

**Community Hospital Association (CHA)  
Chairperson's Report  
2023-2024**

*Dear Members, Colleagues, and Friends of the Community Hospital Association,*


I am pleased to present this report for the period of April 2023 to April 2024, a year marked by progress, collaboration, and innovation as we continue to support and enhance the role of community hospitals in our healthcare system.


**Achievements and Progress**


- **Strengthening Partnerships and Collaborations**


Over the past year, CHA has focused on strengthening relationships with key stakeholders.


- Our joint events and webinars have provided platforms for discussing innovations and best practices in community care. We have engaged with many different trusts through our Special Interest Groups (SIGs), which have included showcasing best practices from several trusts, such as:

 **Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust:** Highlighting their approach to integrating community services with acute care - 'Gloucestershire: a vibrant and thriving community hospital community' with Dawn Allen, Service Director for Community Hospitals, Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust.

 **Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust:** innovations in community rehabilitation and end-of-life care- 'National Programmes in Action in Community Hospitals - End PJ Paralysis' Steffi Bailey Advanced Clinical Practitioner & Rehabilitation Transformation Lead from Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust, and patient safety improvements with EPMA rollout - Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration roll out and Careflow Medicines Management Integration with Rebecca Gosrani, Senior Clinical Pharmacist Digital & team. SCFT also presented a SIG on 'Giving Health Care Support Workers a Voice: Introduction of a Health Care Support Worker education and development team with Julia Fairhall, Assistant Director of Nursing and CHA Committee Member.

 **Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust:** Sharing their award-winning approach to reducing hospitals falls - Developing the role of a 'Meaningful Activities Coordinator' with Anna Mitchell, Lead Meaningful Activities Coordinator, Launceston Hospital, Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. We also heard about 'Good Practice in Wound Management' with Sally Oxley Clinical Team Lead, Wound Management Clinic, Camborne & Redruth Community Hospital, Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

 **Powys Teaching Health Board:** Sharing quality improvement tools in pharmacy - Pharmacy Intervention Recording Tool with Rafael Baptista, Clinical Pharmacist, Powys Teaching Health Board, NHS Wales

 **Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust:** 'Making Changes Locally, Contributing Nationally - Exploring Research And Innovation In Community Hospitals' with Dr Christine Burt - PhD, M MedSci, BSc, Director of Research and Innovation, Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

We have also actively engaged with key national organisations such as the British Geriatric Society (BGS), the End of Life Coalition, and Professor Chris Whitty, the Chief Medical Officer for England. These collaborations have strengthened our advocacy efforts for Community Hospitals ensuring their role is well represented in national healthcare discussions.

Furthermore, we have continued to support and engage with local League of Friends groups, providing vital support and guidance through the dedicated work of Chris Humphries. His involvement has been crucial in fostering strong relationships and ensuring community support for hospitals across the country.

## 2. Advocacy and Policy Influence

CHA has continued to advocate for the importance of community hospitals in delivering integrated care, particularly for older adults and those with long-term conditions.

We met with Chris Whitty and emphasised the need for sustainable funding, workforce support, and infrastructure investment within Community Hospitals.

We have also cooperated with the **Magenta Inquiry**, a criminal investigation related to the events at Gosport War Memorial Hospital, by providing a comprehensive digitalised database to support the inquiry. This contribution has helped to highlight specific issues that community hospitals can face regarding medical governance and the importance of maintaining high standards of care and accountability.

Looking ahead, one of our key priorities is to advocate for the development and implementation of a **Community Hospital National Strategy**. Such a strategy would ensure a cohesive approach to the role of community hospitals within the wider NHS framework, provide clarity on their funding and operational models, and highlight their value in delivering high-quality, localised care. We believe that a national strategy will help to secure the future of community hospitals, ensuring they remain a cornerstone of community-based healthcare.

## 3. Research and Innovation

Recent publications from CHA committee include:

- Hendry, A., Kurpas, D., Munoz, S.-A. and Tucker, H. (2024), "Guest editorial: Integrated care in rural, remote or island communities", *Journal of Integrated Care*, Vol. 32 No. 1, pp. 1-  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JICA-02-2024-096>
- *Prodger, E., Greenwood S. **Enhancing the care of older people: role of community-hospitals** JCN2024, Vol 38, No 1*
- *The Decarbonisation of Rye Hospital Jo Posnette CHA committee member and Trustee of Rye Hospital. Barry Nealon, Chair of Rye Hospital. Conference Presentation "Our People Our Planet" Sept 2023  
[https://issuu.com/ourpeopleourplanet/docs/our\\_people\\_our\\_planet\\_resource\\_pack\\_2023](https://issuu.com/ourpeopleourplanet/docs/our_people_our_planet_resource_pack_2023)*
- *Conference Presentation CNETO Esperienza UK degli Ospedali di Comunità The UK experience of Community Hospitals, Dr Helen Tucker – Community Hospitals Association, Feb 2023*
- OA significant paper from our COVID-19 study was 2022 Seamark DA, Prodger E, Jay T, et al Response of UK community hospitals to the COVID-19 pandemic: an appreciative inquiry BMJ Open Quality 2022;11:e001958. doi: 10.1136/bmjog-2022-001958

#### **4. Enhancing Member Engagement**

Member engagement has been a key priority for us this year. We have increased communication through regular newsletters, virtual forums, and social media channels to keep our members informed and connected.

Our social media presence continues to grow, particularly on LinkedIn and Twitter, helping to raise awareness and engage a wider audience.

LinkedIn followers: 468 followers and 235 LinkedIn newsletter subscribers.

Twitter followers: 1835

Facebook followers: 244

Special Interest Group in Q members: 66

Community Hospital Association Personal Members: 379

Community Hospital Association Organisational Members: 20

The CHA YouTube channel will be instrumental in sharing video content from webinars, interviews, and conference highlights, providing valuable insights to a wider audience.

The CHA Annual Conference, scheduled for October 2024, promises to be a significant event in our calendar.

#### **5. International Links**

We have also nurtured international links with partners in **Italy, Japan, Sweden and Africa**, resulting in Japanese community hospital doctors from Kaito attending our National Conference. These connections provide a valuable opportunity for cross-cultural exchange and sharing of best practices in community healthcare.

#### **CHA National Conference 2024**

We are delighted to announce the upcoming **CHA National Conference**, taking place on the **10th and 11th of October 2024** at **The Cheltenham Chase Hotel, Gloucester**. This will be our first in-person conference since 2017, themed "Community Hospitals: Leading Best Practices Today, Shaping the Healthcare of Tomorrow."

The conference will bring together community hospital leaders, healthcare professionals, and stakeholders to connect, share, learn, and influence. The programme includes keynote speakers, interactive workshops, and networking opportunities designed to foster collaboration and innovation in community healthcare.

#### **Innovation and Best Practice Awards 2024**

A highlight of the conference will be the **CHA Innovation and Best Practice Awards 2024**, recognising outstanding achievements and innovative practices in community hospitals.

The awards will be presented during celebrating the creativity and commitment of those working to enhance care delivery.

#### **5. Financial Stability and Growth**

CHA remains in a strong financial position, thanks to prudent management and diversified funding streams.

We have secured additional funding through Q sponsorship of the conference, enabling us to expand our activities and outreach efforts.

Our membership base has also grown 39% (379 CHA individual members, 148 new members in 23/24) over the past year, reflecting increased interest in and support for our mission.

### **Special Interest Groups (SIG) and Digital Engagement**

Our **Special Interest Groups (SIGs)**, including those focusing on frailty, palliative care, and rehabilitation, have continued to provide valuable platforms for sharing knowledge and best practices. These groups have been active in developing resources, conducting webinars, and producing guidance documents that support our members in their work.

### **Updates on Community Hospital Involvement**

Chris Humphries, Associate CHA committee member and past Chair of the CHA, has been involved in supporting several community hospitals League of Friends in their communications with Trusts Board of Directors:

- **Bishops Castle**
- **Teignmouth**
- **Insch**
- **St Monica's, Easingwold**
- **Ellen Badger Hospital, Shipston on Stour**
- **St Peter's Maldon**

### **Committee Activities and Actions**

Recent committee actions include planning for the CHA Conference, exploring sponsorship opportunities, and organising roles for committee members.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

#### **Challenges: Ensuring Sustainability for CHA**

One of our key challenges moving forward is ensuring the financial and operational sustainability of the Community Hospital Association. We need to better understand why groups are hesitant to join as organisational members and address these concerns, which we will discuss at the conference.

Currently, much of our work relies on the goodwill of our dedicated members. However, with increasing clinical pressures on many of our members, it is essential that we explore ways to remunerate those who contribute significantly to promoting community hospitals. Providing compensation where possible for their hard work will ensure continued engagement and the sustained promotion of CHA's mission.

#### **Opportunities: Enhancing Organisational Membership and Strategic Partnerships**

There are several opportunities for CHA in the coming year:

1. **Improving Organisational Membership:** We aim to enhance our efforts in attracting more organisational memberships by demonstrating the value of CHA through access to resources, networking, and advocacy.

2. **Nurturing Links with the New Government and Strategic Partners:** Strengthening our ties with key policymakers, including continued engagement with Professor Chris Whitty, the Chief Medical Officer for England, to advocate for a National Community Hospital Strategy.
3. **Continuing Partnerships with the British Geriatric Society and End of Life Coalition:** Collaborating on webinars and educational events to promote best practices in community hospitals.
4. **Sponsorship Opportunities:** Exploring sponsorship for newsletters and events to generate additional income and support CHA activities.

By addressing these challenges and capitalising on these opportunities, CHA will continue to support the essential work of community hospitals and promote innovation and best practices across the healthcare landscape.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, I would like to thank all our members, partners, and stakeholders for their unwavering support and dedication to our shared mission. The progress we have made over the past year would not have been possible without your commitment and collaboration. I look forward to continuing this important work together in the coming year.

Dr Kirsty Protherough

CHA, Chair