



Triathlete Ed competes for Tiny Babies Big Appeal

Triathlete Ed Reed, competed in the Stratford 2020 Triathlon on 15th May with the aim to raise awareness of the 'Tiny Babies Big Appeal' as well as generating as much sponsorship monies as possible to support our Appeal.

Just before Christmas, a good friend of Ed's gave birth to a baby girl named Eve Louise. Ordinarily, this would have been a wonderful Christmas present, but unfortunately, Eve's arrival was 16 weeks premature and she weighed a mere 1lb 6oz. This was a life or death situation and Eve required specialist intensive care, bringing home just how precious life is. As a result of the exceptional care given by staff at Birmingham Women's Neonatal Unit in the early days of Eve's life, and their continued support, she grew stronger and left hospital weighing 6lbs.

By day, Ed leads the Trident Group's IT team and in his own time, has spent 5 hours per week training for the 400m swim, 23km bike ride and 5km run. The Stratford-Upon-Avon triathlon is a challenging event aimed at novice participants through to club and professional triathletes. Ed Reed said, 'It takes something like the birth of Eve to bring home how wonderful and precious life really is and it puts everything into perspective. Any support will be gratefully received.'

Anyone wishing to donate can do so through www.justgiving.co.uk

Law Society President jumps 10,000 feet for Appeal

A huge thank you to Dean Parnell of Sydney Mitchell Solicitors who took to the skies to raise money for our Neonatal Appeal. Dean has kindly written his account of the event for Women's Progress.

"As President of Birmingham Law Society, I was required to nominate a charity that the Society would support for the 12 months I held this office. I knew a few people associated with the Tiny Babies Big Appeal and following a visit to the hospital I was keen to support this charity.

It is quite amazing and rather humbling to see that through the expertise of the staff and specialist equipment these tiny babies are able to survive when the odds are so stacked against them. However, it is not just about protecting the life of these babies, it is also about the positive impact that this has on so many people associated with the baby such as family and friends.

Each year, Birmingham Law Society normally raises money for the nominated charity through the Legal Awards event. However, this year I introduced a raffle at our annual dinner which I think is the first time this has been done in the 192 year history of this dinner. I also wanted to do a special dedicated event for the charity and opted for a parachute jump. Fortunately I persuaded my vice president (Andrew Lancaster) and Mary Kaye (Deputy Vice President) to join me in this jump. We are the three most unlikely candidates for a parachute jump but we were all keen to support the charity.

The actual jump was horrendous and during the 20 minutes it took for the plane to reach an altitude of 10,000 feet, I was having second thoughts but it was too late to turn back at that stage.

Jumping out of the aeroplane was both scary and amazing and the freefall which normally takes 30 seconds only took me 20 seconds (I have put on a few pounds during my 12 months as president). The drift down once the parachute had opened (thank goodness) was quite relaxing but I was so pleased to get my feet back on the ground."



Dean Parnell

In total the law Society will have raised approximately £15,000 with the jump and other events which is a fantastic sum for the appeal. Our grateful thanks to Dean his co-jumpers and the Law Society for their support.

Women's progress

The newsletter for Birmingham Women's NHS Foundation Trust

SPRING 2011

Spot the difference

It's not just paint that comes in CANS at BWH - although there was a lot about over the weekend 7/8 May - but determination.

Before most people had woken up to a day off, Warren Hubbard, Head of Estates, was already painting the ceiling in the Norton Court reception. By around 8.30am he was joined by 15 members of BWH staff, the occasional relative and one of the hospital's band of volunteers. Armed with paintbrushes, jet washers, spades and DIY equipment, they rolled up their sleeves, donned a variety of protective clothing and got on with planting, digging, painting and cleaning.

Rain soaked the gardening team but spirits were kept high and by the afternoon, the team had benefited from the arrival of Chief Executive, Steve Peak who found himself with brush in hand (as directed by the team) painting benches and walls. The father of a baby on NNU was another welcome addition to the DIY team - putting in effort on both Saturday and Sunday because, as he put it, "it's the least I could do for all the help you've given us".

By early Sunday afternoon most of the painting inside was complete, the bollards and the benches outside had been given a coat of paint, the canopy cleaned and painted and the stray parking cone that had become a feature of the entrance porch removed.

The flowerbeds had been given a complete makeover with two large Yuccas felled and a new flower display created. By early Sunday afternoon, the remaining six people who had braved a second day of painting trooped home to recover.

Having counted down the days until the reception makeover, anticipation was high on Monday morning. Jatinder Mavi said: "I couldn't wait to see the reception area so I popped in on my way to the office this morning, and it looks fantastic". Midwife Sara Tennant added: "You are all super stars !! Well done. When I walked in this morning I thought it looked cheerful and so very much more welcoming". Maggie Seldon, NTS, added "it is amazing the difference some good old community spirit can make!!"

Finishing touches are still being arranged including frosting the glass doors, vending machines and wall art inside. A picnic bench is waiting to be painted so staff can enjoy their break outside and more plants, artificial and real are being planned to brighten up the area.

The heroes behind the makeover project?

Andrew Cuthbert • Joyce Perks • Maggie Lett (devastated not to be there at the weekend but a tour de force behind the fundraising) Warren Hubbard • Jenny Manley • Frank Gough • Maureen Frost • Amanda Lugg • Chris Morgan • Peter Marks • Phil Williams • Pooja Dasani • Neil Metcalfe (volunteer) and Jatinder Mavi (who provided much needed financial advice and support) and Dom McMullan.



Continued on page 2



FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to our Spring edition of Women's Progress.

You will find lots of good news stories about our staff and services and our front page as you will have seen is dedicated to our staff making a difference for the benefit of patients and staff. We also have news from patients who through their own experiences at the women's have been moved to raise money as a thank you to the hospital.

If you have a story or would like to make a contribution to Women's

Progress, please contact Maria Mcleod. We are always keen to highlight the views and experiences of our staff and members.

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GET WALKING KEEP WALKING

Women's Progress caught up with some of our keen staff walkers who have joined the Thursday lunchtime walking group. Snapped above are Maggie Lett, Lisa Parsons, Linda Carter, Karen Bowen and Denise Goulding.

Lead by Volunteer, Margaret from the Get Walking - Keep Walking campaign, the lunchtime walks take just 20 minutes, are a great way to get some fresh air and fitness during the working day and meet staff you might not meet otherwise.

Get Walking Keep Walking is a Ramblers Association project funded by the National Lottery aimed at helping people, especially in towns and cities, improve their health and well-being by walking regularly and locally.

Interested in joining?

Walkers meet at the Health Advice and Information office in the foyer at 12.20pm every Thursday. Register and you will get a free Get Walking Pack and pedometer.

For more information about Get Walking in Birmingham and the many routes and places of interest to discover on foot, please visit www.getwalking.org/birmingham

Spot the difference cont/d...



From left to right: Andrew Cuthbert, Christine Morgan, Amanda Lugg, Maureen Frost and Joyce Perks

It wasn't just elbow grease and DIY skills - the fundraising/sponsorship efforts have seen the group raise around £700 towards the cost of the project, together with about £400 worth of sponsorship from Bourville Garden Centre in terms of plants, tubs and things to make the outside more attractive. Fallen Angel in Harborne provided cakes, whilst B&Q, hospital staff and suppliers donated other raffle prizes. A fibre optic Christmas tree, donated by Lilo Leisure Products will ensure the area looks special in the run up to Christmas. Other sponsors will be supporting the artwork for the stairs going to Genetics.

Of course the project has been several months in the making. Andrew Cuthbert, who first approached the Executive team about the project said: "Talk about sustained enthusiasm, what a fabulous assembly of creative, energetic and committed individuals! From start to finish there was a constant buzz of excitement about this project, the outcome of which categorically establishes the truth about a CANs not CANT's ethos. Apart from all the dedication and hard work that went into transforming Norton Court's Reception, this project will, I hope, engender a more optimistic spirit in difficult times."

Accommodation Manager, Joyce Perks explained, "At the beginning, I didn't think much would come of it, I thought that there would be a couple of meetings and then nothing. But I was wrong! It was hard work over the weekend, but with forward planning everything slotted into place. A big thank you to everyone who has supported us."

The secret of the group's success? According to Maggie Lett, Administrator for Medical Physics it was because, "The spirit of our group consists of people who CAN and will make a difference; a very powerful and positive force of which I am privileged to be a part."



Employees of the month

The Monthly Colleague Recognition Awards were launched in November 2010 as part of the Trust's commitment to recognise the achievements of staff.

Since they were launched, a steady stream of nominations are coming in every month nominating colleagues who daily surpass the call of duty to provide care and support and commitment to patients as well as colleagues.

Since March a new patient award has also been introduced where patients can nominate a member of staff. All winners receive £100 and a card of thanks from the Board

So far the winners have been:

Maureen Williams	Birth Centre
Lida Debono	Radiology
Jason Marsten	Medical Physics
Robyn Chase	Neonates
Lorna McLoggan	Housekeeper
Gail Alexander	Hotel Services Manager

Employees of the month nominated by Patients so far have been:

Sylvia Davis	Healthcare Assistant
Jane Harkin	Midwife

To nominate a colleague, visit the intranet or send a message to Steve Peaks office.

Appeal Support from local school and former tiny babies



Last summer, The Neonatal Unit Parents Support Group appealed to the Blue Coat School, Harborne to donate their Summer Fete collections to Our Tiny Babies Big Appeal.

Three girls from the school were ex-premature babies on the unit, Photographed above are Molly Griffith born at 23 weeks, weighing 695gm, Bronagh Lee born at 30 weeks, weighing 1.02kg and Charis Dass born at 31 weeks, weighing 1.4kg.

Charis's mum Nikki Dass and Bridget Steel, who work as volunteers for the Trust and run the Parents Support Group, worked extremely hard on the day with their collection tins and were presented with a cheque for £1,500 for the appeal

Many thanks to Nikki and Bridget for their hard work and to Blue Coat School for their generous donation.



Volunteer, Amy receives a luxury hand massage

Volunteers revive their inner spirit

Last December, the Seminar Room on the lower ground floor of the hospital was transformed in to a place of relaxation and tranquillity! There was a beautiful smell of aromatherapy oils, soothing music being played and lovely images displayed on the monitor. Who were the lucky recipients of such an environment - our BWH Volunteers!

Ten volunteers were treated to mini treatments of manicures, massages and facials at a "Revive your Inner Spirit" event as a reward for their commitment and dedication to the Trust. Vicky Trueman, who is the National Training Manager for Grafton International and two other therapists from the Comfort Zone Team, donated their time and effort to offer these spa based treatments.

As Vicky explained, "We enjoyed being involved with Birmingham Women's Hospital. Comfort Zone wants to offer their resources to give back to the dedicated volunteers who I understand give their help, time and kindness to support patients, visitors and members of staff. We believe it was a beautiful reward for them."

A reward it certainly was! One of the brands used from Grafton International was a luxurious Italian skin and body care line called Comfort Zone which is available within the leading health spas around the world. Everyone enjoyed it and we thanked the Comfort Zone team for their professionalism and skill.

Vicky concluded, "Moving forward, I believe this could be a valuable community activity that could involve local spa businesses..... we may be able to take this further a field as a national project in the time to come."

Thanks again Comfort Zone!!

Written by Jenny Manley
Volunteer Services Manager

Listening into Action..

what has been achieved so far?

The Staff Conversations seem a distant memory. Then there was an air of expectation. As one person said "there are lots of challenges to face but I feel that there is a lot of commitment to face them constructively."

Others were more cautious adding "I've been to many similar events and while I commend the genuine effort, I'm not convinced that some of the changes needed would ever come to fruition".



At the Conversations, you said you wanted:

More recognition for personal and team efforts

Now the monthly staff recognition awards give you the chance to celebrate the efforts of teams and colleagues and there are also more categories in the annual staff awards

More opportunities to socialize

An Eid event and a well attended staff Christmas function were organised with another social event planned for the summer.

More opportunities to meet with the CEO

Steve Peak set up a CEO surgery so any member of staff can talk to him personally. From one of these surgeries, prayer room facilities were reviewed and a larger, more appropriate area has been identified and is now in use.

More recycling opportunities

There are extended facilities to recycle bras, batteries, office paper waste; aluminium cans, plastic containers, printer cartridges and mobile phones and stamps. Not to mention the extensive recycling that the catering and facilities teams already do.

Better car parking facilities

An inevitable gripe but based on comments facilities worked with the police, so now have all our car parks accredited under the Safer Parking Scheme and, teamed up with Q Parks a review passes should ensure that only those working here have access to our car parks.

Better signage around the hospital

We collected your concerns and those of our patients and Steve Peak and a number of staff, spent more than two hours walking around the hospital. New signage went up in January.

Better personal protection

The portering staff discussed what was required and acting on their feedback protective kit was purchased. Personal safety alarms are also available to staff.

Some of the things weren't quite as easy or quick to fix. However, this hasn't deterred about 150 staff - housekeepers, estates staff, midwives, nurses, doctors and administrators - getting together and tackling the issues that make life harder for us and our patients.

You said you wanted:

Better communications across the hospital

Our Brief is written by staff, for staff and about staff. Meeting at lunchtime, once a month, the staff led editorial team pulls together a review of information that is short, punchy and to the point.

BWH values - A standard promise or pledge for customer care

Having discussed what really good customer service looks like, the BWH values group, canvassed your thoughts and feedback. Taking your comments into account, they have now developed a set of values which represents our commitment to each other and our commitment to our patients.

The Team have now received approval from the Board to go ahead and launch these values across the Trust.

Better approaches to tackling the day to day frustrations in IT services and support

A group of IT users and specialists got together and now meet on a monthly basis, with senior IT professionals from the Hospital and UHB to identify and where possible resolve local IT issues across the hospital.

Tackle sickness absence

We all get ill but sickness absence was a big gripe at the Conversations. Now staff are meeting regularly. The first staff suggestion was to highlight the individual cost of sickness absence. Other suggestions being looked at include ensuring staff know what sickness procedure and processes are; reviewing long shifts so we can balance the individual benefits with our ability to deliver the best in patient care.

Better intranet provision

Creating a virtual community brought staff from different parts of the hospital, supported by colleagues on the IT User group, together to look at ways to improve our intranet.

Listening into Action cont/d..

Improve the ante natal pathway

Consultants, midwives, radiologists, administration staff and healthcare assistants are getting together to look at improving the ante natal experience for our patients - and staff.

Tackle bureaucracy

Which is why several people are looking at a range of processes that annoy us. To date this includes stock level procurement, the order processing system, electronic documentation and even a meeting between end users and the Lorenzo team.

Getting involved has lots of benefits

"You'll meet people you only knew by name, you'll get a break from the day job, have lots of fun as well as having the satisfaction of knowing you made a difference," explains Vicki Davies. As Walt Disney once observed, 'it's kind of fun to do the impossible - why not get involved?'

For more details go to the Listening into Action page on the intranet or contact Vicki Davies at vicki.davies@bwhct.nhs.uk or ext 6965.

Listening into Action comes in CANs not CAN'Ts at BWH.

Lord Bragg at the Women's

Eagle eyed staff and patients may have been surprised to see esteemed writer and broadcaster, Melvyn Bragg wandering the corridors recently.

He was at the Women's for a new BBC series entitled 'The Reel History of Britain'. Midwife, Antoinette Connelly was interviewed about her role as a midwife and changes she has seen as well as her claim to fame delivering the Millennium baby! Melvyn also visited Ward 4 and interviewed a new set of parents.

The transmission date will be publicised.



Twins support Women's after heartache and joy

A Midlands family who have experienced both terrible sadness and extreme joy pulled out all the stops to raise money for our Hospital with a lavish Spring Ball.

The Ball was arranged by identical twins, Liesl Whale and Melanie Richardson and their mother, Annette to raise money for various specialist services at the hospital. The family wanted to say thank you for the care that they have received over the past 15 years.

Their story goes back to 1995 and over the following year, when the girls both lost one baby due to premature labour as well as three late miscarriages. Liesl and Melanie thought that after this harrowing experience, neither of them would be able to have a living child. However, with much medical help and support, they are now mothers to three wonderful children each.

Liesl explained, "We are so grateful to the hospital, after so much heartache, we each have three lovely children and it is thanks to the Women's for their fantastic care and expertise. We are raising money specifically for the Fetal Medicine Department, the Tiny Babies Big Appeal and the Urogynaecology Department who have all provided so much care and support to our families.

Organising this event has been a real labour of love, but we were determined to do something to give something back to the hospital which has made such an impact on our lives."



Thank you
WRVS!

Our WRVS ladies, Debbie, Barbara, Brenda, Jill and Lynn, with Lynne Hensman and Sam Ward, joined by Steve Peak and Pam Cooper

Steve Peak recently expressed his sincere thanks on behalf of the Women's to the WRVS after receiving a cheque for £40,000.

The money received has enabled us to invest in the new parents accommodation in Norton Court.

The WRVS volunteers and staff provide a valuable service to our hospital for our many patients, visitors and staff.

BBC Documentary places Women's specialist care in the Limelight

Birmingham Women's Hospital was placed firmly in the Limelight during March when Adam Wishart's documentary '23 weeks – the Price of Life' was broadcast on national television.

This BBC2 documentary asked the very difficult question of whether we should keep babies born at 23 weeks alive, when the majority do not survive? Whilst it did make difficult viewing, it was a fantastic portrayal of the dedication, compassion and work which takes place here at The Women's every single day.

Science writer and award winning film maker, Adam Wishart, spent 6 months at the hospital on the neonatal unit in 2010, then in its temporary home on Ward 6. His sensitive approach to making the film meant that he was able to establish good relationships with the staff as well as parents of the babies on the unit during that time. His film depicted the reality of looking after such tiny and vulnerable babies whilst at the same time reflected the difficult decisions both clinical staff and parents have to make.

It was clear from the programme that more work needs to be done to address the issues of why so many more babies are born prematurely in this country and that more needs to be done to prevent this. It was also very clear that greater support and investment needs to be made to ensure that families and their children get the help they need after they leave hospital. Thousands is spent on looking after premature and very poorly babies but this investment needs to continue as they grow and develop should further care be required.

Chief Executive Steve Peak commented, "It was with immense pride that I watched our Trust on television, whilst capturing the complex issues surrounding the care of babies born so early, it also reflected the real compassion and commitment of the staff."

The programme attracted a huge amount of media attention and sparked debates nationally, with many comments from parents of children born extremely premature.



Helena Stopes-Roe and Karen Herd demonstrate the correct positioning for Breastfeeding

Baby Friendly

The Trust achieved 'Baby Friendly Stage Two Assessment' in February. This was achieved thanks to the hard work of staff who were able to show that they have the knowledge and skills to help women to breast feed.

Baby Friendly Initiative commented on our excellent use of dolls and 'prop' breasts used to show correct positioning and mums love this too!

The Infant Feeding Team are Helena Stopes-Roe, Karen Herd, Bernadette Earley, Sara Tennant and Pam Cook. Their job is to promote and support breastfeeding and educate and support staff to help new Mum's to feed their babies.

The next steps will be to work towards Stage Three, as Helena and Karen commented, "We now know we can do it, but we need to ensure that the right information is getting to Mums".

Stage Three will entail Baby Friendly assessors visiting the hospital and interviewing pregnant mothers and new Mums.

About The Baby Friendly Initiative

The Baby Friendly Initiative is a worldwide programme of the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

The Baby Friendly Initiative works with the health-care system to ensure a high standard of care for pregnant women and for new mothers with feeding their babies. Support is provided for health-care facilities that are seeking to implement best practice, and an assessment and accreditation process recognises those that have achieved the required standard.

THE BIRMINGHAM sperm bank launches drive to recruit donors

In Britain, there is a national shortage of sperm donors. In the West Midlands, the problem is even more acute.

This is because of the region's rich ethnic mix and also a range of genetic diseases.

In order to eradicate such conditions, some couples who want to start a family seek to use donated sperm.

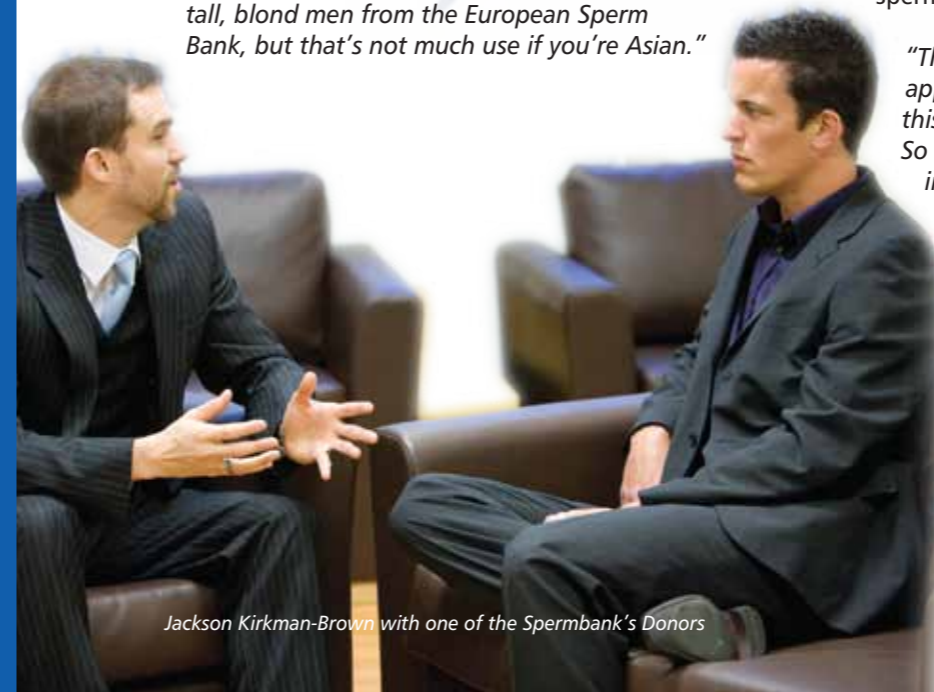
At the moment, though, sperm from all ethnic backgrounds is extremely hard to source - which is one of the reasons for setting up the Birmingham Sperm Bank.

The bank, part of the Fertility Centre based at the Birmingham Women's Hospital (BWFC), is aiming to recruit 50 sperm donors a year. This would be enough to reduce the long waiting lists to almost nothing.

"The shortage of sperm donors nationally is a real problem," explains Jackson Kirkman-Brown, Scientific, Research and Development lead at the BWFC. "In the Midlands particularly, there is a large number of people, especially in the Asian community, with genetic problems that they really don't want to pass on to future generations. Using donated sperm is a way to clear these problems from the family."

The West Midlands' ethnic diversity also provides the opportunity to collect much-needed sperm from different backgrounds.

"At the moment, if you're mixed-race, Afro-Caribbean or Asian, there aren't any supplies of sperm around the UK," says Jackson. "There is some sperm available from tall, blond men from the European Sperm Bank, but that's not much use if you're Asian."



Jackson Kirkman-Brown with one of the Sperm Bank's Donors

The chronic shortage of sperm across all ethnicities that has spurred the BWFC into launching a campaign to raise awareness and attract donors to the bank is due to several factors.

Firstly, there is the fact that one in six couples trying for a family in the UK experiences fertility difficulties. Of those, just over half will be due to a male problem. This can range from the man having no sperm to being infertile because of childhood cancer. Single women and lesbian couples have also heightened the demand for sperm.

But as the need for sperm has risen, so the number of men willing to donate has fallen.

"There are two things that put people off donating sperm," says Jackson. "You can't make money from it (apart from covering expenses when you donate to an NHS centre) just as you can't when you give blood. Yet blood donors are admired, while sperm donation is considered a bit seedy - even though by giving sperm you're doing something even more miraculous, not just for a couple but for future generations."

Men are also put off donating sperm because of the change in UK law which allows children born from donated sperm to contact their biological father when they reach 18. (Even though they have no legal rights or claims.)

"On the flip side, when we spoke to people as part of a survey we've recently conducted, men said they'd simply never thought about it as being something they could do."

Until now, the fertility centre has had an average of just three sperm donors at year.

"The centre has always had a policy that people could approach us to donate sperm," explains Jackson. "But this didn't come close to satisfying the need for donors. So we now have a dedicated unit to recruit donors. This involves distributing leaflets and posters to spread the word. And already we're getting a response. We'd like 50 donors a year, but if we only get 20 or 30 we'll still have done really well and will be able to significantly reduce the waiting list for sperm."

For more information, visit www.birminghamspermbank.com email info@birminghamspermbank.com or call 0121 627 2739