Have you seen our latest edition of **GP matters**

There is now a Dedicated Telephone Service for Emergency Admission Opinion for GP’s in Newcastle

0191 282 1524
‘There was a well-established and proactive Community Advisory Panel, which consisted of patients using or who had trust service and/or their relatives. The panel met each month to hear from speakers on various issues and consider requests for involvement. The panel sat on a number of groups such as the Patient, Carer and Public Involvement Group, Nutrition Steering Group and Outpatient User Group. The panel provided an annual report to the Chief Executive.’

(CQC Quality Report for The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, 2016)

The Community Advisory Panel (CAP) consists of a number of people with varying skills gained in a number of walks of life. All of our members have (or still are) users of the Trust services as patients or carers. Now in its 14th year of working with the Trust, the Panel continue to provide unbiased advice on the patient, carer and public perspective and in turn bring about improvements for all patients.

The Panel meets monthly at Freeman Hospital when it is addressed by invited speakers from departments within the Trust. The Trust Secretary firstly presents information from recent Board Meetings which keeps us fully up to date about the business of the Trust and answers any questions Panel Members may have.

At the monthly meetings, CAP members have raised a number of issues which were important to patients and their carers. These issues are fed back to the relevant people within the Trust who respond to Panel concerns and provide explanations or changes where necessary. In addition Trust staff addressed the Panel on the following subjects, all of which the Panel found very informative and gave members the opportunity to give the patient perspective on developments.

• The role and function of Laboratory Services (including a tour of the department);
• Nurse staffing and recruitment;
• Volunteer Services;
• Transformation Project and Telehealth;
• Hospital Readmissions due to Medication Issues;
• Patient and visitor portal;
• Pharmacy website;
• Equality and Diversity in the Trust;
• The ‘Perfect Week’ in Medicine; and
• The Trust Quality Account.

In addition, throughout the year members have been requested to assist in a number of areas, such as;
• Involvement in a peer review process;
• Medication Safety Working Group;
• Nutritional Steering Group membership;
• Clinical Audit and Guidelines Committee membership;
• Patient view of student involvement in consultation;
• PLACE inspections; and
• Review of Coming to Hospitals Information.

In addition the Panel has continued to be involved in providing a member(s) as a Governor of the Trust, a judge on the Staff Personal Touch Award Scheme, reviewers for the Patient Information Review Panel and Food Tasting Panels.

A member of the group has also been involved in the compilation of a food policy for Newcastle. This group involves various groups from within the City including the Council and its work is ongoing.

The Community Advisory Panel was invited to meet with inspectors from CQC during the inspection in January and provided feedback about their role within the Trust. The inspectors were very interested in the working of the group and felt they made a valuable contribution to the welfare of patients of the Trust. This is recognised in the CQC inspection report highlighted at the top of this section.

The members of the Panel continue to give their time freely and willingly to help the Trust meet the needs of patients. The members who represent the Panel on various committees and steering groups give a voice to patients and ensure that policy and procedure reflect the needs of patients, carers and friends and family.

On a final note, I must acknowledge the commitment of our recently retired Chair, Mr Alf Brown and Vice-Chair, Mr Syd Atkinson who have served the Panel with dedication for over ten years and have achieved so much to improve the patient experience.

Sharron Thompson
Chair
August 2016

Review of the Year 2015/16 191
Incident Reporting

The Trust uses a transparent and accessible approach to incident reporting, via Datix, which offers a web-based system for reporting, analysis and control. The system facilitates a quick and comprehensive analysis of all reported incidents and also underpins reporting to the National Reporting and Learning System. The NRLS provides national incident analysis and benchmarking.

Datix also supports the Corporate Risk Register, which again uses a web-based system designed for ease of use by local accountable managers. This Register is reviewed and monitored by the Corporate Governance Committee.

Incident numbers and rates have continued to increase in each quarter in 2015/16 in response to the Trust Sign up to Safety campaign. This has led to an increase in the number of incidents reported as serious incidents as expected however the percentage of incidents resulting in serious harm or death has decreased when compared with last year.

Quality Improvement

As part of the continuing commitment to quality improvement, the Trust, in association with key stakeholders, identified a number of quality and safety areas which were agreed as priorities for improvement. The 2015/16 priorities were:

- Priority 1 - To reduce all forms of healthcare associated infection (HCAI);
- Priority 2 - Sign up to Safety;
- Priority 3 - The delivery of ‘Harm Free Care’ for all patients;
- Priority 4 - Human Rights;
- Priority 5 - Mortality;
- Priority 6 - National Audits and Confidential Enquiries;
- Priority 7 - NICE Quality Standards (QSTs); and
- Priority 8 - Patient Experience.

Patient safety continues to be our number one priority and the aim during 2015/16 has been to reduce avoidable harm and when an incident does occur, ensure that we learn and improve. This year we have worked hard to ensure reporting rates reflect disclosure of all incidents, these being reported per 1000 bed days and which have increased from 28.4 to 32.3. We have also achieved our target in regard to reducing the incidence of patient falls – there being fewer falls than the national average. Harm free care continues to be reported at above the 95% national average also mortality rates have been below the national average for the last 12 months and consistently below all other acute healthcare providers across the North East and Cumbria.

We put quality at the heart of everything we do and to constantly strive for improvement by monitoring effectiveness. High level parameters of quality and safety have been reported monthly to the Board and Council of Governors. In January 2016 a new style of Quality Report was introduced which is aligned to the CQC domains of Safe, Effective, Caring, Responsive and Well-led. Activity is monitored in respect to quality priorities and safety indicators by exception and performance is compared with local and national standards.

Leadership walkabouts, coordinated by the Quality and Assurance Lead, involving Executive and Non-Executive Directors and members of the Medical Director’s and Nursing and Patient Services Director’s teams have been regularly conducted in a variety of departments across the Trust. These are reported to the Corporate Governance Committee, and any actions reported on acted upon and followed up.

The Trust Complaints Panel is chaired by a Non-Executive Director and reports directly to the Board of Directors, picking up any areas of concern with individual Directorates and Departments including outside agencies as and when necessary.

The monthly Clinical Assurance Tool (CAT) continues to provide clinical assurance to the Trust Board as an overview of performance against a wide range of clinical and environmental measures for each ward and Directorate.
Our Partners
The Faculty of Medical Sciences, Newcastle University’s translational research and our relationship with The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (NuTH) continue to be key to the success of our research agenda. The formation of Newcastle Academic Health Partners (NAHP) (the partnership between the University, NuTH and Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (NTW)) to oversee our joint teaching, research and commercial activities has both formalised and reinvigorated the links between the partner organisations. The Director of NAHP, a Professor in the Faculty, is also the Associate Medical Director for Research in NuTH and has a seat on The Faculty Steering Group. The role is pivotal to our ability to enhance and facilitate interactions and relationships.

Ongoing performance reporting for our Schools and Institutes has continued to provide a sound basis for strategic planning, and identifies areas of both under-performance and where further investment is needed. We also remain focussed on retaining and recruiting only the highest calibre staff who can contribute to raising our profile and securing our future.

We continue to be proud of our excellence and strength in teaching. All of our undergraduate subjects scored more than 90% student satisfaction in the 2015 National Student Survey. In 2015 both the Postgraduate Taught Evaluation Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Evaluation Survey (PRES) ran. In both surveys we performed better than the sector average (82% in each), achieving 87% satisfaction in the PTES, and 86% satisfaction in the PRES.

We have continued to see success in international league tables, members of our Faculty have continued to work hard to raise our external profile, and they have been rewarded again this year. We have retained our ranking of 94th in the QS World Rankings in the Life Sciences and Medicine category, and Dentistry has been ranked 37th. Our position in the Leiden Ranking for Medical and Life Sciences has risen to 44th.

In the last year we launched new undergraduate degrees in Oral and Health Sciences and Exercise Biomedicine, and Masters (MSc) in Biochemistry and Biomedical Genetics, both of which offer an extended research experience for students. The flexible, on-line postgraduate degree in Clinical Health Sciences programme was developed and launched in October 2015.

The Faculty has launched the National Centre for Ageing Sciences and Innovation (NASI) and have appointed a Director with a strong track record in innovation from the commercial sector. NASI will bring together experts from academia, the NHS and public and private sectors to create a world-leading centre for innovation addressing the challenges and exploring the opportunities offered by an ageing population. NASI will improve people’s lives by developing technologies to support our ageing population and will also help boost the regional and national economy, bringing in jobs and investment.

The Faculty (in partnership with FutureLearn) delivered the second cycle of the ‘Ageing Well: Falls’ Massive Open On-line Course (MOOC) in 2015. Five thousand participants registered for both cycles, and FutureLearn has confirmed that the course has the highest completion rate of all the courses they deliver.
Continued research growth

Our overall trend of very healthy research growth has continued. Research income saw an increase of 2% on the previous year, resulting in another record level of £68.73m; this is reflected in the income per academic FTE which increased by 4%. We invest in our scientific facilities to ensure that they are state-of-the-art, and are proud that our competitors complement us on how well our model works. Combined research and commercial income continues to be dominated by research income (98.7%).

Continued success with translational research

Over the last year the number of grants has increased by 11%, and the value by 4%. It is worth noting our success in the both the Medical Research Council (MRC) Confidence in Concept awards - funding to be used flexibly to support the earliest stages of multiple translational research projects, and the Proximity to Discovery awards - flexible funding for innovative ways to enable the initial development of academic-industry collaborations. We are ranked 2nd nationally, (alongside Oxford University) in the allocation of these awards.

The success of our translational awards is very much dependent on our relationship with NAHP (NuTH in particular). The amount of NIHR Research Capability Funding (RCF) available to the Faculty/Trust partnership to support clinical research has increased by 2% for NuTH and is reasonably stable at around £2m. Whilst these are not Faculty measures as such, they are indicators of the success of our clinical academic workforce in securing NIHR funding and Senior Investigator Awards, a success that we hope to see strengthen further with the formation of the NAHP partnership.

The Faculty’s review of its research support infrastructure is well underway, with Phase 1 (the organisation of our clinical research facilities which interface with NuTH into one manageable structure) delivered mid-way through 2015/16. Reviews of the costing processes and pre- and post-award support have commenced in 2015/16, working closely with the University Research Office in its overarching review of university wide research processes. We believe this will lead to a more business-like, customer focussed and streamline process for stakeholders.

Julia Newton
Director: Newcastle Academic Health Partners
Associate Medical Director, NuTH

Chris Day
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Medical Sciences
Vice-Chancellor-Elect, Newcastle University
Newcastle Dental Hospital & School

The Dental Directorate was inspected as an independent site by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) when the Trust hosted the inspectors in January 2016. We were delighted to be awarded an “outstanding status” by the CQC. This is the first time such an award has been bestowed on a Dental Teaching Hospital. We note that excellence runs through the Trust which was also the first teaching hospital in the country to be awarded outstanding status.
The Dental Directorate continues to make excellent progress across its key functions as a provider of specialist clinical care and of undergraduate and post-graduate education and research. Dental undergraduate training continues to be the main focus of educational activity with the Trust and University utilising their strong and effective working relationship to ensure that this training is of the highest standard. The Dental Therapy degree programme welcomed its first intake in September 2015 and the Directorate is set to build on the achievement of the programme as we prepare to welcome the second intake. For qualified dentists, trainees continue to achieve excellent levels of attainment across all of the recognised main dental specialties and at all levels.

The Dental Directorate as an Academic Clinical Directorate has strengthened its research portfolio by recruiting more patients to Oral and Dental research studies than any other Trust in England. This facility continues to be at the vanguard of future infrastructure developments within the Directorate.

Specialist clinical services continued to be in very high demand and in 2015-16 there were over 110,000 patient appointments undertaken. The Directorate maintained and improved on its management of patient waiting times and by the end of the year was fully compliant with national targets.

Work has continued to identify areas for clinic refurbishment and consideration is being given to the introduction of digital radiology and electronic patient records. It remains critical to ensure that the facilities provided for training and patient care reflect contemporary clinical and educational requirements.

Commissioning arrangements for dental services continue to undergo change as part of wider NHS reforms and we are in a position to influence future changes in commissioning. We have been working with both referrers and Commissioners to ensure that our wide range of specialist clinical services continues to be focused on those patients who need them most. In recruiting staff we will work to ensure that appointments are configured to effectively meet the needs of patients in addition to contributing to the ongoing development of the Clinical Directorate and University.
Working in Partnership

The last year has seen the Trust once again prove its importance to the city, both in terms of our health and our wider success.
We have seen the excellent news that the Trust was awarded a well deserved outstanding rating by the Care Quality Commission. In a time of ongoing challenges in the health and care sector, it's particularly welcome to receive good news and I offer sincere congratulations to the Trust and all its staff.

Newcastle is a better place for the excellent healthcare it receives from clearly dedicated professionals. But the city benefits in other ways as well.

Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals play an important role in our city's economy. The Trust is a driver of both excellence in our care standards and in our economic growth. It brings in jobs to our city for every level of our workforce, and proves to be an important partner in our shared vision for Newcastle.

The Council, the Trust and our other local partners continue to work together on the public sector reform agenda, including the integration of health and social care. The scale of collaboration across NHS organisations and the council continues to grow with a commitment to plan and deliver better care together for the people of Newcastle despite a very difficult national and financial context.

There remains big challenges for all involved in securing healthy outcomes for the city both in terms of budget constraints and lifestyle interventions. But on the evidence of the last year the Trust is well prepared to meet them and I look forward to working with it in the year ahead.

Councillor Nick Forbes
Leader, Newcastle City Council
Supporters & Volunteers

There are more than 700 volunteers providing a direct commitment in one way or another throughout our hospital sites.

For example, the League of Friends have been providing charitable support to the Freeman Hospital for over 38 years. Since their sterling efforts began in 1976, The League has supplied an enormous range of equipment, raising money through the sales of a wide variety of merchandise in the Main Concourse Shop (now in its third guise), the ENT Tea Bar, the Sales Table in Main Outpatients and the Craft Trolley.

All volunteers work tirelessly to help provide major pieces of equipment to the benefit of patients and staff alike. However it is often the smaller items which though not highly technical, provide comfort and relaxation which in many ways, just as important.

Many, many thanks to everyone involved.

These are some of the voluntary and charitable fundraising groups with whom we are proud to be associated. There are many others and a host of individuals - a huge thank you to all.
We are very grateful to the many individuals and organisations who support much of what we do.
Maggie’s Newcastle opened in May 2013. Located in the grounds of the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle, the Centre has rapidly become very popular having over 42,000 visitors to date.

This is an extraordinary number for such a new centre and is illustrative of the overwhelming demand for Cancer Services in the region.

Maggie’s Newcastle is one of 19 Maggie’s Centres in the UK which provide free emotional, practical and social support to people with cancer from across the North East of England, as well as their families and friends. It is located directly opposite the Northern Centre for Cancer Care providing people with cancer an opportunity to relax whilst getting support in an informal setting. Maggie’s compliments the essential clinical services provided by the hospital.

Cancer care pathways are process driven and people are often left reeling after being told they have cancer. We do acknowledge that only a quarter of what was said can be remembered and many are unable to make sense of the diagnosis and treatment options and struggle to cope. Whilst hospitals can deliver excellent clinical care, people with cancer, their carers and families also need extra emotional and practical support. This is the essence of what Maggie’s Centres provide.

Established in 1996, Maggie’s has pioneered a model of ongoing support which ensures that people can get the calmness they need in a warm, friendly, informal place, full of light and open space. These purpose built centres provide a shelter from the stress of dealing with hospitals, appointments and treatment. They become a refuge, providing a peaceful space to absorb the information that people are inevitably bombarded with and help to relieve some of the distress of having cancer.

People can drop into a Maggie’s Centre and an expert will be on hand to listen to questions or concerns and provide both practical information and emotional support. The Centre often becomes a home from home for people with cancer.

We currently provide:
- Drop-in support sessions, 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday, with a Cancer Support Specialist to discuss diagnosis, treatment options, treatment side effects, decision support and anything of concern related to cancer;
- Booked appointments for individuals, couples or families;
- Monthly Support Groups for many site specific cancers;
- A young people’s networking group for people aged 18-30 who have had a cancer diagnosis and a Young Women’s Support Group;
- Maggie’s Monday Morning for Men, a support group for men who have or have had cancer
- Courses for those starting treatment, for people who are recovering from cancer or for those caring for someone who has cancer;
- Other services including workshops for people experiencing hair loss, nutrition and health classes, Tai Chi, Yoga and Exercise sessions, Art Therapy and Creative Writing sessions;
- Benefits Advice Service, which has secured over £5,000,000 in benefits and grants for people since the Centre opened; and
- Return to Work Clinics and Stress Management courses.

A lasting legacy

We very much hope that this truly extraordinary building, made from sustainable, low-carbon materials and technology and designed to include space and relaxation areas shall be a lasting legacy of the support given to Maggie’s by our generous donors.
WE ❤️ DAAB

Proud to be part of our community
From cupcakes to fun-runs, River Tyne walks to garden parties, Daft as a Brush Cancer Patient Care are proud to be loved by the community with so many people helping, volunteering, supporting and sharing their passion for this local, award-winning, cancer charity.
Founder Brian Burnie chose the Geordie folk song, about a woman whose loved one is separated from her by the river, to celebrate the launch of the River Tyne Trail. The 135-mile walk was launched earlier this year by the Gosforth charity, which provides free transport to cancer outpatients across the northern counties.

Conducted by musical director Ernest Young, the enormous choir of children was made up of pupils from Archibald First School, Broadway East First School, Stocksfield Avenue Primary School, Regent Farm First School, St Oswalds RC Primary and St Charles’ RC Primary.

Their uplifting performance was also captured by film crews from the BBC’s The One Show, which is producing a film on the charity’s work, to be aired later in the year.

The charity, Daft as a Brush Cancer Patient Care, provides free transport in its 21 ambulances for cancer out patients across three northern counties to and from the Freeman Hospital and Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle.

Pictures courtesy of NCJ Media.
Daft as a Brush
CANCER PATIENT CARE
"I could not of done without them."

James Edgar - Ashington

Daft as a Brush Cancer Patient Care offers staffed custom-made vehicles to transport outpatients, free of charge, to and from Hospital who are undergoing Chemotherapy and/or Radiotherapy cancer treatment.

Discover more at www.daftasabrush.org.uk

Daft as a Brush Cancer Patient Care
Daft as a Brush Cancer Patient Care, Daft as a Brush House, Great North Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2DR. Telephone: (0191) 28 55 999
Daft as a Brush Cancer Patient Care is a registered charity No. 328432.
65,000 cancer patient journeys, 1 unique charity for VIP’s!
Our Very Important Patients say...

Beverley De Placido
Shiremoor
"Made life so much easier. All just wonderful people."

Michael Howe
Gateshead
"Cannot speak highly enough of the charity."

Beverley Hough
Washington
"A truly amazing, friendly service that is there in a time of need. ‘Daft as a Brush’ definitely go the extra mile."

Anne Lewis
Newcastle
"DAFT’ - certainly not!! You brushed my travel worries aside."

Brian Lee
Chester le Street
"A fantastic, unique service. Takes the pressure off."

Dawn Davison
Boldon Colliery
"Excellent service. Takes away the stress."

Edith Gilderoy
Sacriston
"Impressed by all of the volunteers. Made a traumatic time more comfortable."

Harry Darling
Newcastle
"Took a lot of stress out of a stressful time."

Rene Davison
Westerhope
"Very beneficial for all the family."

Susan Eunson
Gosforth
"DAAB patients are always on time & return safely home after treatment."

Pamela Tilly
Lanchester
"Daft as a Brush’. There is nobody better."

Joan Snaith
South Shields
"Excellent service. Talking to the volunteers helps you to relax before treatment."
When two become one...
A single charity with a single mission to support our local hospitals

From 1st April 2016, the two officially appointed Charities which previously supported the work of the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (Newcastle Healthcare Charity and Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Charity) merged, creating one single NHS Charity for Newcastle Hospitals.

For many years, the two official Charities have looked after around 700 charitable funds based at the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Freeman Hospital and Centre for Ageing and Vitality at the former Newcastle General Hospital site, supporting every Ward, Unit, Department and Specialty right across the Trust.

The aims of both the Newcastle Healthcare Charity and the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Charity have always been the same; to complement NHS resources in the Newcastle hospitals to improve the patient experience and enhance facilities for both patients and staff. This includes providing additional equipment, supporting staff training and development and funding new and innovative research projects.

The merger to form one new single charity has created a focused and unified Newcastle Hospitals NHS Charity (reg. 1057213); a single voice dedicated to supporting the work of the Trust. It will simplify the whole process of donating money, raise the profile of hospital charitable giving to the Trust and hopefully increase income. Most importantly, it offers us the opportunity to develop a local charity brand for Newcastle Hospitals with which potential donors can identify. The key word here is ‘local’.

Why is this important? To answer this, we need to understand who our audiences and potential supporters are. As well as existing donors and fundraisers we also look to engage corporate contributors of other local decision makers and the media. Whoever they are, all our supporters have local health interest in common, either from personal experience or that of a loved one or friend or simply through a desire to improve the quality of life for the whole region.
We are constantly overwhelmed by the imagination, commitment and sheer energy of our Newcastle Hospital ‘champions’, many of whom have experienced life-changing difficulties in their lives.

We already know that ‘health and well being’ matters to the public when they are choosing a charity to support. In the latest chart produced by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), the ‘Advancement of Health and Saving Lives’ comes second only to ‘Education & Training’ in the list of ‘Causes and Voluntary Income’ in England and Wales (July 2016).

We are extremely lucky in this region. The generosity of the North East people and their huge regional pride is well documented. If we want our North East public, including important opinion formers and corporate donors, to consider giving us their trust, time and money, we need them to know that they can make a real difference locally. The new single Newcastle Hospitals NHS Charity will strengthen the message that this is a local cause, making a difference to local hospitals and local lives.

As we have so often said, we take a ‘softly-softly’ approach in our hospital fundraising. We don’t knock on doors, use agents, cold call or bombard potential donors with direct mail campaigns. Instead, we rely on the great North East public to fundraise on our behalf for these are our best ambassadors. Many of them support us because they have had direct experience of our services, either as a patient or as a friend or relative of a patient. Time and again, they tell us in their letters and their phone calls and visits that they are grateful for the excellent treatment provided by our talented clinicians and want to give something back to say thank you. We are constantly overwhelmed by the imagination, commitment and sheer energy of these Newcastle Hospital ‘champions’, so many of whom have experienced life-changing difficulties.

In the face of economic uncertainty and despite our relatively low-profile and soft fundraising approach, we have been able to achieve consistently high levels of charitable giving, with 2015/16 being another outstanding year for the two Charities, with a combined income of £4.811 million. This is undoubtedly attributable to the immense goodwill of the North East public and once again, our Corporate ‘Friends in the North’; Fenwick; ASDA; Newcastle City Council; Barclay’s Bank; the Ouseburn Learning Trust; Sainsbury’s; Zurich Insurance; and many, many others.

Over the following ‘Charity Matters’ pages we can only give a small snapshot of the amazing generosity and ingenuity of those who have supported us over the past year. We are extremely grateful to all those who have given their time, their money and their fundraising support to help us provide that little bit extra for our local hospitals and services and on behalf of the Charity Trustees we would like to thank you all.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us if you would like to fundraise or need any help or advice.

Contact Pauline Buglass, Head of Fundraising on 0191 213 7235 or email: charity.matters@nuth.nhs.uk

Review of the Year 2015/16 213
The Great North Children’s Hospital (GNCH) is more than just a building. Despite being one of the largest children’s hospitals in the UK, offering one of the widest ranges of children’s healthcare in the country, the GNCH is designed to feel as different from a traditional hospital as possible.

Towards the end of 2016, we look forward to the creation of the Great North Children’s Hospital Foundation, which will merge the existing GNCH Charitable Fund with the formerly independent Newcastle Children’s Hospital Charity which has supported the GNCH for many years. The Foundation will raise the profile of the work of the GNCH and further develop support from the general public and commercial sector in raising funds for the hospital.
Support for the GNCH comes from around the whole region
Thanks to our wonderful GNCH fundraisers...

Sunderland
Ten year old Faye Dunlop from Sunderland, a patient in Paediatric Rheumatology and a keen cyclist, raised £350 for our Arthritis in Children Fund at the GNCH by taking part in the Virgin Cyclone event, cycling 9.8 miles over the 6 bridges in Newcastle.

Teesside
Since 2013, little Sam Stone from Hartburn in Teesside has received care from the paediatric gastro ward as well as from the allergy and dermatology teams at the GNCH. Sam has a number of conditions that impact his daily life ranging from EGID, a gastro illness that limits what he can eat, to Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, a collagen-based illness that causes various issues ranging from hypermobility to dysmotility.

During 2016, Sam’s father Gavin is taking part in a Grand Slam Walking Challenge to raise money for Ward 1a in recognition of Sam’s treatment. Starting in May 2016, Gavin is taking on four 100km overnight walks: the London to Brighton, London to Cambridge, South Coast Challenge and Thames Path Walks. He has already raised over £500 for the GNCH and hopes to raise £2,500 in total.

“Everything the doctors and nurses do at the GNCH is with the aim of making Sam’s life happier and his conditions more manageable. As a family, we want to say thank you and this is our small way of doing so.” Gavin Stone

North Shields
In recognition of the treatment being given to his grandson Frankie, Michael Laidler organised a Fundraiser night at the Spring Gardens in North Shields in September which raised £2,000 for wards 4 and 14 Children’s Cancer Fund at the GNCH, including proceeds from the sale of charity wristbands.

Cullercoats
A cheque for £10,436.54 was presented to Ward 4 Children’s Cancer Fund from a Black Tie Charity Dinner & Auction held in Cullercoats organised by Mrs Abbie Latimer. Abbie’s niece, Katie Duff, is receiving treatment at the GNCH for a Wilms’ tumour, a form of kidney cancer which primarily affects children.

Hartlepool
Two weeks without electronic games for grateful Lennon

After being discharged by his physiotherapist following a second hip operation in May 2015, seven year old Lennon Hutchinson, from Hartlepool, decided he wanted to give a little something back to the people who “fixed him” - the Great North Children’s Hospital at the RVI in Newcastle.

Lennon took part in his own “Stoptober” giving up his Tablet, PlayStation3 and DS from 19 October until 2 November.

Said mum, Sarah: “Lennon has osteoporosis and has been under the care of the RVI for over two years. He has had two separate hip operations undertaken by his wonderful paediatric orthopaedic consultant, Mr De Geldhere, and both have been 100% successful.

“Being sponsored not to use any electronic games for two weeks was all Lennon’s idea as he wanted to say thank you to the Great North Children’s Hospital. We’re all very proud of him.”

To date Lennon has raised over £615 for the GNCH.
Ouseburn Schools give GNCH a fundraising boost

A Trust of schools in the east of Newcastle has given the Great North Children’s Hospital a fundraising boost with a significant donation of £5,426 and a commitment to support the hospital throughout the year.

The Ouseburn Learning Trust (OLT) is a charitable company of eight schools and six partner organisations formed in October 2014. The OLT nominated the GNCH as their focus for charitable fundraising for the 2015/16 academic year and to start things off, pupils handed over a giant cheque at the hospital last November.

Shirley Mills, Chair of the OLT said “I am absolutely thrilled by the response of pupils, staff and families from our schools to the challenge of raising funds for the GNCH. The GNCH plays such an important part in the lives of children here in our city and the wider North East region, we couldn’t think of a better local cause to support through our co-ordinated fundraising efforts. As a Trust, we work stronger together in enhancing the quality of education and care that children receive in our eight schools. It is working in this collaborative way which has enabled us to raise significant funds that are going to make a real difference to children receiving treatment at the GNCH. I’m immensely proud of the efforts of all our schools.”

Fundraising for the GNCH began at the OLT’s annual City Hall Music Concert in March 2015, where a substantial donation was made by families in attendance. In September 2015, a number of staff collected sponsorship by participating in the Great North Run and Hotspur and Ravenswood Primary Schools also added to the fundraising total with their own successful whole school running events alongside seventy children from Ravenswood Primary running in the mini or junior Great North Runs.

A team of teachers and staff from OLT schools have again pledged to run the 2016 Great North Run in aid of GNCH and will be easily spotted in their own custom-designed OLT/GNCH running vests which were unveiled at a photo-call at Ravenswood Primary School in Heaton in the Spring.

Dr Iain Johnstone, Clinical Director of the GNCH said: “We are proud that the Newcastle Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is a proactive trustee of the OLT and are delighted GNCH has been able to be a beneficiary in what is clearly such a strong working partnership. Huge thanks must go to the whole learning community at OLT for such an impressive collective fundraising effort. Their donation will make a real difference to patients here at the GNCH. We look forward to updating pupils, staff and their families on how their donations have been utilised and conveying our thanks at the 2016 OLT City Hall Music Concert.”

Chocolate Orange Charity Challenge 2015

The Great North Children’s Hospital was one of several of the Trust’s charitable funds and other local charities to benefit last year from the Department for Work and Pensions’ Chocolate Orange Challenge, a charity initiative set up and run by employees of the DWP to say thank you to hospital staff all over the country for the care of loved ones.

The challenge was started in 2011 by Chris Lamb, a DWP employee in the North West region. The story began when Chris bought one chocolate orange to say ‘Thank You’ to the physio who worked with his 4yr old son Elliott who sadly passed away in December 2010. The challenge has continued to grow ever since, with DWP employees being asked to donate £1 or a Chocolate Orange to a range of nominated charities in their own regions. The idea is that the Chocolate Oranges are shared by staff, patients and visitors in a small gesture to show appreciation in memory of loved ones.

As a result, over 850 chocolate oranges were collected by staff at the DWP Benton Park site, with hundreds delivered to the RVI and Freeman as a way of saying ‘Thank You’ for all the good work and support given.
Great North Run 2015

With thanks to all our GNCH runners and helpers – another Great North Success story! You are an amazing bunch!
‘GIRAFFE’ hope to inspire others to run the Great North Run for the Great North Children’s Hospital

It was highly appropriate that a team of six employees from the Giraffe restaurant chain should take on the Great North Run 2015 in aid of the Great North Children’s Hospital. Not only is a giraffe (by the name of ‘Fudge’) the official children’s hospital mascot, but the Giraffe restaurant’s ethos is to be family friendly and “a welcoming place where a smile goes a long way” – a perfect fit with the GNCH, which is itself designed to be as welcoming and as different from a traditional hospital as possible.

The Giraffe team, comprising five from the company’s café-style restaurant previously at Tesco Extra, Kingston Park, together with one colleague from Giraffe in Manchester, raised nearly £1,500 for the GNCH.

Speaking after the race, Kingston Park manager, Neil McElhone said:

“We had such a great day! Yes it was a little hot and yes we were all suffering on Monday but we really enjoyed the event. “Essentially we have relied on sponsorship from friends and family but we did a bit at the restaurant too. Kim and Steph baked cakes for a cake sale and raised £80 in one day. We also had a raffle for customers in the cafe.

“Special mention should be made of Louie Moore who raised almost £500 running the Great North Run dressed as a Giraffe, which in that heat must have been really hard. He managed to finish in just 1 hour 45 minutes which was the quickest of all of us. Amazing! “The event has really helped us bond as a team and we have all helped each other, comparing training plans and nutritional advice. I gave up chocolate for a few weeks leading up to the event which, I can tell you, wasn’t easy! We had a big range of ability in the team but everyone worked really hard and we are all very proud of ourselves and happy that we have contributed to a great cause. I would encourage anyone else thinking about doing it next year to definitely have a go.

“It was lovely to finish at the GNCH tent at the end of the race. The team applauded us all in and made sure we were all fed and watered, which was much appreciated. I’m sure some of us will do more events in the future - I know everyone is keen to beat their time next year.”

Jane Gibson, Directorate Manager for Children’s Services expressed her gratitude to the Giraffe team:

“We are so very grateful to the team of runners from Giraffe for their commitment and support of the GNCH. I’ve heard that the giraffe has the largest heart of any land mammal. How appropriate! Especially as we now have Fudge our giraffe mascot and what a perfect partnership.

“Actually, we were overwhelmed by the number of people who chose to run on our behalf this year, whether for the first time, to beat a personal best or just to finish the race. We applaud you all and thank you for thinking of us at the GNCH.

‘GIRAFFE’ hope to inspire others to run the Great North Run for the Great North Children’s Hospital

The Giraffe restaurant team from Kingston Park Tesco Extra. L-R: Neil McElhone, George Popple (Manchester Giraffe), Louie Moore, Michael Crozier, Kim Patterson and Stephanie Evans

The Giraffe team are welcomed to the GNCH tent at the finish of the Great North Run 2015. L-R: Neil McElhone and Louie Moore from Giraffe; Dr Michael McKean, Clinical Director Children’s Services; Joe Fell, Asst Directorate Manager; Jane Gibson, Directorate Manager and Julia Temple, Admin Manager

Photographs: Newcastle Hospitals

218 Review of the Year 2015/16
Help for Bereaved Families at the
Great North Children’s Hospital

The Child Bereavement Support Service provides counselling free of charge for any family whose child has died or is terminally ill and has been treated at the Great North Children’s Hospital at the RVI or at the Freeman Hospital. The service relies totally on charitable donations to the Child Bereavement Support Fund which is managed by the Newcastle Hospitals NHS Charity.

Child bereavement specialist, Paula Appleby, provides counselling for parents, carers, siblings and other family members, either on a one-to-one basis, or as a couple, a family unit or in a support group. Sessions can take place in the family home, or in comfortable private surroundings and specialist support can also be provided for children at their own school. Over the past nine years, Paula has helped over 400 families from across the north east and Cumbria, some referred by social workers, healthcare professionals, teachers, chaplains or self-referred by the families themselves.

Says Paula: “In our modern Western culture, children are not supposed to die before their parents and their grandparents, so when a child dies suddenly or if loved ones are faced with a child’s terminal illness, it’s sometimes impossible for them to make sense of it all. It’s every parent’s worst nightmare. Families are often overwhelmed with feelings of anger, grief, anxiety, guilt, despair and disbelief. They can feel numb, resentful, exhausted, in shock and in pain. People deal with bereavement in very different and personal ways but sometimes this can lead to additional problems including serious depression, marital stress or siblings wanting to drop out of education.

Twelve year old Charlotte Payne from Castle Eden in County Durham was only 9 when she lost her little brother Thomas. Tom was 8 when he died at the Freeman Hospital just 6 weeks after being first diagnosed with a heart condition. Paula worked with Charlotte and her mum and dad for over two years, including counselling Charlotte at school as well as at home. Charlotte now wants to become a nurse when she grows up to try and help poorly children. She says, “I used to get really angry. Paula helped me to control my feelings and now I can cope so much better when I get angry”. Charlotte’s mum adds, “The fact that Paula will come out to your house has got to be a major plus part of the service and essential for children.”

“Talking to someone outside the family who’s there just for them, to listen and not to judge, can sometimes be what bereaved parents and children need to support them through this difficult time.”

Leila and David Huntington from Kingston Park in Newcastle lost their first baby Oliver suddenly at the age of just 5 weeks. Oliver appeared to be a fit and healthy baby boy, however he died very suddenly and unexpectedly from an undetected heart condition. Leila and David took Oliver to Children’s A&E at the RVI as he didn’t appear to be his normal self. Despite the best efforts of the staff, Oliver died less than two hours after arriving at hospital. Paula worked with the couple for two years and saw them through a new pregnancy and the birth of a daughter, Sophie. Says David, “it helped us, not to forget, but to cope with the reality of it all and face the future again.”

Joanne Good from Dudley in Cramlington lost her 16 year old daughter Megan when Megan suffered pulmonary aspiration during her sleep following a night out with friends to celebrate New Year’s Eve. Joanne found Megan dead in her bedroom on New Year’s Day. Says Joanne, “the bouts of blame and guilt still come at me like a hurricane but Paula has helped and continues to help me realise that this wasn’t my fault and she helps me to find the truth in my own mind. Her support to myself and my family is vital. So many parents struggle with blame and guilt over how their child passed even when it is clear there was nothing they could do, it is soul-destroying.”

Julie Harper from Blyth in Northumberland lost her youngest son Liam in September 2011 at the age of 12. Liam had a soft tissue sarcoma known as rhabdomyosarcoma and had been treated at the RVI. Paula counselled Julie for a year and, to help raise funds for the Child Bereavement Support Fund, Julie took part in the Great North Swim on Lake Windermere as a way of saying thank you. Julie is a keen amateur photographer and has also kindly provided one of her own photos for the Child Bereavement Fund’s new donation leaflet.

The Fund has now launched a new online Just Giving account, text giving facility and donation leaflet to make it easier for anyone thinking of making a donation to the Child Bereavement Support Service to do so: www.justgiving.com/GNCH-child-bereavement-support-fund or text 70070 with the message CBSF70 and the amount (£3, £5 or £10) eg. CBSF70 £5

Photographs: Newcastle Hospitals
Baby Georgie inspires Consett Community to raise £10,000 for PICU

Little Georgie Yorke from Consett in County Durham had six operations before she was even eight months old. Georgie was born with oesophageal atresia and tracheoesophageal fistula, a rare condition which means her oesophagus was not connected to her stomach, causing air to pass from the windpipe to the oesophagus and stomach and stomach acid to pass into the lungs.

Georgie needed emergency surgery as soon as she was born and was treated in the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and on Ward 9 at the GNCH. Her mum, Stacey Ross explains: “Her feeding tube wasn’t connected. We were giving her a bottle and it was coming out of her nose and going everywhere. It was awful. It is every parent’s nightmare, but after spending a lot of time in intensive care and also on a surgical ward at the Great North Children’s Hospital and after another few operations our little girl is full of beans, full of smiles, and brings us all so much love.”

To say thank you for the care she has received, Georgie’s parents, Stacey Ross and Vic Yorke organised a charity fundraising event with live entertainment, tombolras, raffle, auction and more. Says Stacey: “The staff at the hospital were absolutely fantastic and we felt it was our time to show just how grateful we are for all they have done for us. At first we wanted to raise £1,000 and then we put the target up to £2,500, then £5,000. The response was unbelievable.”

Donations from customers visiting Stacey’s mum’s shop, Jula Crafts in Raglan Street, Consett, together with those from family, friends, the whole community and even complete strangers have culminated in a staggering total of over £10,000 being raised jointly for the PICU and Ward 9 in recognition of Georgie’s care.

Stacey said: “We had people coming up to us that we didn’t know, it wasn’t just family and friends. There were people sending money from York, from Ireland. It was unreal. People just seemed so generous - they just kept on giving.”
Family raises £1,250 for Children’s Intensive Care Unit to say thank you for Dylan’s life

Just one year ago, young Dylan Cook, 13, from Bedlington, was put into an induced coma at the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) at the Great North Children’s Hospital. Dylan had contracted a very common infection, Strep A, which set root in his ankle bone. Very quickly the infection spiralled out of control, taking over his whole body and ultimately putting his life in danger.

His mum, Lindsey Hindmarsh, explains: “We had been having a lovely bank holiday Easter Monday on Byth beach and in the park. Dylan just fell off a climbing frame and hurt his ankle. He plays football with Bedlington Town under 13s, the ‘Cobras’, so he’s used to getting little knocks and injuries. I told him to just walk it off.”

Later that night Dylan started feeling poorly and being sick, with a high temperature and this carried on for a few days. “We didn’t think for one minute that it had anything to do with his ankle,” says Lindsey. “It wasn’t even swollen. We thought he’d just picked up a bug.”

A year on and Dylan, a pupil at Bedlingtonshire Community High School, is once again fighting fit and playing football. To say thank you for the care that he received at the PICU and to all those in the local community who gave their support to the family, Lindsey organised an Easter family fundraiser at Bedlington Station Social Club on 28 March this year, with a disco, children’s entertainer, dancers and games. Dylan’s little sister Lauren, 8, was even sponsored to have 14 inches cut off her hair to help boost the funds.

A total of £1,250 was raised and Dylan and his eight year old twin siblings, Lauren and Justin, joined mum Lindsey and dad Jeff at the GNCH to present a cheque to the PICU Fund.

“Everyone has been so generous,” says Lindsey, “and I want to thank especially Bedlington Social Club who allowed us to use the club free of charge, Bedlington Masonic Lodge for their sponsorship and “Mister Twister” magician and entertainer aka Darren Bonas, as well as HTA Cheerleaders for keeping us entertained so brilliantly.”

Receiving the cheque on behalf of the PICU, Dr Iain Johnstone, Consultant Paediatric Intensivist and Joint Clinical Director of Children’s Services said: “We are really grateful to Lindsey and her family and friends for raising such a large sum of money. Donations like this directly benefit children and their parents and carers on our intensive care unit. It’s humbling to know that we have such support.”

I thought my whole world was crashing down around me,” explains Lindsey, “I went from watching him running around a football pitch to watching him lying there with machines keeping him going. It was the worst thing I have ever been through and I don’t think that I could have done it without the care and support given to us by all the staff in the PICU at the Great North Children’s Hospital. They were amazing. They kept us informed about everything and spoke to us in a way that could be understood when everything seemed to go over our heads. They kept us grounded. I will be forever in their debt for caring for Dylan when taking care of him was taken out of my control. They brought him back to me and for that I am eternally grateful. They offered fantastic care and support for all of us at a really stressful and upsetting time and their care and dedication saved Dylan’s life.”

A year on and Dylan, a pupil at Bedlingtonshire Community High School, is once again fighting fit and playing football. To say thank you for the care that he received at the PICU and to all those in the local community who gave their support to the family, Lindsey organised an Easter family fundraiser at Bedlington Station Social Club on 28 March this year, with a disco, children’s entertainer, dancers and games. Dylan’s little sister Lauren, 8, was even sponsored to have 14 inches cut off her hair to help boost the funds.

“I thought my whole world was crashing down around me,” explains Lindsey, “I went from watching him running around a football pitch to watching him lying there with machines keeping him going. It was the worst thing I have ever been through and I don’t think that I could have done it without the care and support given to us by all the staff in the PICU at the Great North Children’s Hospital. They were amazing. They kept us informed about everything and spoke to us in a way that could be understood when everything seemed to go over our heads. They kept us grounded. I will be forever in their debt for caring for Dylan when taking care of him was taken out of my control. They brought him back to me and for that I am eternally grateful. They offered fantastic care and support for all of us at a really stressful and upsetting time and their care and dedication saved Dylan’s life.”

A year on and Dylan, a pupil at Bedlingtonshire Community High School, is once again fighting fit and playing football. To say thank you for the care that he received at the PICU and to all those in the local community who gave their support to the family, Lindsey organised an Easter family fundraiser at Bedlington Station Social Club on 28 March this year, with a disco, children’s entertainer, dancers and games. Dylan’s little sister Lauren, 8, was even sponsored to have 14 inches cut off her hair to help boost the funds.
For the third year running, the Great North Children’s Hospital was once again privileged to be supported by Fenwick, Newcastle, during the Christmas season 2015.

Three separate Christmas cards, two vintage designs taken from archives and one luxury foil card were sold in the Northumberland Street store, with 5% of the proceeds going to the GNCH and to Medicinema.

A fourth card showing an image of the 2015 Fenwick Christmas Window display, resulted in a 50% split of total proceeds between GNCH and Medicinema.

Over the past three years, the total amount raised by Fenwick through the sale of their Christmas cards amounts to more than £5,000. A wonderful contribution to the Great North Children’s Hospital.

Culture Centre Coffee Shop supports the Great North Children’s Hospital

The Culture Centre Coffee Shop situated in the link building between the RVI’s New Victoria Wing and Peacock Hall serves between 200 and 300 staff per day in a bright and airy room that has more in common with a hotel conservatory than a staff canteen.

Being located so close to Children’s Services, the coffee shop Hospitality and Catering Assistants Katie, Shelley, Becky, Liz and Natasha were keen to have a Great North Children’s Hospital collection tin on the counter for customers to donate any loose change and help raise money for the Great North Children’s Hospital Fund.

A huge thank you from the Great North Children’s Hospital Fund!

www.justgiving.com/gnch
New emergency children’s cancer fund is ‘Inspired by Maya’

A Northumberland family whose own five year old daughter has recovered from blood cancer have set up an emergency fund inspired by their own experience to help parents who find themselves in a similar situation.

Little Maya Sehgal, from Ponteland, was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in December 2012, aged just a year old. Maya received treatment at the Great North Children’s Hospital until being given the all-clear at the end of 2015. Throughout her treatment, Maya’s parents Aman and Nisha, together with friends and family, have been tirelessly fundraising for the children’s cancer ward, raising in excess of £78,000 through a series of charity events and challenges.

The family’s fundraising has already provided a full-time post for three years within the Kay Kendal Leukaemia Service at Gateshead Citizens Advice Bureau. The service provides support and advice to children and young adults diagnosed with cancer throughout the North East region as far as south as Teesside, across to Cumbria and up to the Scottish border.

Now the family have also kick-started an emergency fund to be made available for families of children with cancer being treated at the GNCH to assist them in times of financial hardship.

The ‘Inspired by Maya’ Fund is administered by CLIC Sargent, the UK’s leading cancer charity for children, young people and their families and will be managed by Newcastle Hospitals NHS Charity, the appointed hospital charity for the RVI and Great North Children’s Hospital. Grants will be provided for families most in need to help with anything from travel costs and hospital parking charges, to accommodation, clothing, heating, childcare and food for parents and family members in emergency admission situations.

Gary McCoy, Social Work Team Leader at CLIC Sargent, explains why the emergency grant is important: “Having a child diagnosed with cancer is a frightening and emotional experience for any family but having to cope with the financial implications of treatment in such stressful circumstances is sometimes an overwhelming burden for families in need. We have great experience at CLIC Sargent in assessing the needs of families and will consider applications from anyone in financial hardship whose child is being treated at the Great North Children’s Hospital.”

Maya’s father, Aman Sehgal explains that having spent a lot of time at the GNCH during Maya’s treatment, the family wanted to give something back. “We’ve been on a real roller coaster over the past few years but Maya has always received the best possible care from the superb team on the children’s cancer ward and we are so very grateful to them.

“Nisha and I both recognise that we are extremely fortunate but, quite apart from the huge emotional and physical trauma you obviously go through as a parent when your child is diagnosed with cancer, we know that many families face unexpected financial consequences too. For example, anything from experiencing loss of income due to caring responsibilities to having to take time off work to attend appointments, increased travel expenses, costs associated with having to adapt the home environment and so on.

“Inspired by our experience with Maya, we just wanted to help other families who might be facing a similar situation.”

As part of their fundraising efforts in the past, the Sehgal family and friends have taken part in the Great North Run (a team of 22 in 2013) and held several major fundraising events including a Black Tie Ball and Champagne Reception at the Civic Centre and a pamper day at the Vermont Hotel on the Quayside.

They have vowed to continue fundraising for children’s cancer causes in the North East and hope that others will be ‘Inspired by Maya’ to do likewise, helping to ensure that the emergency grant continues to be available for the most needy families well into the future.

A Just Giving page has been set up for donations at www.JustGiving.com/Inspired-by-Maya and for more information on how to make a donation or organise a fundraising event for the Inspired by Maya Fund, email charity.matters@nuth.nhs.uk or ring Charitable Funds at Newcastle Hospitals on 0191 213 7235.

Families who may wish to apply for an emergency grant should speak to their designated CLIC Sargent social worker in the first instance to discuss their needs.
The Grafters Club is a club for children and their families in the North East and Cumbria who have experienced burn injuries. The club arranges activities to give children an opportunity to try new things, learn new skills and build their confidence and self-esteem. Twice a year, the club sends out its own newsletter, ‘the Telegraft’ to all members with details of fundraising events, competitions, the annual Christmas party, family days out, donations and supporters.
The Regional Children and Young People’s Kidney team, based at the Great North Children’s Hospital, looks after young patients and their families from all over the region, from Berwick in the north, Whitehaven in the west and down to North Yorkshire in the south, covering a population of approximately 3.2 million. The team treats children with chronic and acute renal failure, those requiring dialysis and transplantation and those with many other types of kidney disease.

Their dedicated charitable fund is the Children and Young People’s Kidney Fund. In the past, donations have been used to fund the production of a dialysis teaching video, run study days for teachers and health visitors, subsidise children to attend the annual unit holiday, fund the development of a haemodialysis machine for newborns, buy equipment such as blood pressure machines and scales for home use as well as supporting research projects.

Baldy Marvellous Fundraiser for Children’s Kidney Fund!

With over a million hits on YouTube and two albums to their name, The Baldy Holly Band are well known in the North East of England as a gutsy Rock ‘n’ Roll outfit who play a variety of 1950s classics from the likes of Buddy Holly, Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, Gene Vincent and Eddie Cochran.

Much in demand for weddings, corporate events and outdoor festivals, the band is used to undertaking charitable commitments but it was for very personal reasons that lead singer, Jamie Bell (aka ‘Baldy Holly’) approached the Children and Young People’s Kidney Fund in March 2016 with plans to organise a fundraiser at the Newcastle Companions Club.

Jamie’s son Dylan (now aged 18) had to have a diseased kidney removed and a bladder operation at the age of three with continued treatment at the GNCH for many years. Dylan’s treatment by the Children and Young People’s Kidney team was so successful that he went on to become British Junior Shot Put Champion.

Jamie’s colleague at Newcastle City Council, Carl Rutter, who helped to organise the fundraiser has a daughter who also has extensive kidney problems and continues to receive treatment. She’s now a successful dancer thanks to the treatment she has received at the Royal Victoria Infirmary.

Says Jamie Bell: “It is for these reasons that your charitable fund has a very personal connection for Carl and myself and we are extremely eager and hopeful to make this event a great success.”

And a success it certainly was... The Baldy Holly Charity Rock ‘n’ Roll Evening raised a magnificent £1,520 including proceeds from a raffle and auction and with all involved giving their time free of charge, including a 45 minute set from female soloist Jamie-Lee Duffy from Tynemouth. The organiser are also very grateful to the Companions Club who provided the room free of charge for the evening.
A robot designed to encourage the movement of children’s arms using video games is being used at the Great North Children’s Hospital to rehabilitate children with brain injuries.

The state of the art ‘Tyromotion Diego’ robotic therapy device from Austria is a UK first for the GNCH and was made possible with funding of £47,500 from the Newcastle Healthcare Charity, (now part of the Trust’s dedicated Newcastle Hospitals NHS Charity).

The robot works by providing partial support for a child’s arms with overhead cables from a portable stand, whilst incorporating sophisticated sensors to track elbow and wrist positions. This information is used to create virtual reality games on the computer screen where the child can move his or her ‘arms’ more effectively than they can in reality. With this partial assistance the child can begin to practise and re-learn movements helping them to recover more quickly.

Children can play a variety of video games, appropriate to their age, interest and the degree to which they cause fatigue.

The ‘gaming’ nature of the device is something that is familiar and reassuring to the child and the competitive element, attempting to improve upon previous best scores, motivates and engages the child, stimulating more practice attempts. The result is that more prolonged periods of sustained practice can be achieved than in conventional gym-based therapy sessions.

Speaking at the robot’s first public demonstration at the GNCH in December 2015, Dr Rob Forsyth, Consultant and Senior Lecturer in Child Neurology said:

"Every year in the UK some 1,300 children are diagnosed with cerebral palsy. A similar number of older children also acquire significant brain injury – from strokes, road traffic accidents or meningitis for example. This second group with so-called acquired brain injury (ABI) is growing. We are getting better at treating severe acute illnesses like meningitis and some children who in the past would have died are now surviving, but unfortunately with an injury to their brain."

"Robotic devices are an increasingly accepted part of 21st century rehabilitation in an adult context, yet there are very few paediatric centres using them anywhere in Europe. It is clear from basic research into the neuroscience of recovery after brain injury that effective rehabilitation requires many more repetitions of practice movements than are typically achieved in conventional rehabilitation sessions."

"We have been trialling the ‘Diego’ here at the GNCH since September 2015 and have been very encouraged by the results. Newcastle’s
research into the causes, treatment and rehabilitation of brain injury in children (including cerebral palsy, stroke and traumatic brain injury) has an international reputation and this new robotic therapy system will help cement Newcastle’s reputation in this area.”

Senior paediatric physiotherapists and occupational therapists have been closely involved in the evaluation of the system. Deb Gardner, an Advanced Paediatric Occupational Therapist working at the GNCH, with specialism in neurology and acquired brain injury in children, commented:

“During the trial stage, we were immediately impressed by the ability of the Tyromotion Diego robot to engage and motivate children. This will now become part of our therapy team’s ‘toolbox’ for use both by children rehabilitating in the paediatric Acquired Brain Injury service on Ward 1b and outpatients with cerebral palsy using the upper limb service of the Child Development Centre. The system is extremely portable and flexible and we can quickly adjust the degree of support and task difficulty as a child improves. We can also monitor performance over time which allows us to measure and document progress.”

Dr Rob Forsyth paid tribute to the role of charitable funding in the ability of the Trust to purchase the Tyromotion Diego system:

“We are immensely grateful to the Newcastle Healthcare Charity which funded the purchase of this equipment. This is precisely what charitable funding is all about in the health service. It is there to support the NHS in providing additional equipment and services which either enhance our existing provision or enable us to keep up to date with the very latest treatments and technologies, as in this case.

“Advances in medicine move on quickly and new technologies and treatments are coming on stream all the time. We constantly strive to be ahead of the game here in Newcastle, but we can only do this with the help of charitable funding which enables us to buy state-of-the-art equipment far more quickly than could be done with NHS funding alone. Anyone donating to any of our hospital charitable funds is enabling us to achieve this.

“Our next goal is to raise funds for a companion device to the Diego which will help with finger movement as well as the whole arm reaching provided by this system.”

Amazing Grace shows how it’s done

Little Grace McShane, aged 7, from Blyth in Northumberland enjoyed being the focus of attention in the media when the Diego rehabilitation robot was unveiled at the Great North Children’s Hospital. The Diego robot has been an integral part of Grace’s therapy, providing a real motivational factor in her recovery.

In August 2015, Grace, then aged 6, returned from a holiday in Portugal with her family (Mum Sarah Fairbairn, Dad Derek McShane and big sister Cathy, aged 11). On arriving home, Grace was tearful, complaining of a headache and feeling poorly, so her mum Sarah put her to bed, thinking she was tired from the journey. In the morning, however, she was unable to rouse Grace and called an ambulance.

Grace was taken to A&E in Cramlington where she was reported as drowsy and not using her left side, although responding to commands. She was incubated, ventilated and transferred to the PICU (paediatric intensive care unit) at the GNCH on 17 August 2015. Her CT scan showed a large bleed on the brain (AVM).

On 22 August Grace was transferred to Ward 1b at the GNCH which is the paediatric neuro ward. The bleed had caused left-sided facial palsy and left upper and lower limb weakness.

Grace was an inpatient in Ward 1b from 22 August until 20 November and celebrated her 7th birthday with a party on the ward. Thanks to Deb Gardner, the team of paediatric occupational therapists at the GNCH and of course, Diego, Grace now walks independently, manages stairs with supervision and is having a phased return to school.

Grace McShane with mum and dad, Sarah and Derek, and Advanced Paediatric Occupational Therapist, Deb Gardner

Photos: Newcastle Hospitals
Rothbury cyclists take on “LEJOG” challenge for CHIEF

A team of amateur cyclists from Rothbury in Northumberland took on the gruelling challenge of cycling nearly 1,000 miles from Land’s End to John O’Groats to raise money for the Children’s Head Injury Equipment Fund (CHIEF) at the Great North Children’s Hospital.

Keith Storey, Adrian Newbould, Byron Beatty, Graham Bates and Heath Cairns along with their support driver Steve Williams have been friends for many years and in 2015 decided to really challenge their cycling skills whilst raising money for a good cause. Heath’s wife Sharon is a Senior Sister at the GNCH on Ward 1b, the regional neuroscience unit specialising in the treatment and rehabilitation of children with head injuries.

The “LEJOG” fundraising team set off on their End-to-End challenge on 10 June and then pedalled their way through Cornwall, over Dartmoor and north along the Welsh border, skirting the Lake District into Scotland, via lochs and the Highlands to the north coast and John O’Groats. In all, they covered roughly 1,000 miles in just one week passing through some of the most stunning and remote countryside in the British Isles.

Byron Beatty, a Partner with Executive Recruitment firm Drayton Partners explained why the friends chose to raise money for CHIEF: “The team at the Great North Children’s Hospital provide a fantastic level of care and we wanted to help them by contributing to the purchase of equipment to help in the rehabilitation of children with brain injuries. Over the last 5 years we have supported the children by fundraising through events like the Scottish coast-to-coast (Rat Race) and the London Ride 24 event but nothing compared to cycling this far!

“We’ve seen first-hand the difficulties families face when they have a loved one’s life completely changed through a brain injury and we’re all really lucky to have had the opportunity to undertake this challenge. We’ve had wonderful support, with donations from Storey & Edmondson’s (Builders) Ltd, EE, Northumbrian Water, Drayton Partners, Spayne Lindsay & Co and our local pub, the Newcastle House, who ran a raffle to support our fundraising."

The lad’s LEJOG challenge has already raised over £9,500 for CHIEF and they are hoping to be able to help fund the purchase of balance and hand co-ordination rehabilitation equipment and an electric wheelchair.

The ‘LEJOG’ cyclists, L to R: Ade Newbould, Graham Bates, Keith Storey, Steve Williams (support driver), Byron Beatty, Heath Cairns