

# NEWSLETTER #34

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## Celebrating 25 Years of Innovation & Best Practice in Community Hospitals

### RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE: COMMUNITY HOSPITALS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL AWARDS 2025

For the past 25 years, the Community Hospitals Association has proudly recognised the dedication, [innovation and best practices](#) shaping community hospital care across the UK.

As we mark this special anniversary, we reflect on the remarkable achievements of the past while looking ahead to another year of celebrating excellence.



JULIA FAIRHALL WITH WINNERS OF THE 2024 INNOVATION & BEST PRACTICE AWARDS AT THE CHA NATIONAL CONFERENCE IN GLOUCESTER

The CHA Innovation & Best Practice Awards Programme showcases the inspiring work of community hospital teams both clinical and non-clinical who go above and beyond to enhance both patient care, staff health and wellbeing, and initiatives that support local communities. These initiatives do not have to be large-scale projects - small changes that make a meaningful difference to patients, staff and services are equally valued.

This year, we are excited to introduce five key award categories alongside a special **25th Year Anniversary President Award**, which will be selected from all submissions to honour this milestone year.

### AWARD CATEGORIES 2025

- ◆ **Green Initiative** - Recognising sustainable practices and environmental improvements.
- ◆ **Quality Improvement in Community Hospitals** - Highlighting projects that enhance patient safety, care and service outcomes.
- ◆ **Integration and Continuity of Care** - Showcasing effective collaboration across services to ensure seamless patient experiences.
- ◆ **Person-Centred Care (No Decision About Me Without Me)** - Celebrating initiatives that actively involve patients in decisions about their care.
- ◆ **Innovative Technology in Community Hospitals** - Recognising the use of technology to improve care, efficiency, and accessibility.
- ◆ **25th Year Anniversary President Award** - A special award chosen from all submissions to mark this milestone year.

Over the years, these awards have shone a light on countless groundbreaking initiatives, from pioneering digital health solutions to patient-centred care models and sustainability efforts that are transforming healthcare delivery.

We'd love to hear about the work you're proud of - whether it's a small change or something more wide-reaching. Every entry helps to show the strength of our community hospitals.

Please send in your submission by **12 noon on Monday 6th May 2025**

If you'd like to discuss an entry, please email us [info@communityhospitals.net](mailto:info@communityhospitals.net)

[FULL DETAILS ON HOW TO ENTER ARE HERE.](#)

IBPA LEAD, JULIA FAIRHALL RN QN



### CHA Events

#### CHA Q SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP BEST PRACTICE DISCUSSIONS

We are very pleased to host regular Special Interest Group discussions on best practice for community hospitals staff and supporters. These free online discussions are made possible with the support of Q, for which we are very grateful. Thank you very much to our recent SIG speakers.



In March, we were pleased to welcome Ami Cook and Debbie Poulston from Paulton and Bath Community Hospitals to share their award-winning Cubii Project. They spoke about how their creative use of Cubii exercise machines is helping to reduce deconditioning and support patient recovery. Session chair Evelyn Prodger RN QN reflected, *"...such a good example of what happens when people get creative and innovate."* If you missed their session, Ami and Debbie will be presenting their work at this year's CHA National Conference in Swindon on 9th and 10th October. We look forward to welcoming them then!

For the April SIG discussion we welcomed Johanna Barnes, Advanced Practitioner at Tewkesbury Community Hospital, Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust, who led an engaging discussion on her team's quality improvement project on delirium screening. The project highlighted how screening rates have risen to nearly 70% using the 4AT tool. Johanna was also an Innovation and Best Practice winner in 2024. The session explored challenges, practical tools like PINCH-ME, and the importance of linking physical and mental health. It was a really great example of shared learning in action. Many thanks to Johanna and all who took part for such an engaging and inspiring session. Johanna will also be joining us at this year's CHA National Conference, and we look forward to hearing more about how the project has progressed. [Join our SIG in Q here.](#)

#### What is delirium?

Delirium is a common clinical syndrome involving disturbances in cognitive function, perception, attention and consciousness.

Delirium may have fluctuating course and develop over hours or days.



#### UPCOMING SIG DISCUSSIONS -



JOIN US ON **7TH MAY** FOR A CHA Q SIG EVENT WHERE LUCY SOMERVILLE WILL SHARE SCFT'S INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO HCSW DEVELOPMENT THROUGH A SIX-MONTH PRECEPTORSHIP PROGRAMME TRANSFORMING SUPPORT, SKILLS AND STAFF RETENTION. [READ MORE HERE](#) MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW ON HOW TO REGISTER.



ON **2ND JULY**, MARC JOBSON FROM SEACHANGE DEVON WILL SHARE BUDLEIGH HOSPITAL'S JOURNEY FROM COMMUNITY HOSPITAL TO A THRIVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING HUB, HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPACT AND CHALLENGES FACED ALONG THE WAY.



### New Networking & Leadership Webinars



We are pleased to introduce a new series of online sessions designed to bring together senior healthcare colleagues from community hospitals with respected organisations and industry partners. Each webinar is shaped around a shared interest or challenge, and includes a short talk followed by an open discussion and time to ask questions. These sessions are a chance to hear directly from organisations who want to work with community hospitals in meaningful ways. Whether it's exploring new tools, ways of working or fresh ideas, the focus will always be on what's helpful, practical and relevant to our hospitals and the people we care for. If you're in a leadership role, involved in developing services, or simply interested in how we can work better together, you're warmly invited to join us. These events are free to attend.

#### SUPPORTING PATIENT NUTRITION - THE ROLE OF SNACKING, WEDNESDAY 21ST MAY AT 12 NOON

With Brett Fowler from Queensland Bakery and NHS Senior Dietitian Noor Al-Refae

Join us for a practical session on the role of nutritious snacks in supporting patient recovery, led by Queensland Bakery and NHS dietitian Noor Al-Refae. The session will be chaired by Dr Kirsty Protherough.



NOOR AL-REFAE



BRETT FOWLER

*"Aimed at NHS caterers, catering managers and dietitians, Queensland Bakery's Brett Fowler and NHS Senior Dietitian, Noor Al-Refae will lead a discussion on the importance of snacking for patient nutrition and improved patient outcomes. With BDA standards, Bapen and The Independent NHS Review of Hospital Food recommending snacks be provided throughout the day to NHS patients, Queensland has recently launched Marybake Health, a range of nutritious, dietitian and clinician approved snacks developed specifically for the hospital sector. The Marybake Health range helps meet the needs of patients' individual nutritional needs, with vegan and higher protein options, and more in development."*

[REGISTER HERE](#)



## National Conference 2025 - updates!



We are very pleased to confirm the CHA National Conference 2025 will take place at the **Delta Marriott Hotel in Swindon** on 9th and 10th October 2025. This event will be a wonderful opportunity for NHS Trusts, Leagues of Friends and providers from community hospitals across the country to come together. This year's theme, **'Community Hospitals - integrating care, building capacity'** will highlight and celebrate the vital role of community hospitals in bridging healthcare services and communities across the four nations.

### JOIN THE WAITING LIST!

Bookings will open soon, but in the meantime, we encourage our members to join the National Conference waiting list. This secures your place at the event. As soon as the booking opens, you will be notified. [JOIN THE WAITING LIST HERE.](#)



[JOIN THE WAITING LIST](#)

### CALL FOR SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS

We are also inviting our network to share details of any sponsors or suppliers who would benefit from meeting staff from community hospitals at the conference. This year, sponsors will have the chance to be part of our **Sponsor Spotlight**, where they can showcase their products and services to a wide audience. It's a fantastic opportunity for companies to demonstrate their equipment, products and services and engage with a range of community hospitals staff.

Do share our [SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES BROCHURE](#) with any suppliers you think might be interested in engaging.

We look forward to seeing you in October!

## Member queries - possible discussion topics

We recently received some queries that we believe could lead to meaningful Special Interest Group discussion topics. We'd be grateful for your input on the following and would also like to gauge interest in hosting online sessions to discuss them further.

**CREATIVE APPROACHES TO DISCHARGE PATHWAYS** - We're keen to hear from anyone who has experience with successful approaches to delivering the four discharge pathways from hospital, particularly those aimed at helping patients leave hospital sooner. Of particular interest are those solutions that assist patients who are waiting for care home beds.

**RETHINKING RISK APPETITE IN HEALTHCARE** - Another important topic is rethinking risk appetite in areas such as discharge pathways. We're looking for examples of alternative ways of working that could support healthcare professionals in making decisions, as well as any evaluations or academic research that explore these new approaches.

If you'd like to contribute to these queries or share your experiences as part of an online discussion, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please get in touch with us at [info@communityhospitals.net](mailto:info@communityhospitals.net). Your feedback and insights are invaluable in shaping this conversation.

## Championing Community Hospitals

We were contacted recently by CHA member and retired Theatre Sister, Jane Crowther who alerted us to a letter published in The Times newspaper by a retired GP from Cornwall. The letter expressed concern over the closure of local community hospitals, which, according to the author, were shut down due to cost-cutting measures more than a decade ago with the loss of vital healthcare services. In her response, Jane highlighted the ongoing success of community hospitals in Gloucestershire and continue to offer excellent care to local people, despite a reduction in bed numbers. Jane shared her own experience volunteering in Tewkesbury Community Hospital, where patients in the 20-bed ward are receiving high-quality care, particularly in rehabilitation. She expressed hope that the vital services provided by community hospitals would continue to thrive, offering essential care for years to come.

Thank you Jane for your ongoing support and advocacy of community hospitals!



JANE CROWTHER (2ND RIGHT) WITH PAST CHA PRESIDENT DR HELEN TUCKER (FAR LEFT), DR ANDREW CROWTHER AND CURRENT CHA PRESIDENT DR DAVID SEAMARK (FAR RIGHT)

## Blog

Thank you very much to Chris and Marc for sharing their insightful blog posts.

In his blog, Chris Humphris, CHA Associate Committee Member, discusses the ongoing battle to restore inpatient beds and services at the Ellen Badger Hospital in Shipston on Stour. Despite initial plans in 2018 to transform the hospital into a full community hub, recent decisions have seen beds moved to Leamington Hospital. *The Beds4Badger* group, supported by the local community, continues to fight for the restoration of the original vision, with the ICB launching a rural services group in response to their efforts. The campaign has also gained attention with a rather unusual but highly effective media partner - meet the camel! [Read Chris' blog here](#)



IMAGES - BED FOR BADGER



In his blog, Marc Jobson, Head of Seachange Devon, shares how the charity has transformed the former Budleigh Salterton Cottage Hospital into a thriving community hub. Offering NHS outpatient services, GP care, and wellness activities, Seachange plays a crucial role in local health, reducing the need for travel to larger hospitals. The focus on preventative care and early intervention not only improves health but also saves the NHS money. Despite this, Seachange receives no direct funding from the Integrated Care Board (ICB), relying instead on charity funds to support its vital work. [Read more here.](#) Marc will be leading a Special Interest Group discussion about Seachange on 2nd July. More details to follow.



## Submission - evaluation of palliative care in England



Dr David Seamark, President of the Community Hospitals Association has submitted a response to the Health and Social Care Committee's Independent Expert Panel in their [evaluation of palliative care in England](#)

Community hospitals play a vital role in palliative and end of life care, particularly in rural and small-town communities. They provide care close to home, ensuring patients receive compassionate support from familiar staff. Many act as 'rural hospices', offering symptom control, emotional and spiritual care, and access to specialist teams. As part of

the local community, they provide a valued alternative to acute hospitals. However, closures and bed reductions threaten this essential service. The CHA urges policymakers to recognise and protect the role of community hospitals in delivering high-quality palliative care.

[Read the full submission here.](#)





## CHA President at IFIC25 Lisbon 14th -16th May



Dr David Seamark, President of the Community Hospitals Association, will be speaking at the 25th International Conference on Integrated Care in Lisbon, Portugal from 14-16 May 2025. Dr. Seamark will present as part of Session 9.C: *Leveraging the Potential of Community Hospitals, in association with the Intermediate Care Special Interest Group (SIG)*. His session, titled "*Celebrating Care Closer to Home: Launching a new international network for Community Hospitals*", will highlight the vital role community hospitals play in providing integrated, sustainable care closer to home. [Read more here](#)

## CHA Member survey findings & support the CHA



Thank you very much to CHA members who took part in our recent survey. The results are clear - CHA membership is highly valued for the networking opportunities and educational resources it provides. 71% of members highlighted networking as a key benefit and 67% praised our free educational webinars. Members also appreciate the advocacy for community hospitals and regular updates, which keep everyone connected and informed. In terms of overall satisfaction, we're pleased to report that an incredible 96% of responses were satisfied and very satisfied with the CHA overall. One member shared - "*Being a member of the CHA is so valuable and I have benefited a lot from it, being able to ask other members questions and help with particular issues.*"

Looking ahead, members are eager to expand networking events, have more access to educational webinars and tools for staff training. There's also strong interest in increasing member involvement and creating more special interest groups, especially for ACPs and GPs. Thank you to everyone for sharing what you value most about the CHA!

**Support the CHA - we want to continue the highly valued work to support our community hospitals colleagues. You can now donate to support our on-going work. [Donate now!](#)**



Support the CHA –  
Strengthening Community  
Hospitals

Entered by customer

Donate

## News

The [CHA collates news articles](#) on community hospitals from a range of sources such as notifications from our members and from media coverage. Please do send us any news items you would like us to share with the CHA network.

Work has begun on a new Community Diagnostic Centre at Withington Community Hospital (pictured), which will provide 85,000 tests annually when it opens in 2026, improving access to life-saving diagnostics. A new £19m Willow Therapy Unit has opened at Norwich Community Hospital, offering 48 beds for rehabilitative care to help ease pressure on acute hospitals.



The new West Wing at Western Community Hospital has been officially opened Paralympic champion Aaron Phipps (pictured), providing two specialist rehabilitation wards to support patient recovery and independence. The new £5.1m Community Diagnostic Centre at Ilkeston Community Hospital is easing pressure on local services and offering state-of-the-art diagnostic tests, including a new open MRI scanner.

Clatterbridge Hospitals League of Friends (pictured) is celebrating 70 years of vital community support, and is seeking new volunteers to help continue their important work. Berwick Community Hospital will feature a new mobile sculpture made from recycled NHS waste, celebrating the town's heritage and supporting community wellbeing.



[READ ALL THE NEWS HERE!](#)

**WE'D LOVE TO SHARE YOUR NEWS; DO GET IN TOUCH WITH US!**

## Join Us on Bluesky!

We're excited to announce we are now on Bluesky! Follow us on our new account [@commhospassocuk.bsky.social](https://commhospassocuk.bsky.social) to stay up to date with the latest news, updates and community discussions.

This is a great place to connect with others in the sector, share insights and keep the conversation going. Join us today and be part of the CHA community on this exciting new platform!

[Community Hospitals Association UK \(@commhospassocuk.bsky.social\)](https://commhospassocuk.bsky.social) — Bluesky



**Community Hospitals Association UK**

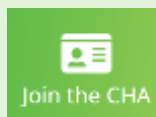
@commhospassocuk.bsky.social

29 followers 72 following 14 posts

The Community Hospitals Association is an independent voluntary membership organisation. Established over 50 years ago, the CHA is the unique voice for community hospitals - their services, staff, patients and communities.

## Join our Networks

If you are not already a member, you are very welcome to join us.



- ♦ CHA personal [individual lifetime member](#) (free).
- ♦ We also offer [membership to organisations](#) such as NHS Trusts and Leagues of Community Hospital Friends. There is a small fee for this.
- ♦ You are welcome to join our [Community Hospital Special Interest Group](#) within the Q Community with a focus on Quality Improvement and sharing good practice.

For any enquiries and further information, please contact [eleonor@communityhospitals.net](mailto:eleonor@communityhospitals.net)

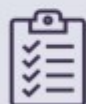
Thank you to SystmOne for their support of this newsletter. Brigid is the new app for clinicians using SystmOne.



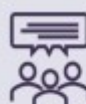
# Care Plans, Reinvented for Brigid.



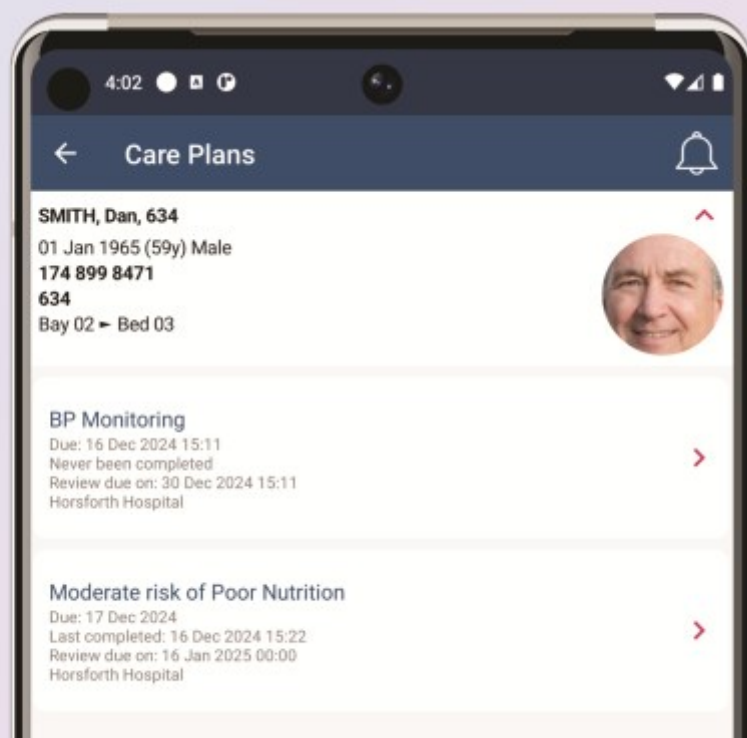
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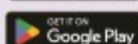
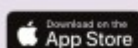


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