

Oxleas Exchange

CONNECTING THE PEOPLE OF OXLEAS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

Surge in members at summer events



Staff from Oxleas joined colleagues from other local NHS services at the Greenwich Great Get Together and the Danson Festival recently. Local people were keen to hear about the range of services the trust provides and nearly 200 took the opportunity to become members. Pictured above are sisters Charlotte, 2 and Ruby, 4 from Crayford finding out about good dental health.

Vikki Rawlins is Nurse of the Year

Issue Viability Nurse Vikki Rawlins was crowned Oxleas Nurse of the Year at the eighth annual nursing conference at Charlton Athletic's The Valley on Friday 17 June.

A deserving winner, Vikki developed and led a programme of clinical change in wound care management in Bexley Community Health Services (BCHS). This included developing a competency programme for district nurses for the management of leg ulcers, with great results.

Vikki also wrote a wound care formulary - a quick guide which tells people what dressing products to select for a particular type of wound. She supported this with a tissue viability resource folder which explains all about wounds -

what they look like and how to treat them. Neither of these was available before and both have proved invaluable in Older People Mental Health Services and in Forensic Services.

There were also awards for Patient and Carer Experience, Safety and Nursing Excellence. The winners were:

- **Patient and Carer Experience:** Matthew Watts, Community Mental Health Nurse, Early Intervention in Psychosis Team
- **Safety:** Tony Hollands, Epilepsy Nurse Specialist, Bromley Adult Learning Disability Services
- **Nursing Excellence:** Maureen Cook, Outreach Team Manager, Bexley Health Visiting.



Nurse of the Year, Vikki Rawlins

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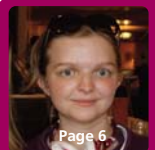
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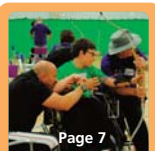
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Welcome



Integrated services provide excellent healthcare

Stephen Firn, Chief Executive

Dave Mellish, Chair

Reading this edition of Exchange it is impossible not to be impressed by and moved by the examples of innovative and compassionate care. Each page has an uplifting story about the ways in which colleagues are working to make a difference to people's lives. These innovations stretch across our community, mental health and learning disability services and cover every age group.

Last month we were both privileged to be present at our Nurse of the Year Awards (see front page). We came away marvelling at the dedication and commitment of the nurses who gave presentations or were nominated for awards. It reminded us that day in and day out there are hundreds and hundreds of nurses across Oxleas providing extraordinary care with remarkable skill and compassion. The vast majority of our nursing colleagues do their remarkable work without fanfare or plaudits. They do it

simply because they care deeply about the wellbeing and recovery of patients. So the Nurse of the Year Awards was a fantastic opportunity for us to express our thanks and recognise and reward some of the very best nurses. The winner, Vikki Rawlins is a shining example to every nurse. Vikki's incredible knowledge, energy and enthusiasm has transformed wound care across the district nursing workforce in Bexley. Vikki has used a variety of approaches and methods to improve practice including umbilical workshops; publication of a wound care formulary; development of a clinical network; audits of practice; and the trialling and adoption of latest equipment and therapies. This includes the Avance Negative Pressure Wound Therapy device described below. In addition, Vikki has shared her expertise and given support to our Older People Mental Health and Forensic services so that mental and physical health needs

can be met in one care plan. This September at our Annual Members Meeting we will have another opportunity to say thank you when we present our Recognition Awards. With this edition of Oxleas Exchange is a nomination form. This is your opportunity to highlight examples of outstanding practice which shine a spotlight on those people you think have done most to promote the best possible quality of care. Those of you who have access to the internet can also go to our website www.oxleas.nhs.uk and click on the Staff Recognition Awards link. This will allow you to complete and submit a nomination form electronically.

We hope you can join us at our Annual Members Meeting on 28 September to take part in a whole range of health related activities, discuss the progress of the trust and recognise and reward best practice.

Healing wounds the high-tech way

A dedicated Bexley Community Health Services staff nurse is using a new high-tech piece of kit - which should mean that patients' wounds will heal quicker and more hygienically.

Mandy Baty, who is based at the medical centre in Lyndhurst Road, Barnehurst, described the new piece of equipment as a real breakthrough. The Avance Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT) device is a treatment that uses controlled negative pressure, or vacuum, to speed up healing in wounds. It works by drawing excess fluids and infection out of a wound and increases blood flow to newly formed tissue. It also helps a wound dressing stay in firm contact with the wound surface.

Mandy, from Bromley, is treating her first patient with the NPWT unit, which is about half the size of a shoe box. And Mandy said she believes her patient, Betty Evans, from Bexleyheath, is the first person in Kent to have had the new treatment.

Betty, 83, a former bookkeeper at her family's car showroom business in Belvedere, said she was delighted with the treatment Mandy had given her and that her wound was healing nicely. She said: At first it was

very sore. I didn't want to leave the house with it. If it hadn't been for this machine and Mandy's work I would probably have had to go into hospital."

Mandy, who has spent all of her nine years in the NHS working out of the Lyndhurst Road practice, said: "This therapy heals wounds at a quicker rate than conventional dressings." It works by draining fluid from the wound into a special canister, which means none of it seeps onto the dressing and so does not touch the patient's skin. Mandy again: "The Avance therapy reduces bacterial load, increases blood supply, controls odour and reduces infection."

Another advantage of the Avance system was also highlighted by Mandy. She said that wounds conventionally treated need to have their dressing changed every day, but that the Avance only needs to be checked every third day. This of course means there is less pressure on the workload of busy district nurses - which brings financial benefits to the NHS.



83 year-old wound patient, Betty Evans, with Oxleas staff nurse Mandy Baty

News



Learning Disability Week

Oxleas organised events recently to mark Learning Disability Week (20 - 26 June).

In Greenwich the Community Learning Disability Team held an open day at Civic House with stalls from local partner organisations. They also held a Work and Fun day at Charlton Athletic FC. This was brought to an energetic end by the Relating Game Project who hosted an over 18s disco for the second year running. Around 100 people enjoyed supper, karaoke and lots of dancing (see picture right).

To coincide with the week, learning disability charity Mencap launched a three-year campaign against hate crime, under the banner 'Stand by me'. It will challenge the police, the criminal justice system and the courts to end hate crime against people with a learning disability. For more information, visit www.mencap.org.uk



The Valley of good health



Three hundred visitors enjoyed Oxleas third annual Health Festival at The Valley, home of Charlton Athletic Football club, in May.

As well as having the opportunity to take lessons in circus skills from a clown, visitors were able to have a free health check and enjoy an Indian head massage - all in the spirit of good health and wellbeing. There were also several workshops throughout the day on topics such as film and animation, creative writing and poetry and social networking.

Market stalls run by partner organisations provided information, guidance and advice on health issues, while football teams from a mental health football league put on a great performance for spectators.

Our picture (above) shows members of the Complementary Cancer Care Trust, which works with patients providing a home visiting service that affords benefits to those unable to attend support groups, due to frailty, disability, illness or the effects of undergoing cancer treatments.

Pak's award honour

Specialist Support Worker, Pak Chiu, was named as a runner up at the annual British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) Positive Behaviour Support Conference 2011 in May.

The award was for the innovative work he has put into developing an easy to use and read hard copy version of a Prevention Management Violence Aggression (PMVA) care plan.



Trust to provide integrated healthcare services to West Kent Prisons

We have been successful in a bid to run integrated healthcare services to West Kent Prisons and Forensic Units in Maidstone and Dartford.

The work will be carried out in partnership with the Medical Centre, Maidstone, through a new organisation called the Kent Healthcare Consortium. The consortium will provide healthcare services to Her Majesty's Prisons at Maidstone, Blantyre and East Sutton Park. It will also provide specialist forensic care at psychiatric units in Maidstone and Dartford. The £4.6 million contract begins in November 2011

and will last for between three to five years.

John Enser, Oxleas Service Director Forensic & Prison Services, said: "I am delighted that we have been successful in our bid. This development means that as a consortium we will be responsible for providing a full range of physical healthcare services in addition to the mental health services already provided by Oxleas to West Kent Prisons.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their contribution and hard work to ensure our success in this bid. "This development marks

the start of an exciting phase for us as we aim to meet the physical and mental health needs of service users both in prisons and the forensic units in West Kent."



John Enser

Exchange features

Ellen gives telehealth the thumbs up

Ellen Lawson admitted she felt a bit nervous at the prospect of taking part in a short film. However, so strongly did she feel about the subject of the film – the trust's new telehealth service operated by Buxley Community Health Services – that she went ahead anyway. In the event she needn't have worried as the film crew all agreed she was a 'natural'.

Oxleas telehealth service was set up last year at the Erith Health Centre. It allows the nursing staff to monitor patients' vital signs, health and wellbeing without them having to go to hospital. The patients are able to manage long term conditions - such as heart failure, diabetes and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) – effectively at home. This empowers them to understand their illness and take a more active role in their own care.

Regular monitoring also reduces GP visits and unplanned hospital admissions and allows nursing staff to see more patients. If it is decided that it is safe to monitor patients at home, telehealth equipment is installed in their home. At a time agreed by both the patient and nursing staff, the

monitor will signal that it is time for the patient to take their vital signs and answer questions about their symptoms. The monitor then guides the patient, using text display and audio announcements through a series of measurements and health related questions.

Ellen is pictured right taking her blood pressure at her home in Welling. She suffers from COPD and says having the equipment at home is great for someone with limited mobility: "I'd love to be able to walk to the bus stop, but I get out of breath just answering the door. This gives me complete peace of mind. I don't have to worry about bothering my GP as staff monitor my readings every day and will phone me and visit when needed."

The equipment monitors vital signs such as blood pressure; temperature, weight; blood glucose and oxygen intake. This information is then sent via the patient's telephone line to a computer in the health centre. Ellen usually does her readings at around 9.30am and says the equipment is easy to use: "If I can use it anyone can. If I forget to do my readings on time it even gently reminds me.

That's very reassuring and a wonderful safety net."

High quality care tailored to individual patients and delivered in their own homes is more comfortable for them and also saves on expensive hospital admissions. Ellen is in no doubt of the benefits: "I haven't had a trip to hospital for a long while. I feel completely and utterly cared for by a very supportive and special group of people."

You can watch the telehealth video on the trust website: www.oxleas.nhs.uk



Ellen with the telehealth equipment

BBC presenter inspired by music therapy service

Exchange recently visited the music therapy service at Wensley Close, Eltham, the same day that BBC Radio 3 arrived to record a feature for their magazine programme Music Matters.

The service is part of Greenwich Community Health Services and its 16 music therapists are among only 147 employed by the NHS nationally, making it the largest statutory music therapy service of its kind in the UK.

While we waited for the broadcaster to arrive, Exchange asked Professional Manager for Music Therapy, Sarah Hadley, to describe the service.

"The Music Therapy Service is accessed by children and young people up to the age of 19 who are experiencing complex emotional, psychological, social, behavioural, communication or interpersonal difficulties.

"Therapists are highly trained – we all have a degree in music and have undertaken further post graduate training in music therapy. We use music as a therapeutic language which is very different from traditional music making. We work on the assumption that people are innately musical – that is that rhythm, melody and harmony are a natural part of each of us and we use sound, rhythm and improvised music to form therapeutic relationships with our clients. This offers them a different experience of shared interaction and aims to develop their awareness, understanding and robustness in their role in relationships."

Sarah pointed out that the most natural

rhythm is our heartbeat, and that we all have a natural tempo in the way we move and speak. Therapists pick up on this and respond musically – this could be through singing and piano playing for example – to the rhythms they perceive in their clients. Sarah again: "Every conversation has a melodic line. Even the non-verbal sounds made by toddlers have pitch and music therapists are trained to pick up on this rhythm and pitch and use it to create a musical dialogue with the client."

According to Sarah, we all respond naturally to music. This is not a cognitive process so



therapists work in an improvisational way and gradually build up trust and communication with their clients. The therapy takes place in a special music therapy room equipped with a variety of instruments that clients can freely use during their session. Sarah says therapists are trained to use harmony to reflect what they observe in their clients: "We become emotional sounding boards for our clients. It's all geared to creating a musical blueprint of what we're experiencing with them and that's just the start!"

Sarah stresses that music therapists are committed to a multi-professional method of working and links with schools and other health professionals, particularly the paediatric therapy team, are extremely important to successful outcomes.

As well as recording a music therapy session on 1 June, Tom Service, who presents Music Matters, interviewed three year old George (pictured left), who has the rare condition bilateral anophthalmia and was born with no eyes; his mother Claire and Specialist Music Therapist Emily Cawdron. It was wonderful to hear how George - with the aid variously of drums, glockenspiel, guitar, a bunch of keys and his voice - communicated with Emily who provided vocals and piano. This was only the third session George had attended and Tom was clearly moved and impressed by the way that George's communication grew and developed during the 30 minutes the therapy lasted.

Exchange features

Promoting social inclusion and recovery

Every Tuesday Tony Tang gives up his afternoon to make music with Bromley Music Group (BMG) – local service users who get together once a week to jam and chew the cud at Antenna Studios in Crystal Palace.

Tony, who has been involved with the group since he was a student nurse, now attends as a volunteer. He is in no doubt as to the value of the BMG to the 10-15 members who come regularly: "This is community music. The people who come here – some of whom are escorted while on a section – develop both musical and social skills. It's important that the group is based in a working studio as members meet other musicians and artists from the community. I think the reason the group works is that it is so enjoyable. I just got hooked – and have actually learned to play the bass guitar here myself."

Phil Friel, a Community Psychiatric Nurse based at Blean Grove, runs the group with Tony and has been with it since the start. He explained: "The BMG was started by service users around six years ago and has grown organically since. This year for the first time we have recorded an album – called Pearl – which we're all really proud of. People are welcome to have a copy – subject to availability. We can't sell it, as it contains some cover versions, but a donation to BMG

would be gratefully received."

There is a terrific atmosphere at the studios – relaxed, if not to say 'chilled' – and tons of enthusiasm and warmth. Andrew Moody is a talented author as well as a singer songwriter (he has two novels under his belt) who has been coming to BMG for five years. He wrote and performed the song Jeremy on Pearl and wants to pursue a career in music. He said: "When I sing it's a bit like acting – I inhabit the role and need to feel the emotion to put the song across. I find it therapeutic."

Pearl was launched at an event at Community House in Bromley on 8 June and according to Tony: "It is very listenable and has at its heart a sense of fun and joy – which is the essence of the BMG."

Phil continued: "We hope to raise funds for the group from future performances and by producing albums containing material originated by the group."

One big gig on the horizon is the trust's Annual Members' Meeting (AMM) 2011 which is once again being held in Indigo2 at the O2. The group will be running a jamming workshop and performing on the main stage.

Phil and Tony are understandably passionate about the BMG and want to see it grow and prosper. Phil said: "We are looking for more volunteer musicians to help run the group and join in the sessions. These could be staff

or people from the local community. We involve people by focusing on the positives – what they can do rather than their illness – and boost their interest and enthusiasm."

Oxleas Chief Executive, Stephen Finn, is very impressed by the BMG. He told Tony and Phil: "This is a really important initiative which plays a key role in promoting social inclusion and the recovery of service users."

For more information about the group, or to get a copy of the album, contact Tony or Phil on 020 8676 8250 or email tony.tang@oxleas.nhs.uk.

There is a longer version of this article on the trust website: www.oxleas.nhs.uk



Andrew Moody, vocals, with Phil Friel on guitar

No mean feet!



Suzy Taylor, far right, with members of the Specialist Foot Service

In March this year Suzy Taylor became a fully qualified podiatric surgeon. It was the culmination of a remarkable career which began as a chiropodist, progressing through diabetic foot podiatrist and podiatric service manager to her current position: Allied Health Professional Consultant – Foot Health/Podiatry in the Specialist Foot Service, Greenwich Community Health Services (GCHS).

Suzy, who now lives in Bromley, was raised in Grove Park and over the years has got to know many people in the Oxleas area:

"Wherever I go someone will ask me about their feet or toe nails." While many might

balk at such a prospect, Suzy does not seem to mind at all and is in fact enormously enthusiastic about her work.

Suzy joined GCHS in 2000 when she was recruited as Podiatric Service Manager and tasked with modernising the service. This included introducing self-referral for assessments and new treatments: "My role was to set up a whole series of new treatment pathways. These included electro surgery – the removal of painful skin lesions – and infection therapy. Both were very effective."

After four years, Suzy decided it was time for another challenge: "I thought I'd achieved what I wanted in my management career and as a result of the work I'd been doing decided I'd like to be a surgeon."

Studying in her own time, Suzy passed her entrance exams and embarked on a work/study regime that most would find daunting. Thanks to GCHS' flexible working policy, she was able to keep her day job and condense her working week into three days by working longer hours. The remaining time was set aside for surgery training.

Seven long years later, this March, Suzy says that she knew that she had passed her final exam when one of her examiners asked her a question about the off-side rule in football – a question which, like all the others, she was able to answer correctly.

In a week that is hardly less busy than when she was studying, Suzy now practices

as a registrar surgeon for 15 hours and spends the rest of her time managing the musculoskeletal service and complex wound service.

Suzy assesses patients in pre-operation appointments in Garland Road Health Centre, Plumstead. All options are considered before surgery is decided upon and she only takes people she can help – Suzy does not for example carry out cosmetic work. If surgery is necessary, she performs the operations in the day surgery unit in Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woolwich.

Patients are looked after from assessment to discharge and Suzy says that podiatric surgery provides real benefits: "We offer a very innovative, cost efficient and high quality service. All foot operations used to be performed by orthopaedic surgeons, which meant a general anaesthetic and several days in hospital. Plaster casts were often used which as well as being uncomfortable carried the risk of deep vein thrombosis. Podiatric surgeons, on the other hand, use a local anaesthetic which is more comfortable for the patient and saves around £500 per person – and that's before savings on hospital beds.

"As the patients are awake throughout it is important to establish a relationship of trust. Typical operations could be bunion or hammer toe correction. We get fantastic feedback from our patients – last year the satisfaction rate was 92%"

Exchange stories

A matter of life and deaf

Katie Martin and Jane Thomas are busy speech and language therapists working with deaf children in Greenwich. With a full caseload of around 80 clients, most of whom they see every week – you’d think they wouldn’t have time for anything else.

In fact, they have created and run a unique speech and language therapy project – all in their own time – called Life & Deaf in which deaf children explore their identity through poetry in written English and British Sign Language (BSL).

Life & Deaf began in 2006 as a project which aimed to develop deaf children’s self esteem and communication in signed, spoken and written languages. The result was a beautiful book of 16 poems and accompanying DVD of the children performing their poems in sign language. This was then taken further by the development of the Life & Deaf website: www.lifeanddeaf.co.uk and a workbook, which can be found on the website, for other teachers and therapists containing techniques used in Life & Deaf. Children were also encouraged to upload poems to the site.

Katie and Jane work for Greenwich Community Health Services (GCHS) and spend most of their time in local schools. An important part of their role is to develop what they call “emotional literacy”. According to Jane: “Most deaf children know how to express happy, sad, or angry, but this does not cover the shades of what they may be feeling. We try to broaden their emotional vocabulary so they can express specific emotions and clearly communicate to others what they are feeling.”

40% of deaf children and adults suffer from depression and anxiety disorders

Katie agrees: “We have found that communication in the home can be difficult for children as parents may find it hard to learn sign language. This can lead to children feeling isolated and affect their social confidence. It may surprise people to hear that 40% of deaf children and adults suffer from depression and anxiety disorders as a result of low self esteem and poor communication skills.”

In 2010, with funding from Greenwich Council’s Sensory Service and in collaboration with Helena Ballard, a teacher of the deaf, the pair launched Life & Deaf 2. Deaf young poets were invited to workshops where they could explore their identity as deaf people and learn from professionals how to perform their poems confidently using voice, art and sign language. Children from schools in Greenwich, Lewisham, Bexley and Bromley were invited to the first workshop in May 2011; the second, to be held in July 2011, will bring together children from across the country.

One of the young people involved in the workshops is Sarah Ivy-Jayne, a remarkable 17 year old who took part in the original Life & Deaf. Now at Shooters Hill Post 16 Campus, Sarah is studying for her A – Levels. She has a communication support worker (CSW) who helps during lessons by signing or

clarifying what the teacher is saying. Sarah, whose speech is very clear, believes that communication is vital for deaf people’s wellbeing: “Talking to people helps maintain good mental health. But most deaf people are too nervous to talk to a hearing person in case they can’t understand them. I’m always writing something. Poems about what I’m thinking or what I want to do. Sometimes I feel I’ve just got to write.”

For more information about Life & Deaf, visit the website or contact Jane and Katie at info@lifeanddeaf.co.uk or call Jane and Katie on 020 8858 3678.

There is a longer version of this article on the trust website: www.oxleas.nhs.uk



From left, Katie, Sarah Ivy-Jayne, and Jane

Pillow case doctor dreams up sleep aid

She was urged to go on Dragons’ Den with her idea – but clinician, Dr Ruth McAllister, decided to go her own way – with the result that her patients can now look forward to a better night’s sleep.

The Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist, who works at the Bracton Centre, has invented a very clever disposable pillow case which is a great help to hypersalivation sufferers. Oxleas is piloting the new patient aid for people suffering an uncomfortable side-effect of medication.

Dr McAllister explained: “Many patients on antipsychotics, especially clozapine, suffer from excess saliva production, which can be worse at night. Their pillows can be so wet that the discomfort wakes them up. Many of them try sleeping with a towel wrapped round the pillow, but it holds the moisture next to the face and tends to come adrift in the night.”

She got to work with a borrowed sewing machine and a pile of cut-up nappies. She made some padded absorbent pillow cases for the patients to try out. They were a hit – the patients say they’re comfortable, they

soak up all the moisture and keep your face dry. “Everybody who’s on clozapine is going to want them” said one patient. “They were a huge success” said another. Several people encouraged Ruth to go on Dragons’ Den with her idea.



Ruth with her comfy invention

Instead, she took her idea to NHS Innovations, who turned it down flat. But Oxleas Finance Director, Richard Page, encouraged Ruth to go ahead anyway. “I like this idea” he said. “It’s simple but effective and the patients want it. I think we should give it a try”. With trust support, Ruth employed a patent attorney and a technical consultant who found a business partner – a company called Independence Products – to work with Oxleas.

Ruth again: “The pillow cases are now commercially available and Richard has negotiated a small royalty for the trust on any sales. We have them in stock for Oxleas’ patients. Those who’ve tried out our samples say they’re even better than the prototypes.” Oxleas Chief Pharmacist, Carol Paton, points out another advantage: “Many clozapine patients take hyoscine for excess salivation” she told us. “It does help but it can make them drowsy and constipated. If the pillow cases keep them comfortable enough, perhaps they’ll be able to stop taking the hyoscine”.

Exchange stories

Olympian passion for her work

Exchange has interviewed many people since it was first published in 2006 – but none have been more passionate and enthusiastic about their work than Vicky Lambert, Acting Manager of Greenwich Community Health Services’ Children’s Physiotherapy Team.

In fact Vicky, who at only 31, is presently running a team of 15 staff treating a caseload of some 400 children said: “I suppose I am career driven. I am very passionate about my work. I love the job and can’t imagine waking up in the morning and not looking forward to coming to work.”

Before her current elevation – because of a colleague’s maternity leave – Vicky’s job title was Highly Specialist Children’s Physiotherapist. A dog lover, Vicky has a Boxer called Molly, she explained her work further: “We provide comprehensive and timely intervention for children up to the age of 19 registered with a Greenwich GP or that attend a Greenwich school.

“The children we see have a condition affecting their movement, posture or development of physical skills. The service offers specialist advice on equipment and activities that can assist the child and programmes of activities for the child and their carers to follow.”

Vicky, who lives in the Dartford area, also gives up a good chunk of her free time to helping disabled children get involved in sport. This happens at a Saturday Club at

Eltham Foundation School, formerly Eltham Green School. Vicky explained: “The club runs during school term time after we managed to get funding from the Sports Unlimited charity to get us started, though now we are self funding.”

Vicky has also done a lot of work with Stoke Mandeville Hospital and the Olympic Delivery Authority. Annually she helps arrange for a group of 25 children to take part in sporting events which include wheelchair football and wheelchair basketball. She went on: “This is a brilliant four-day Paralympics residential event where disabled children from the

London Olympic host boroughs, of which Greenwich is one, send children to take part in events like archery, football and volleyball.”

Full of praise for her workmates that include: physiotherapists; technicians (physio assistants) and administration staff, Vicky said: “None of what I do would be possible without the hard work and passion displayed by my colleagues. They frequently go above and beyond the call of duty to give the best service possible to the children and families they work with.”



Shea French-Gibbons from Crown Woods school, Greenwich, had a great time during an archery session that Vicky helped organise at Stoke Mandeville Stadium last year

Specsavers helps trust focus on falls

Oxleas teamed up with high street spectacles company Specsavers recently – to see to it that Falls Awareness Week (FAW) was given the focus it deserves.

Falls Awareness (20-24 June) this year concentrated on vision. It highlighted the link between poor vision and falling through the theme “Watch Your Step”.

The partnership with the Woolwich Branch of Specsavers was the brainchild of Memorial Hospital based Special Occupational Therapist, Farnaaz Bux, who works for the Falls Prevention Team in the Community Assessment and Rehabilitation Service. The team works with people in their own homes who are experiencing falls. They are part of Greenwich Community Health Services which joined Oxleas on 1 April this year.

Farnaaz and Rehabilitation Assistant Satvir Dhesi, were raising the profile of the trust and promoting FAW outside the Powis Street branch of Specsavers in Woolwich on Tuesday. They have also been visiting other

high streets in the borough to draw attention to FAW. Every year, around one in three over 65s living in the community and one two people over 85 will have a fall. The consequences can be devastating, both physically and emotionally. Falls can cause loss of function, mobility, independence, confidence, and in many cases even death. FAW 2011 promotes activities and projects that help prevent falls in later life.

Specsavers Store Manager, Randip Wilkhu said: “We are very happy to work with Oxleas to help promote Falls Awareness Week.” Specsavers has offers specifically aimed at helping older and NHS customers.



From left: Satvir Dhesi, Randip Wilkhu and Farnaaz Bux at the Woolwich branch of Specsavers

Fix that wound with SWOT

It sounds like a rapid response unit in a US TV drama – and in fact Oxleas Greenwich SWOT team does indeed exist to help ... patients in the borough of Greenwich.

SWOT or Specialist Wound-care Outreach Team is the brainchild of Juliet Blenman, Tissue Viability Nurse, The Lower Limb service at the Fairfield Centre in Fairfield Grove, Charlton.

Juliet has spent 31 years working in the NHS. The 10 strong SWOT team treat clients in Woolwich, Plumstead, Charlton, Eltham and Thamesmead.

SWOT was launched in March 2011 – and according to Juliet it is the first team of its kind in the UK. Juliet said: “The SWOT role is to promote effective care regarding wounds and we aim to improve on this through educating and supporting our colleagues as an integrated team. Wound care links like these have been heralded as a potentially very valuable resource, however often lacked the structural power to be able to influence change to any degree.

“The first task of the team was to conduct an audit with regards to the type of compression bandages being used in the community and how many service users who have leg ulcers. The team actually replaces the old ‘Link Nurse’ and acts as a go-between between specialists and nurses.

“Patients can refer themselves or can be referred by a GP. Sometimes it is a daunting task with all the extra patients we deal with. The advantage of SWOT is that it offers three services in one: podiatry; lower limbs and tissue viability.”



Recognition Awards 2011

Deadline for nominations Friday 29 July

Nomination form with this Exchange or on our website www.oxleas.nhs.uk

Trust celebrates Carers' Week

...Talking 'bout the car wash yeah!

The highlight of Carers' Week in June was an event at the Ripley Arts Centre in Bromley attended by around 200 people. Ruth Hannon, National Speaker for the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, gave a talk about the Triangle of Care - a guide for staff working in mental health services to promote the inclusion of carers in the care planning, decision making and treatment of people with a mental illness.

There was also a short drama by the Playout Theatre Company which explored how carers' social relationships can be affected by their role as carers.

Trust Carers' Lead Anna Chan said: "It was a successful event and carers said they found it very useful. One lady's mum had just started developing dementia and she didn't know where to turn. She was able to find out about the sort of help she could get from organisations like the Alzheimer's Society which made her much happier."



Oxleas' Director of Finance Richard Page (right, back) helping to launch the new car washing service at Pinewood House in June with staff and service users from the Bracton Centre, and his own beautiful, but rather grubby, Jaguar.

The service, which also operates at the Bracton Centre, costs £3.50 - about half what you might normally expect to pay. All the money goes to the Friends of Henri De Bracton charity to help fund service user activities.

You can book your car in for a wash by calling **01322 297191**.

A happy body, mind and soul

Almost 200 people turned up for the opening of the 2011 Happy Soul Festival held at Charlton House, Greenwich in May. Happy Soul is a film, culture and arts festival for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities promoting mental health and wellbeing.

The theme for the day was how to respond, examining how people respond to someone with mental illness. Oxleas, who sponsored the event, had a number of clinicians on hand to talk to people about mental health and address any issues brought up on the day.

Local resident, Theodora John, said: "I wanted to see what was being put on in terms of wellbeing. I really enjoyed the poetry and the rapping. It's also been good to meet other people and share experiences."



Visitors to the Happy Soul Festival take part in a Tai Chi workshop

Oxleas to host work fair

The trust is to hold its first ever work fair for people with experience of mental ill-health.

The day will include:

- Information and advice about finding work - paid and voluntary
- Workshops including interview preparation and techniques
- Marketplace with local service providers and businesses
- The opportunity to buy low cost interview/work clothes
- Guest speakers including Clive Barker, South East London Chamber of Commerce President.

The organisers are seeking donations of men and women's clothing (washed and ironed) and accessories like shoes, belts and bags for this event.

Local employers are invited to register to join the marketplace or just come along on the day.

The groundbreaking day runs from 10.30am to 4pm on Friday 23 September at: The Education Development Centre, Church Lane, Princes Plain, Bromley BR2 8LD.

All inquiries please contact Julia Vater at: julia.vater@oxleas.nhs.uk or 020 8295 8060 or Japleen Kaur at japleen.kaur@oxleas.nhs.uk or 020 8301 9438.

Please send us your letters and news stories. You can contact the Communications Team at: exchange@oxleas.nhs.uk or call 01322 625754 or write to us at Communications, Pinewood House, Pinewood Place, Dartford, Kent DA2 7WG.

If you prefer to receive Oxleas Exchange by email, please email us at: exchange@oxleas.nhs.uk