for children’s services in P&K

Children in Perth & Kinross who attend occupational therapy, physiotherapy or speech and language therapy at the Sunflower Centre, PRI, are set to benefit from a £2100 donation.

The parents of Ayrton De Cecco, who has received therapy from all three services, handed over a cheque to be split between the services, with each receiving £700. The cash was raised by Ayrton’s father and his friends at their local game shooting fraternity.

Alison McIntyre, Paediatric Occupational Therapist at the Sunflower Centre said, “Through this generous donation, the paediatric occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech and language therapy services within Perth & Kinross will be able to update their resources and buy new equipment that will help a wide range of children who access our services.”
Triathlon and adventure race raise £8100 for Ninewells

Former Dundee and Dundee United player David Worrell presented Ward 34 at Ninewells with an £8100 cheque after his brother-in-law and best friend successfully completed a gruelling test of their physical abilities.

His brother-in-law Jason Cooke and best friend Liam Kelly decided to take part in the Skerries Triathlon – a 750m sea swim, 20km cycle and 5km run – and the ‘Gael Force West’ challenge in Ireland – a six-stage cross country race including 20km of running and hiking, 44km of cycling and 1.6m kayak.

Jason and Liam wanted to raise the money to give something back to the staff at Ninewells who have been treating David for Hodgkin’s Disease since he was diagnosed a year ago.

David said, “From the consultants to the staff who served my meals, I received nothing but first class care.”

Needlecraft group donate to Cornhill

Perth Needlecraft Circle presented an embroidered wall hanging to the new Cornhill Macmillan Centre at Perth Royal Infirmary.

Macmillan volunteer Elma Muir, who is also a member of the Perth Needlecraft Circle, came up with the idea to create a wall hanging for the new centre and sought help and advice from Tayside Healthcare Arts Trust (THAT).

The three-panelled triptych, which depicts Perthshire scenery and local flora and fauna, took over four months to complete, with members using a variety of traditional embroidery techniques, patchwork and collage-work.

Over £7500 for Roxburghe House

Local businesses helped raise over £7500 for patients at Roxburghe House at an ‘It’s a Knockout’ event organised by Clydesdale Bank’s Financial Solutions Centre in Dundee.

The day’s events saw teams participating in an inflatable assault course, a giant inflatable version of table football and a gladiator-style duel. Funds were raised through a raffle, auction and personal donations.

Over £10,000 was raised for the Help the Hospice Association, with 75% of that sum directed to Roxburghe House, a total of £7555.25.

Transplant patient raises cash for kidney patients

Perth man Alan Crawley, who received a kidney transplant from his sister Lyn, presented £300 to the Tayside Kidney Patients Association.

Thanks to his transplant, which he received in August 2008, Alan is back at work and able to lead a normal life after months of dialysis.

Alan is a member of Ormond’s Bar golf section and plays every Sunday at North Inch. The golfers raised £300 from various fundraising efforts at outings to courses including Piperdam, Whitemoss and Aberfeldy, and decided to donate the money to the cause which is very close to Alan’s heart.

Chairperson of the Tayside Kidney Patients Association Ross Martin said, “We very much welcome this kind donation, which will allow us to continue to support and provide information to patients, their families and carers in Dundee, Angus and Perth & Kinross.”

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NHS Tayside’s Director of Finance David Clark has retired after 35 years working in NHS Scotland and 25 years service in senior finance roles locally.

David came to Tayside in 1985 as unit accountant for the former Dundee General Hospitals Unit before being appointed Director of Finance and Information for Dundee Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. He became Director of Finance for Tayside Health Board in 1996 and has been an Executive member of the Board, and subsequently of NHS Tayside Board, since 1997.

In his career with NHS Tayside, David has overseen around £8.5 billion of public expenditure. He has worked closely with around 65 Board members and has attended over 300 Board and Committee meetings.

David’s wife Fay also recently retired from the Board’s Emergency Planning Department, and they are looking forward to enjoying their retirement together.

Chairman of NHS Tayside Mr Sandy Watson said, “David Clark is an individual of integrity, commitment and professionalism who has made a significant contribution to the health service in Tayside and in Scotland.”

Staff from the Estates Department bid a fond farewell to a long serving colleague who helped to build the hospital where he worked for 35 years.

Alf Small, Senior Estates Officer, began his career as a trainee building technician with Crudens Constructions in 1969 and spent three years on the Ninewells site during construction of the hospital.

When Ninewells opened in 1974, Alf was employed by Tayside Health Board as an assistant building supervisor before being promoted to his recent post of senior building officer in 1979. In this role Alf has contributed to the overall management and supervision of the maintenance of buildings and build services at Ninewells and Dundee Dental Hospital.

Alf received vouchers from NHS Tayside in recognition of his 35 years service, while his Estates colleagues collected £350 as a retirement gift which Alf plans to put towards buying a radio control unit for his model boats.

An Arbroath midwife has celebrated 40 years with the NHS, 27 of which have been spent at Arbroath Infirmary.

Val Parker has brought hundreds of children into the world at the infirmary and some of those children and their mothers came along to her celebration to say a big thank you for her dedication. Val has experienced some unusual and special births during her career, including deliveries in ambulances and the first baby of the new millennium at the infirmary’s Queen Mother Wing, who was one of the youngsters at Val’s celebration.