



Gloucestershire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



Proud to **care**

Our review of the year, 2025–2026



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Foreword by the Chair and Chief Executive



2025/26 was a year of progress and change. Despite continued pressures across the NHS, industrial action, financial challenges and increased scrutiny on some services, our colleagues remained focused on providing safe and compassionate care for our patients.

This year saw the introduction of our new Trust values: We are Caring, We are Compassionate, We are Inclusive and We are Accountable. These values set out the behaviours we want to see across our organisation. They reflect how we support our patients, families and colleagues through kindness, respect, listening and taking responsibility for the care we provide.

The year also marked the launch of our new Trust strategy, setting out our ambitions for the years ahead. Alongside our values, it provides a clear direction for how we will improve services, support our people, work with our communities and create sustainable healthcare for the future.

We made progress across several key areas. Our work to improve patient flow helped reduce delays in urgent and emergency care, while continued recovery of planned services meant more patients were able to receive treatment sooner. Meanwhile, investment in buildings, equipment and technology has strengthened our services and supported future improvements.

we are caring

We show kindness and concern for others, recognising the importance of each interaction and every person's experience.

we are inclusive

We build positive relationships by listening, respecting and valuing the experiences of patients, families and colleagues.

we are accountable

We work to ensure everyone receives the care and support they need, regardless of identity or background.

we are compassionate

We take personal responsibility for our actions, decisions and behaviours, and we are committed to learning and improving.

Our achievements this year reflect the commitment of our people. Across our hospitals and services, colleagues have worked together to improve care, find new ways of working and support each other through a demanding period. Their dedication has made a positive difference to patients, families and communities.

Quality and safety have remained central to our work. We have listened to patients, families and staff, learned from reviews and continued to strengthen the way we monitor and improve care. In maternity services, we have responded to external reviews and recommendations with a clear focus on improvement, strengthening leadership, governance and support for women, families and colleagues.

We have continued to develop our role in research, education and innovation. Through partnerships and research activity, we are helping to improve healthcare now and support the development of future services and professionals.

While we are proud of the progress made, we recognise there is more to do. Challenges remain in areas including urgent and emergency care, workforce pressures, financial sustainability and improving performance where it is not yet where we want it to be.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to listening, learning and improving, working with our patients, staff and partners to provide the best care for every patient, every day.



K. McNamara

Kevin McNamara
Chief Executive



Deborah Evans

Deborah Evans
Chair

Responding to challenges

We have been open about where we need to improve and continue to take action to strengthen services, support our people and improve patient care.

Managing pressure in urgent and emergency care

Demand kept rising this year. Teams improved patient flow and discharge processes to help patients access care more quickly.

Strengthening maternity services

Following external reviews, we've strengthened maternity services through leadership changes, stronger governance and investment in quality and safety, with women, families and colleagues central to that work.

Supporting our workforce

Workforce pressures remain a challenge across the NHS. We focused on recruitment, retention, wellbeing and leadership development.

Delivering sustainable services

Financial pressure means we must keep improving productivity while providing high-quality, sustainable care.

Looking ahead

We've made real progress this year, with more work still ahead, and we'll keep working with patients, staff and partners to meet our communities' needs.

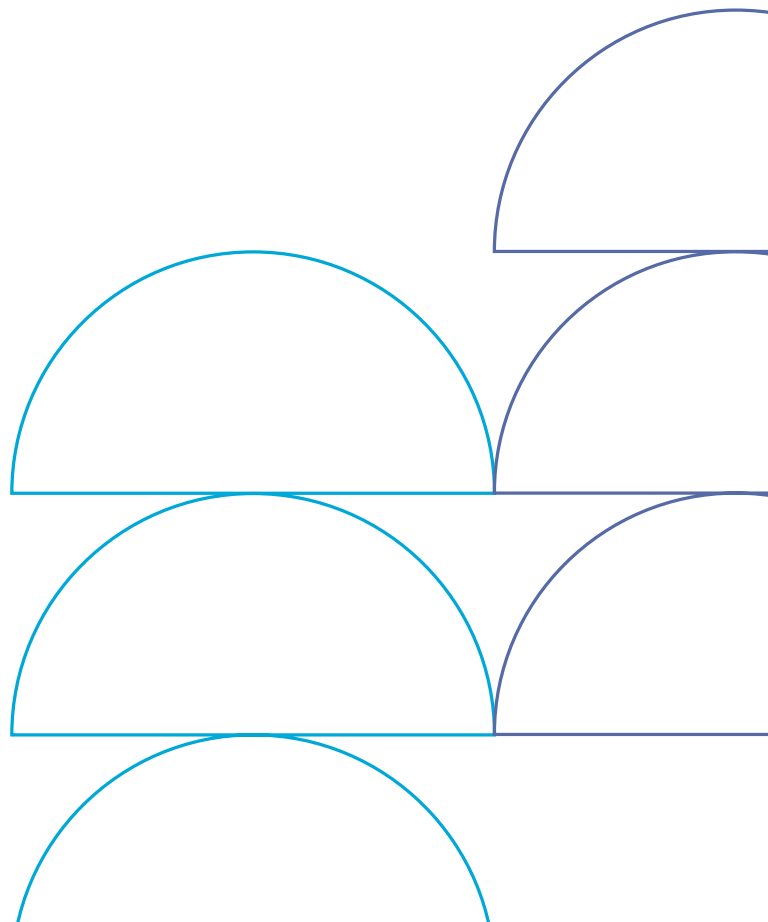


About Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is a provider of local and acute care, delivering good-quality services to over 650,000 people living across the county. We provide whole-life care, supporting our communities to live healthier lives and caring for people when they need us most.

We employ almost 9,000 colleagues and together we provide a wide range of inpatient and outpatient services, as well as emergency and planned care at our two main district hospitals.

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust received authorisation on 1 July 2004. It was formed from Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust, which was established following a reconfiguration of health services in Gloucestershire in 2002.



Our hospitals



Gloucestershire Royal Hospital (GRH)

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital (GRH) is located close to the city centre in Gloucester and specialises in unscheduled care, Urgent and Emergency Care, Cardiology, Renal care, Maternity and Neonatal care, is also the base for our Children's wards and Emergency Department.



Cheltenham General Hospital (CGH)

Cheltenham General Hospital is located in the east of the county and is our planned care centre, providing specialist Cancer and Oncology services, Stroke, Urology and Care of the Elderly as well as an Emergency Department.



Stroud Maternity Hospital

Stroud Maternity Hospital is a midwife-led centre that helps deliver around 300 births every year, supporting births at home and in the unit.



Other community-based services

We delivered a range of surgery, outpatient clinics, diagnostic and screening services from community hospitals throughout Gloucestershire and the Community Diagnostics Centre (CDC). Our Trust also provides services at the satellite radiotherapy centre at Hereford County Hospital.

Our Trust in numbers

On an average day, our teams provide a wide range of care, treatments and services for our communities.



Our year at a glance

From improving patient flow and reducing waiting times to investing in facilities and supporting our workforce, this year has seen progress across many areas.

Reducing delays and improving flow

- ▶ Our Clinical Vision of Flow programme improved patient movement through our hospitals, reducing avoidable delays and supporting safer care.
- ▶ Ambulance handover delays decreased significantly, with average handover times improving to 22 minutes.
- ▶ Improvements in discharge processes and working closely with our partners helped lower the number of patients waiting for onward care.

Helping patients receive treatment sooner

- ▶ Work to recover elective (planned) care reduced the number of patients waiting longer for treatment.
- ▶ Referral to Treatment (RTT) performance improved to 74.4%, with fewer patients waiting more than 45 weeks and 52 weeks.
- ▶ Additional diagnostic capacity helped more patients receive investigations sooner.

Investing in our services and facilities

- ▶ £54.5 million was invested in capital projects to improve buildings, equipment and technology.
- ▶ New facilities and service developments strengthened our ability to provide reliable healthcare services.

- ▶ Digital improvements supported better ways of working for patients and staff.

Supporting our people

- ▶ We continued to invest in leadership, development and staff experience.
- ▶ Teams across the organisation worked together to maintain services during a challenging year.
- ▶ Our people demonstrated our values through the care they provided and the improvements they helped deliver.

Advancing research and education

- ▶ Research activity continued to grow, strengthening our role as a learning organisation.
- ▶ Staff contributed to research publications and collaborations.
- ▶ Education and training remained central to developing the future healthcare workforce.

Working with our communities

- ▶ Partnerships with charities, volunteers and community organisations continued to support patients and services.
- ▶ Fundraising and community support helped improve experiences for patients and families.

Throughout this review, you will see examples of how our people have brought our values to life through improving services, supporting each other and making a difference for patients and communities.

Year in review

April

2025

- ▶ Recovery in focus: Awal's journey through Gloucestershire's Stroke Centre of Excellence
- ▶ Cancer Care on the move: mobile cancer care unit 'Helen' gets a brand-new look
- ▶ Filipino nurses celebrate 25 years of service



Recovery in focus: Awal's journey through Gloucestershire's Stroke Centre of Excellence

One patient's journey through Gloucestershire Hospitals' Stroke Centre of Excellence at Cheltenham General Hospital highlights the speed and coordination of stroke care across the Trust.

After experiencing sudden symptoms, patient Awal was rapidly assessed and transferred for urgent specialist treatment, ensuring timely intervention at a critical stage.

“Awal's story is a reminder of what joined-up stroke care can achieve”

Throughout his care, Awal was supported by a multidisciplinary stroke team working closely together to deliver diagnosis, treatment and early rehabilitation. This coordinated approach ensured care was delivered quickly and efficiently, with a focus on improving outcomes and supporting recovery.

Early rehabilitation played an important role in Awal's progress, with therapy teams helping to rebuild strength, mobility and independence soon after admission. The close integration of acute treatment and rehabilitation supports a smoother recovery pathway for patients.

Awal's story is a reminder of what joined-up stroke care can achieve, from rapid specialist treatment to the practical support that helps people regain confidence after a life-changing event.

Cancer care on the move: mobile cancer care unit 'Helen' gets a brand-new look

A newly upgraded mobile cancer care unit, 'Helen', officially launched in Gloucestershire on 15 April, bringing life-saving cancer care closer to patients across the county.

The unit, provided by the cancer care charity Hope for Tomorrow in partnership with the Trust, offers patients a more convenient, accessible and comfortable way to receive vital treatment in their local community.

Originally launched in 2007 as the world's first mobile cancer care unit, 'Helen' has played a crucial role in supporting NHS oncology services in Gloucestershire for over 17 years.

When starting systemic anti-cancer therapy (SACT) treatment (also known as chemotherapy/immunotherapy), patients begin their treatment at Cheltenham General Hospital. They're then informed if they're eligible to receive subsequent treatments closer to home on the mobile unit.

Based at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, 'Helen' also visits Cinderford, Stroud and Gloucester, providing cancer services to up to four patients at a time and seeing an average of 20 patients per day.

Over the past year alone, more than 1,820 patient visits have taken place on board, reducing pressure on hospital-based oncology services and helping patients avoid unnecessary travel and the associated time and costs.



Filipino nurses celebrate 25 years of service



Six Filipino nurses celebrated 25 years of service at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust in April 2025.

The nurses were recruited in the Philippines as part of a wider cohort and travelled to London before being assigned to work in Cheltenham in spring 2000.

The group were among 27 nurses who began working at Cheltenham General Hospital and Delancey Hospital and have remained in contact with many of their original colleagues who also joined the Trust at that time. Over the past 25 years, they have worked across a range of specialisms and developed long-standing careers within the organisation.

“This milestone reflects their long-standing commitment to the NHS”

When they first arrived in the UK, many were living abroad for the first time. They completed a short induction to help them settle into life in a new country, including practical support with everyday activities and adjustment to a different culture and climate.

The Filipino nurses still work across departments within the Trust, contributing to patient care and services in Gloucestershire. This milestone reflects their long-standing commitment to the NHS and the contribution of internationally recruited staff to the local workforce.

Year in review

May

2025

- ▶ Cheltenham General Hospital welcomes new MRI scanner
- ▶ New MiniTom child-friendly imaging simulator
- ▶ Supporting Dementia Action Week 2025
- ▶ Gloucestershire Royal celebrates endoscopy service expansion
- ▶ Research and innovation: improving patient care and driving innovation



Cheltenham General welcomes new MRI scanner

Cheltenham General Hospital welcomed a brand-new state-of-the-art MRI scanner, marking a major upgrade in diagnostic imaging services at the Trust. The new GE Signa Voyager MRI system replaced the previous scanner, which had been in use for over 12 years and was reaching the end of its life.

“The new technology provides improved image quality and faster scan times, supporting more accurate diagnosis”

The scanner was carefully craned into position following detailed coordination between Trust teams and specialist contractors. Installation also included essential updates to the chiller system to ensure the equipment operates at optimal performance. Staff training was carried out alongside installation to prepare teams for its introduction into clinical use.

The new scanner restored Cheltenham General Hospital's MRI capacity to two scanners, improving resilience and helping meet growing demand for diagnostic imaging across the county. The upgrade forms part of wider work to improve diagnostic services and reduce waiting times for patients.

The new technology provides improved image quality and faster scan times, supporting more accurate diagnosis and a more efficient patient experience. The investment strengthened MRI provision at Cheltenham General Hospital and contributed to improved capacity and performance across Gloucestershire's imaging services.

New MiniTom child-friendly imaging simulator

In May 2025, a new child-friendly imaging simulator arrived to help reduce anxiety and improve the experience of children attending for scans. The Siemens MiniTom simulator unit was introduced to support young patients preparing for imaging procedures such as CT and MRI.

The equipment was funded by a generous donation from The Pied Piper Appeal through the Cheltenham and Gloucester Hospitals Charity. It includes a learning simulator designed to help children understand what will happen during their scan before their appointment takes place.

The MiniTom features a miniature scanner with a movable table and tablet-based demonstrations. Children can practise the process and scan a soft toy, making the experience more familiar. The tablet also plays MRI scanner sounds to help children become accustomed to unfamiliar noises.

Karen Long, MRI Superintendent Radiographer, said, “The simulator helps children feel more in control and ready, supporting teams to obtain high-quality images without the need for sedation.”

By building understanding in advance, the approach helps reduce fear, helps to avoid general anaesthetic wherever possible and keeps examinations smooth and stress-free.



Supporting Dementia Action Week 2025

We were pleased to support Dementia Action Week 2025 from 19 to 25 May, with this year's national focus on promoting timely and accurate dementia diagnoses.

"The Dementia Team works to embed good practice and improve the experience of patients living with dementia and those who support them."

Across England, only around 65.7% of people aged 65 and over who are estimated to have dementia currently have a recorded diagnosis, according to NHS Digital. This means many people are living without access to the care, treatment and help they may need. Receiving a timely diagnosis plays a vital role in helping individuals and their families plan ahead and access the right support at the right time.

The Dementia Team works to embed good practice and improve the experience of patients living with dementia and those who support them. We have a range of initiatives to support personalised, compassionate care. These include 'This is Me' - a document developed by the Alzheimer's Society to help staff understand a person's needs, background and preferences. We also support John's Campaign, which enables carers to stay overnight with their loved ones in hospital.

Our Admiral Nurse Service, led by Asma Pandor, provides expert dementia support for families through self-referral. Additional support includes the Carer's Passport and close partnership working with Gloucestershire Carers Hub to help carers access further advice and resources.

'Sounds of the Soul' playlist launched to support Muslim dementia patients



During Dementia Action Week, a new music initiative was launched to support the wellbeing of Muslim patients living with dementia. Working in collaboration with Gloucestershire charity Mindsong, we introduced "Sounds of the Soul", a culturally sensitive playlist designed to enhance comfort and connection.

The playlist features a carefully selected range of calming and traditional songs that reflected the cultural and spiritual heritage of the Muslim community. It was developed in response to the recognised benefits of music for people living with dementia, particularly in supporting emotional wellbeing, reducing anxiety and encouraging familiarity.

The initiative highlighted the importance of culturally appropriate approaches to dementia care and the role music played in supporting identity and memory.

Juwairiyia Motala, Community Engagement and Involvement Manager, said, "The project demonstrates how meaningful music can act as a bridge to the past, to loved ones and to a person's sense of self."

Gloucestershire Royal celebrates endoscopy service expansion

In May 2025, the Endoscopy Unit at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital celebrated the opening of its upgraded facilities following the installation of state-of-the-art imaging technology designed to enhance patient care.

The development included the introduction of a fixed C-Arm, a key piece of imaging equipment used during Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) procedures, which combine endoscopy and X-ray imaging to diagnose and treat conditions affecting the bile and pancreatic ducts, including gallstones and other digestive disorders.

Consultant Gastroenterologist Dr Ashish Sinha said, "The upgrade allows the team to capture higher quality images with greater diagnostic accuracy, leading to improved outcomes for patients." He also highlighted that the unit's strong regional reputation for innovation was further strengthened, opening opportunities for future training and service growth.

Across the Trust, around 20,000 endoscopic procedures are carried out each year. The expansion marks an important step in continuing to provide safe, timely and high-quality care.



Research and innovation: improving patient care and driving innovation

Our research and innovation teams celebrated a series of achievements in May 2025 that showcased outstanding work to improve patient care and drive innovation.

"These achievements demonstrated the breadth of research and innovation taking place across the trust"

Dr Sarah Vinnicombe was recognised for her contribution to the BRAID Trial, a collaboration with the University of Cambridge, with interim results published in The Lancet. The trial considers the impact of supplementary imaging in the detection of breast cancer in women. We were the second-highest recruiting site for the trial.

We also celebrated success in securing competitive research funding. With support from our Library and Knowledge services team, the RIG team secured two NHS NetZero InSites grants, one of only four awards made nationally.

Two Somerset, Wiltshire, Avon and Gloucestershire (SWAG) Cancer Alliance grants were also awarded, supporting innovative projects focused on artificial intelligence in prostate biopsies. Three University of Gloucestershire Small Grants further supported research across the Trust.

These achievements demonstrated the breadth of research and innovation taking place across the trust, as well as the commitment of teams working to improve outcomes and experiences for our patients.

Year in review

June

2025

- ▶ Celebrating our hospital volunteers in Volunteers Week
- ▶ Dietitians Week
- ▶ Supporting Carers Week
- ▶ Supporting every step: a closer look at our Skin Cancer Care team
- ▶ Opening of new modular MRI Unit at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital (GRH)



Celebrating our hospital volunteers in Volunteers Week

Volunteers' Week, running from 2 to 8 June 2025, is an annual opportunity to recognise and celebrate the contribution volunteers make across the UK. During the week, we celebrate our hospital volunteers and the vital role they play in supporting patients, families and staff.

Across the Trust, more than 260 volunteers support services across both hospital sites, generously giving over 1,000 hours of their time every week. Volunteers work in a wide range of roles, from welcoming patients and visitors at entrances and welcome desks to supporting wards, outpatient areas and emergency departments. Others help with administrative tasks, tend hospital gardens, support cognitive stimulation groups for patients living with dementia or simply spend time with patients who need companionship.

“Our volunteers range in age from 17 to 90 and bring warmth, reassurance and practical support to hospital settings”

Alongside our highly visible red-shirt volunteers, others work behind the scenes or provide specialist support through chaplaincy services, oncology hubs, neonatal family support and youth engagement. Together, they make a meaningful difference to the hospital experience every day.

Dietitians at the heart of patient care



Dietitians Week, held from 2 to 6 June 2025, recognised the vital work of registered dietitians across the UK. Dietitians are qualified health professionals trained to assess, diagnose and treat dietary and nutritional problems at both individual and population level.

The week aimed to highlight that dietetics is about far more than food advice. Dietitians play a key role in reducing hospital admissions, freeing up bed space, cutting NHS costs and supporting patients to live longer, healthier lives. Working across wards, outpatient clinics and GP practices, they deliver measurable benefits for patients, staff and the wider NHS.

Dietitian-led care has been shown to reduce length of stay, lower admission and mortality rates and improve outcomes such as strength, frailty and long-term condition management. Services supported by dietitians also reduce unplanned admissions and saved valuable hospital bed days.

Dietitians Week reinforced the importance of investing in dietetic services as both good clinical practice and a cost-effective approach to improving care.

Supporting Carers Week 9–15 June 2025

Carers Week, which took place from 9 to 15 June in 2025, is a national awareness campaign that highlights the invaluable role of unpaid carers. Carers provide essential support to family members or friends living with illness, disability, mental health conditions or age-related challenges.

Led by Carers UK, the week also encourages people who may not identify as carers to recognise their role and seek support. This year's theme, Caring About Equality, called for a fairer society in which carers are recognised, respected and supported in all aspects of life.

Carers are encouraged to let staff know about their caring role when visiting or staying in hospital, so appropriate support and guidance can be offered. Several initiatives are already in place to support carers, including John's Campaign, which enables carers to stay with their loved ones in hospital, and the Carer's Passport, offering enhanced visiting and practical support such as access to refreshments.

We also work closely with Gloucestershire Carers Hub to connect carers with additional advice, emotional support and community resources. Carers play a vital role, often balancing complex responsibilities alongside their own wellbeing, and this week provides an important opportunity to recognise their contribution.

Supporting every step: a closer look at our Skin Cancer Care team



For many patients, a skin cancer diagnosis can feel overwhelming. Our specialist Skin Cancer Care Team understands this and provides support that goes far beyond the clinical aspects of treatment.

With a compassionate and personalised approach, the team supports patients from the point of diagnosis through treatment, follow-up and recovery, often building long-standing relationships along the way. The team is made up of six Skin Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialists and two Cancer Support Workers.

Each year, the team supports around 6,000 patients, including approximately 250 people newly diagnosed with melanoma, as well as those living with squamous cell carcinoma, basal cell carcinoma and rarer skin cancers. Some patients require lifelong monitoring due to genetic conditions.

The service operates using a nurse-led model, an approach that improves consistency and coordination through nurse-led triage, assessment clinics and dedicated appointments for delivering significant news. Together, the team provides consistent, expert and compassionate support at every stage of the patient journey.

Opening of new modular MRI Unit at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital (GRH)

June saw the official opening of a new modular MRI unit at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, marking an important milestone in strengthening diagnostic services for patients.

The new purpose-built facility is designed to provide a calm and welcoming environment for patients while offering a modern and efficient workspace for staff. Equipped with a state-of-the-art MRI scanner, the unit enhances the diagnostic experience and supports the delivery of high-quality care.

The new unit is making a difference for patients, enabling more people to be seen more quickly and helping to reduce

delays for those waiting for urgent and emergency scans in the Emergency Department and acute medicine.

This investment helps ensure patients can access MRI scans sooner, in a calmer setting, supported by teams with the space and equipment they need.



Year in review

July

2025

- ▶ The Big Space Cancer Appeal aims to transform cancer care for thousands of patients
- ▶ Sustainability report shows cuts in our carbon emissions
- ▶ Lions at Large – The Pride of Gloucestershire Trail
- ▶ Maggie Ireland's 50 years in nursing



The Big Space Cancer Appeal aims to transform cancer care for thousands of patients

The Big Space Cancer Appeal aims to transform cancer care for thousands of patients by creating a modern, purpose-built cancer centre at Cheltenham General Hospital.

“The vision is to create a spacious, welcoming environment designed around patients and staff.”

Cancer teams currently care for around 5,000 patients each year, delivering compassionate and highly personalised care, often under significant pressure. However, the existing cancer centre building is now nearly 25 years old and no longer meets the needs of modern cancer services. Limited space, privacy and facilities affect both patient experience and how staff are able to deliver care.

The vision is to create a spacious, welcoming environment designed around patients and staff. Plans include digital consulting rooms, multidisciplinary clinics and calm, well-lit spaces connected to therapeutic outdoor areas. This supports wider plans to develop centres of excellence, with Cheltenham focused on planned cancer care and Gloucester on specialist urgent and emergency services.

The appeal is led by Cheltenham and Gloucester Hospitals Charity and supported by the Trust. £17.5 million is needed to deliver the project, with £9 million already raised and a further £8.5 million sought through public fundraising.

Sustainability report shows cuts in our carbon emissions



The publication of our 2024–25 Sustainability Report highlighted a range of actions already making a difference. We continue to make progress in cutting carbon emissions, with a 2.4% reduction recorded in 2024–25 compared to the previous year. This is equivalent to the annual energy use of around 2,500 homes and reflects an ongoing commitment to delivering greener, more sustainable healthcare for local communities.

In maternity services, a new Entonox Processing Unit is now in place, capturing and neutralising nitrous oxide and significantly cutting emissions while improving air quality. The use of Entonox had been responsible for the equivalent of around 500 tonnes of carbon dioxide each year, comparable to driving more than seven million miles. This creates a cleaner and safer working environment while significantly reducing environmental impact.

We continue to invest in estates improvements, including triple glazing at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, new solar panels and the rollout of LED lighting across both sites. Anaesthetic gas emissions have been reduced by 9% and more than 180,000 online appointments help patients avoid unnecessary travel.

The report also sets out future projects, including electric vehicle feasibility studies, water efficiency upgrades and expanded green spaces, supporting the NHS ambition to reach net zero by 2040.



Lions at Large – The Pride of Gloucestershire Trail

In July 2025, families across Gloucestershire followed the roar of a pride of lions as Lions at Large – The Pride of Gloucestershire Trail brought 32 spectacular lion sculptures and 54 smaller Cub Club lions to streets, landmarks and community spaces across Cheltenham and Gloucester.

Running from 11 July to 14 September, the free family trail was organised by Cheltenham and Gloucester Hospitals Charity to raise funds for The Big Space Cancer Appeal, helping to create a bigger, brighter home for cancer care at Cheltenham General Hospital.

The new cancer centre will provide modern consulting rooms, digital technology, space for research and innovation, and a therapeutic garden. By the launch of the trail, the appeal had already raised £9 million towards its £17.5 million target, with the event encouraging even more people to support the cause.

Created in partnership with Wild in Art, the trail brought together artists, schools, community groups, businesses and volunteers in a county-wide celebration of creativity.

One of the sculptures, Hive Majesty, was sponsored by our partner Gloucestershire Managed Services (GMS), painted by talented local artist Emily Calvert. The intricate bees featured throughout the sculpture represent GMS colleagues – the vital ‘worker bees’ behind the scenes, supporting hospital operations across our sites every day.

Visitors explored the trail using a dedicated app, trail map and sticker safari book, collecting rewards along the way. More than 75 local businesses supported the project, helping bring the lions to life.

The trail left a lasting legacy, raising awareness and vital funds to help transform cancer care for patients and families across Gloucestershire.



Maggie Ireland's 50 years in nursing

Maggie Ireland celebrated 50 years in nursing in July 2025, marking a remarkable career dedicated to caring for patients across our hospitals. Maggie began her nursing journey in January 1975 and colleagues organised a surprise celebration to recognise her half-century of service as an NHS nurse.

Maggie currently works on Ward 9A at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and has been a gynaecology nurse for more than 40 years. She started her career as a pupil nurse at GRH in Southgate Street before qualifying as a State Enrolled Nurse and working in surgery. In 1982, she moved into gynaecology, where she built a wealth of experience across several wards and later worked permanent nights.

In the early 2000s, Maggie converted to a Registered General Nurse and continued working nights before moving to a mix of day and night shifts. In 2012, she retired and later returned, continuing to support patients and colleagues.

Known for her compassion, dedication and expertise, Maggie continues to make a lasting difference to patients and teams every day.



Year in review

August

2025

- ▶ Gloucestershire team double their medal tally at the British Transplant Games
- ▶ Powering the future: Gloucestershire Royal launches major high voltage infrastructure upgrade
- ▶ Cancer patients given enhanced access to new cancer vaccine trial
- ▶ Newborns in Gloucestershire to benefit from groundbreaking genomic study



Gloucestershire team double their medal tally at the British Transplant Games

The Gloucestershire team doubled their medal tally at the British Transplant Games in Oxford, winning a total of eight medals. Building on their success at last year's Games, the team secured four gold medals, two silver and two bronze against strong national competition.

Sixteen competitors represented Gloucestershire at the Games. Sarah Ryder, Renal Transplant Specialist Nurse, said the sense of support within the team was once again a highlight and described the event as an amazing experience.

Among this year's competitors was Adam Collins, 57, from Cirencester, who was due to represent Gloucestershire in golf. Thirteen years ago, Adam was diagnosed with kidney failure and began dialysis. A year later, he received a kidney transplant from his brother, Steven, at the Churchill Hospital in Oxford. Since his transplant, Adam has returned to an active lifestyle and now plays golf several times a week. He describes the transplant as giving him his life back and says competing in the Games is a way to celebrate that second chance and thank his brother for his gift.



Powering the future: Gloucestershire Royal launches major high voltage infrastructure upgrade

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital began a major upgrade of its high-voltage electrical infrastructure in August, strengthening long-term power resilience and supporting future clinical and technological needs.

“The project focuses on replacing ageing electrical systems”

The multi-million-pound, two-year programme forms a key part of our 10-year infrastructure strategy and is managed by Gloucestershire Managed Services (GMS) on behalf of the Trust. The project focuses on replacing ageing electrical systems and improving site-wide resilience to ensure reliable, uninterrupted power across the hospital.

Transformer capacity is being enhanced alongside a new low-voltage switch panel to meet growing demand from clinical services and equipment. Temporary power solutions and no-break facilities are in place to maintain continuous service throughout the works.

Civil engineering activity includes new fuel tanks, external radiators, exhaust chimneys and acoustic enclosures, all carefully planned to minimise disruption and meet environmental standards. The project also delivers environmental benefits, with 15 mature English oak trees planted to enhance green space and biodiversity.

This upgrade ensures the hospital's infrastructure remains resilient, compliant and capable of supporting high-quality patient care now and in the future.

Cancer patients given enhanced access to new cancer vaccine trial

Patients in the county with advanced head and neck cancer have been given enhanced access to a clinical trial of a potential new cancer vaccine through the NHS Cancer Vaccine Launch Pad.

We're a referring site for the latest trial on the Cancer Vaccine Launch Pad, a national trial matching service coordinated by the Southampton Clinical Trials Unit on behalf of NHS England. Eligible patients receiving care at our hospitals can be referred to the nearest NHS hospital running the trial to take part.

“Our Clinical and Research teams work closely together to support patient access to groundbreaking research”

The investigational vaccine uses mRNA technology to help the immune system recognise and target cancer cells linked to human papillomavirus. More than 100 patients across England are expected to take part, with the trial running at 15 NHS hospitals over the next year.

Our Clinical and Research teams work closely together to support patient access to groundbreaking research. We're also involved in other cancer vaccine studies, including trials for colorectal cancer and advanced malignant melanoma, and continue to engage with future research opportunities.

The Cancer Vaccine Launch Pad already supports trials for bowel, skin and head and neck cancers and plays a key role in widening access to cutting-edge cancer treatments across the NHS.

Newborns to benefit from groundbreaking genomic study



Newborns in Gloucestershire now have access to advanced genomic screening as we take part in the national Generation Study, a major research programme exploring how whole genome sequencing can improve the early diagnosis of rare genetic conditions.

Led by Genomics England and supported by NHS England, the Generation Study aims to recruit up to 100,000 babies across England. It focuses on identifying more than 200 rare, early-onset and treatable genetic conditions shortly after birth, often before symptoms appear. Participating sites locally include Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and Stroud Maternity Hospital.

The study examines how whole genome sequencing can support earlier diagnosis, faster access to treatment and improved outcomes for babies and their families. It also explores how this approach could be integrated into routine NHS care in the future, helping to shape the next generation of personalised medicine.

Eligible parents are invited to take part during pregnancy, with information shared through midwives, posters and digital channels. Participation is voluntary and all data is handled to the highest standards of privacy and ethics. Taking part in the Generation Study supports research, innovation and earlier intervention for families across Gloucestershire.

Year in review

September

2025

- ▶ Radiotherapy Late Effects service secured for the future
- ▶ Publication of maternity reviews
- ▶ Organ Donation Week 22 to 28 September



Radiotherapy Late Effects service secured for the future

A vital cancer support service for people living with the late effects of radiotherapy is now secured for the future across the South West, including at our hospitals.

The Radiotherapy Late Effects Service provides specialist clinical and emotional support for people who experience side effects months or even years after radiotherapy treatment. Recommissioned by NHS England in partnership with the Somerset, Wiltshire, Avon and Gloucestershire Cancer Alliance, the service supports patients with a wide range of long-term symptoms that can significantly affect quality of life.

“The service was first launched as a pilot in 2022 with support from Macmillan and has already supported more than 1,000 patients locally.”

The service was first launched as a pilot in 2022 with support from Macmillan and has already supported more than 1,000 patients locally. This renewed commissioning ensures that anyone who has received radiotherapy as part of their cancer treatment can continue to access expert help for ongoing or delayed side effects.

Led by specialist radiographers, the service offers clear referral pathways and works closely with other expert services across the region. Plans include expanding the team, running targeted group clinics and increasing education for primary care professionals to improve access and awareness. By securing the service long term, patients across the South West continue to benefit from consistent, specialist support beyond their initial cancer treatment.



Publication of maternity reviews

In 2024, our Board commissioned two independent reviews into maternal and neonatal deaths to identify further learning and areas for improvement in our Maternity Services. Published in September 2025, the reviews confirmed that there had been failings in the past and we acknowledged the devastating impact this has had on the families affected.

The findings from the two reviews were brought together in the Perinatal Mortality Report, which was presented to the Board in September 2025. The reviews examined the quality of care provided between 2017 and 2023 and identified instances where standards were not met, including cases that were not fully investigated at the time.

Over the past two years, significant investment has been made in maternity services, including an increase in midwives and continued investment in doctors. We continue to work closely with regulators to address identified gaps and remain fully committed to building on this work to improve care for families across Gloucestershire.

In June 2025, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced a national investigation into maternity and neonatal care and said a taskforce to share learning and best practice would also be established. In August, Baroness Valerie Amos was announced by the Health and Social Care Secretary as the lead of the national maternity and neonatal investigation.

On 15 September 2025, it was announced that Gloucestershire Hospitals would be included in the National Maternity and Neonatal Investigation.

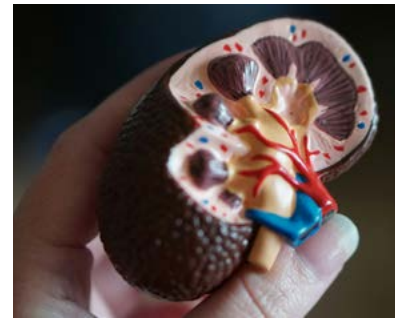


“We fully support this important national review and are committed to working openly and constructively with the investigation team”

The Trust was one of 14 trusts included in the investigation. We fully supported this important review and committed to working openly and constructively with the investigation team.

The investigation is divided into two parts; the first will investigate the 14 maternity and neonatal units and identify ways to improve care and safety, while the second will undertake a system-wide look at maternity and neonatal care, bringing together lessons from past inquiries to create one clear, national set of actions to improve care across every NHS maternity service.

Trusts were included in the review based on a range of factors. These include data and metrics designed to capture individual elements of a trust's outcomes and its patients' experiences, as well as ensuring a diverse mix of trusts.



Organ Donation Week 22 to 28 September

Organ Donation Week highlights the life-changing impact of organ donation and encourages people to consider registering their decision to donate.

One powerful story was shared by James, who donated a kidney to his identical twin brother, Tim. In 2013, the brothers underwent surgery at Royal Liverpool Hospital after Tim's remaining kidney began to fail following lifelong health challenges. Being identical twins meant they were a perfect genetic match, making donation possible with a very low risk of rejection.

The transplant enabled Tim to regain his strength and quality of life, while James recovered knowing his donation had given his brother a second chance. The brothers even went on to compete together in the NHS Transplant Games the following year, celebrating what is possible after transplantation.

"The transplant enabled Tim to regain his strength and quality of life, while James recovered knowing his donation had given his brother a second chance."

Stories like James and Tim's show how organ donation can transform lives. Organ Donation Week is an opportunity to reflect on that impact and to encourage others to register their decision on the Organ Donation Register, helping give more people the chance of a healthier future.

Year in review

October

2025

► You are not alone: standing with families during Baby Loss Awareness Week

► Hate Has No Home in Gloucestershire



You are not alone: standing with families during Baby Loss Awareness Week

From 9 to 15 October, we joined people across the country in marking Baby Loss Awareness Week, a time to remember babies who have died during pregnancy, at birth or in infancy, and to offer support to everyone affected by loss.

Baby loss has a devastating and long-lasting impact, and many parents and families experience feelings of isolation and grief. We want families, friends and loved ones to know they are not alone and that compassionate support is always available.

To mark the week, our Women's Centre and Baby Remembrance Garden at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital were lit in pink and blue, alongside landmarks across the UK. We also held our annual Baby Remembrance Service at St Luke's Church in Cheltenham, opposite the A&E entrance, on Friday 10 October. The service provides a quiet, safe space for reflection, remembrance and coming together.

We're committed to supporting families affected by baby loss and to equipping staff with the training they need to provide compassionate, sensitive care during pregnancy, at the time of loss and in subsequent pregnancies.



Hate Has No Home in Gloucestershire

In October 2025, leaders from Gloucestershire's health and social care community spoke out together to express deep concern about a reported rise in racially motivated incidents affecting local communities and staff.

The statement followed a number of national incidents and reflected shared concern about the impact of hate, intimidation and division.

While peaceful protest and respectful political debate are recognised as democratic rights, recent actions by a small minority have created environments where verbal and physical abuse has increased. Health and social care staff have been directly affected while carrying out their roles caring for the community.

Our health and social care system relies on a skilled, multinational workforce and we stand with colleagues from all backgrounds. We are committed to ensuring everyone feels safe, supported and valued at work.

“Our health and social care system relies on a skilled, multinational workforce and we stand with colleagues from all backgrounds.”

Action continues to be taken to address hate crime, including close working with local police and community groups, promoting inclusion and encouraging reporting. Our message remains clear: Gloucestershire is a place where hate has no home and everyone should be able to live, work and thrive without fear.



Year in review

November

2025

- ▶ Supporting Patients with 'This Is Me' on Knightsbridge ward
- ▶ Small fire at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital
- ▶ Celebrating Nursing Support Workers' Day
- ▶ World AMR Awareness Week 2025
- ▶ Temporary suspension of home births

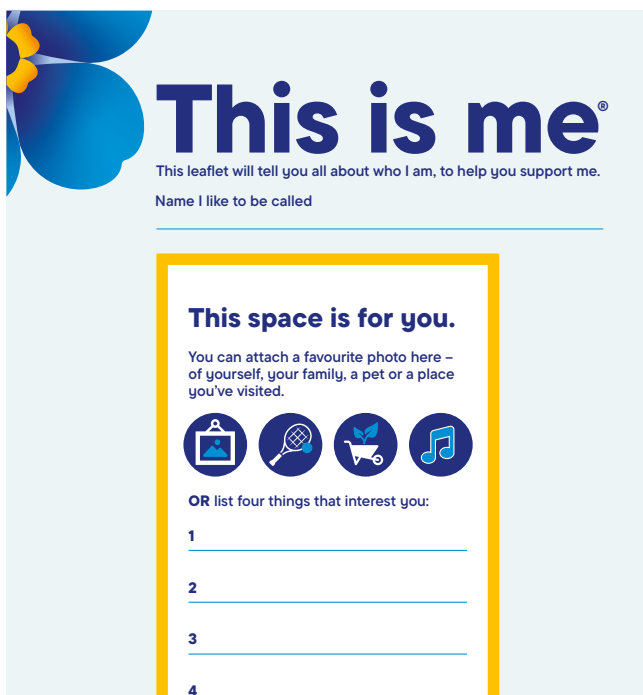


Supporting Patients with 'This Is Me' on Knightsbridge ward

Supporting patients who have dementia, delirium or communication difficulties is a key part of compassionate care on Knightsbridge Ward. Being in hospital can feel confusing or distressing and the This Is Me document helps staff understand the person behind the condition so care can be truly personalised.

'This Is Me' captures important details such as preferred names, routines, interests and what helps or causes distress. Patients or carers can obtain the document from their GP, memory services or other health and social care providers and are encouraged to bring it in as soon as someone is admitted. The document is used not only for people living with dementia but also for patients with learning disabilities or autism. Carers and families are actively involved and supported to share what matters most to their loved one.

By embedding This Is Me into everyday practice, Knightsbridge Ward continues to provide care that is respectful, individualised and reassuring for patients and families.



This is me[®]

This leaflet will tell you all about who I am, to help you support me.

Name I like to be called _____

This space is for you.

You can attach a favourite photo here – of yourself, your family, a pet or a place you've visited.






OR list four things that interest you:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

Small fire at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

On 4 November 2025, a small fire occurred on the eighth floor of the Tower Block at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital shortly before 8am. The fire was quickly contained and there was no ongoing risk to patients, staff or visitors.

“Teams responded immediately and followed established safety procedures.”

The incident was caused by a battery unit powering a mobile computer that malfunctioned. Teams responded immediately and followed established safety procedures. Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service attended promptly, confirmed the area was safe and commended the professionalism and calm response of staff and colleagues from the Trust and Gloucestershire Managed Services.

As a precaution, some patients were temporarily moved to other wards in line with fire safety plans. Relatives of affected patients were contacted directly and no patients were harmed. Several staff were treated for smoke inhalation and monitored in the Emergency Department.

A Business Continuity Incident was declared to support recovery and maintain patient flow across the hospital and wider system. The affected ward underwent a deep clean and enhanced ventilation before it was deemed safe to reopen. We thanked all colleagues involved for their swift and coordinated response.

Celebrating Nursing Support Workers' Day

Nursing Support Workers' Day, marked on 23 November, celebrates the vital contribution healthcare support workers make to patient care across health and social care services. Across our hospitals, nursing support workers play an essential role in supporting patients, families and clinical teams every day.

“To recognise the day, several healthcare support workers shared their career stories, highlighting the skill, compassion and dedication they bring to their roles.”

To recognise the day, several healthcare support workers shared their career stories, highlighting the skill, compassion and dedication they bring to their roles. One of those is Debbie Tyree, who works in Interventional Radiology.

Debbie joined the NHS later in life after raising her family, beginning her career as a Radiology Care Assistant at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital more than 13 years ago. She now specialises in interventional radiology and is a valued member of the team. Debbie describes her role as rewarding and meaningful, from supporting nervous patients during procedures to helping deliver life-saving treatments.

Her experience reflects the impact nursing support workers have every day. Through reassurance, practical care and teamwork, they make a real difference to patient experience and outcomes. Nursing Support Workers' Day is an opportunity to thank all healthcare support workers for their commitment, professionalism and the vital care they provide across our services.

World AMR Awareness Week 2025

World AMR Awareness Week 2025 took place from 18 to 24 November, raising awareness of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and the urgent action needed to protect the effectiveness of medicines now and in the future.

Antimicrobial resistance occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites change over time and no longer respond to treatments, making infections harder to treat and increasing the risk of severe illness and death. In 2019, almost five million deaths globally were associated with bacterial antimicrobial resistance, with significant impact also seen in the UK.

The 2025 theme, Act now: Protect Our Present, Secure Our Future, focused on prevention, responsible use of antimicrobials and reducing health inequalities. Across the week, attention was given to infection prevention, antimicrobial stewardship in clinical practice, safe switching from intravenous to oral antibiotics and improving care for children. Resources highlighted practical steps such as supporting children to swallow tablets and providing clear guidance for parents caring for children with coughs.

World AMR Awareness Week reinforced the importance of using antimicrobials responsibly and working together to reduce resistance, protect patients and safeguard treatments for future generations.

Temporary suspension of home births

We made the difficult decision to extend the temporary suspension of the home birth service for at least six months, following safety concerns raised by our staff.

A review and risk assessment of the service showed that further time was needed to support retraining and to design and implement a new model of care. We have seen an increase in requests for home births against medical advice, prompting a review of current guidelines, standards and processes to ensure women and birthing people are fully informed and supported in their choices, while maintaining safety.

Home births account for fewer than 2% of births locally, around four to six per month. However, the service requires a highly skilled and experienced on-call workforce, and current staffing levels make it difficult to provide this safely, particularly overnight, without risking staff fatigue.

“Our focus remains on safety, listening to concerns and working with our Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership”

Midwife-led care is provided at Stroud Maternity Hospital, Gloucester Birth Unit and Gloucestershire Royal Hospital. Community midwives remain available to offer antenatal care and to discuss individual birth options. We continue to contact families who had planned a home birth to talk through alternatives and provide support.

This decision was very disappointing for some families. However, our focus remains on safety, listening to concerns and working with our Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership as we review and plan the future of the service.



Year in review

December

2025

- ▶ Celebrating our Young Influencers
- ▶ Help protect our patients from winter illnesses
- ▶ 2025 National Maternity Survey highlights positive steps in service improvement
- ▶ Charity-funded artwork brings joy to Cheltenham's Battledown Ward



Celebrating our Young Influencers

In December, we celebrated the achievements of our Young Influencers, recognising the important role they play in shaping services and championing youth voices across our hospitals.

The Young Influencers programme gives young people a platform to share their ideas and experiences, helping to make services more inclusive and responsive to the needs of younger patients. Through their involvement, young people contribute to improvements ranging from clearer patient information to the development of more youth-friendly spaces.

“Their insight and lived experience help ensure that decisions reflect what matters most to children and young people using our services.”

Their insight and lived experience help ensure that decisions reflect what matters most to children and young people using our services. The celebration highlighted the positive impact of their work and thanked them for the enthusiasm, creativity and commitment they bring.

Opportunities to get involved in the Young Influencers programme remain available, supporting young people to have a meaningful voice in improving hospital care across Gloucestershire.



Help protect our patients from winter illnesses

In December, we launched our annual appeal asking members of the public to help protect patients and staff from winter illnesses that spread easily in hospital settings.

“People were asked to play their part in reducing the risk of infection from illnesses such as norovirus, flu, COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses”

People were asked to play their part in reducing the risk of infection from illnesses such as norovirus, flu, COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses, which can be particularly harmful to vulnerable patients. The appeal encouraged people not to visit our hospitals if they have been unwell themselves or live with someone experiencing certain symptoms.

The appeal also reinforced the importance of good hand hygiene, with regular handwashing using soap and warm water highlighted as one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection.

On 10 December, in response to rising levels of flu and respiratory illness, we introduced a temporary requirement for patients and visitors to wear surgical face masks, where possible, in our direct assessment areas to further reduce the risk of transmission.

2025 National Maternity Survey highlights positive steps in service improvement

In December, we welcomed the findings of the Care Quality Commission's 2025 National Maternity Survey, which highlights positive progress across our maternity services. Our hospitals were one of just six services in England rated as 'better than expected' overall.

“There were significant improvements in five key areas”

The survey gathers feedback from women about their experiences of choice, continuity of care and the support they receive during pregnancy, birth and the early weeks afterwards. Our maternity services remain on an ongoing journey of improvement. Over the past three years, teams have acted on CQC findings, taken part in the NHS England maternity safety support programme and worked with independent experts to review and shape care.

Headline results from the national survey showed performance in line with most trusts for the majority of questions, with higher scores achieved across 21 areas. There were significant improvements in five key areas, including access to staff when needed during labour, feeling supported and reassured, advice and support with feeding, and information about physical recovery after birth and in the weeks that follow.

These improvements reflect what matters most to women and families at vulnerable moments. The results show that more people are experiencing the safe, personalised and compassionate maternity care our teams strive to provide every day.



Charity-funded artwork brings joy to Cheltenham's Battledown Ward

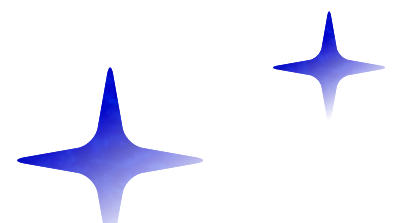
Children visiting the Children's Outpatients Department at Cheltenham General Hospital are now welcomed by bright, playful artwork designed to make hospital visits feel more positive and reassuring.

Visual artist Alice Humphries was commissioned to transform Battledown Ward with bold colours, shapes and imaginative designs that encourage curiosity and a sense of wonder. Our Arts Co-ordinator Anoushka Duroe-Richards worked closely with clinicians to ensure the designs were inclusive, supportive and suitable for a wide range of sensory needs.

The new artwork focuses on shape, colour and geometry to create a calm yet engaging environment for young patients and their families. Four clinic rooms also feature 'spot the difference' artwork, providing a gentle distraction during appointments and helping to ease anxiety.

"The new artwork focuses on shape, colour and geometry to create a calm yet engaging environment for young patients and their families"

The project was made possible thanks to generous charitable funding from the Daisychain Benevolent Fund Trust. Their support has helped create a welcoming space that soothes nerves, sparks imagination and makes visits to hospital a little easier for children and their families.



Year in review

January

2026

- ▶ A simple shift in cancer support, one concern at a time
- ▶ New Critical Care Unit for Gloucestershire Royal Hospital
- ▶ Suspended prison sentence for man who stalked NHS staff
- ▶ 'Odysseys' creative programme
- ▶ Maternity Triage: community engagement events
- ▶ Reducing ambulance handover delays



A simple shift in cancer support, one concern at a time

Cancer care works best when it starts with what matters most to the person. Working in partnership with Macmillan, we began piloting a new, patient-led tool called My Concerns, designed to make it easier for people with cancer to share what support they need.

“Living with and beyond cancer often brings challenges beyond medical treatment”

The My Concerns form has been in use since August 2025 and is being tested over several months with patients, carers and community groups. It is intended to replace the existing Holistic Needs Assessment with a simpler, more accessible approach that supports meaningful conversations between patients and their care teams.

Living with and beyond cancer often brings challenges beyond medical treatment, including fatigue, emotional wellbeing, finances, relationships and day-to-day practicalities. The My Concerns form gives people a clear voice in highlighting what is affecting them and what help may be useful.

Feedback gathered during the pilot will be used to refine and co-design the final version of the tool. The aim is to improve access to support, reduce barriers and ensure cancer care remains holistic, personalised and responsive to individual needs.

New Critical Care Unit for Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

In January 2026, it was announced that plans were underway to develop a new four-storey Critical Care Unit at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, strengthening capacity and supporting high-quality care for some of the most unwell patients.

Construction is expected to take place over the next three years. The development focuses on creating a modern, purpose-built critical care facility with an improved environment and more efficient layout for both patients and staff.

Once complete, the unit will initially provide 24 Critical Care beds, with built-in flexibility to expand to 36 beds as demand increases. This increased capacity will support better management of surges in demand, improved safety and compliance, and smoother patient flow.

Preparatory site works are underway to enable construction to begin. Any disruption will be carefully managed and clearly communicated to minimise impact. Critical Care services will continue to operate across both hospital sites, with no change to the current model of care.



Suspended prison sentence for man who stalked NHS staff

A man who targeted NHS and care staff with sustained stalking and online harassment received an 18-month suspended prison sentence and an indefinite restraining order.

“We stand by, support our staff and remain committed to protecting their safety and wellbeing across our hospitals.”

The sentence followed a guilty plea to charges of stalking NHS and care staff. The behaviour involved years of targeted online harassment carried out through social media accounts aimed at staff working across Gloucestershire. The case marked an important step in bringing this long-running abuse to an end.

Our colleagues come to work to care for others and have the right to feel safe and free from harassment. The prolonged abuse caused significant personal and professional harm to those affected, and the court outcome reinforces that harassment, intimidation and stalking, whether online or in person, are not acceptable.

We stand by, support our staff and remain committed to protecting their safety and wellbeing across our hospitals.

New creative programme ‘Odysseys’ supports people living with neurological conditions and brain injury

Odysseys is a new creative programme supporting people living with neurological conditions or brain injury to build confidence, wellbeing and connection through movement, art-making, storytelling and song.

Delivered in partnership with Art Shape, the programme provides a welcoming and inclusive space where participants can explore creativity, connect with others with similar experiences and feel part of a supportive community. No previous experience in art, movement or singing is needed, and sessions are free to attend.

Odysseys is open to anyone currently supported by the Neuro Specialist Practitioner Team, including people with a diagnosis or awaiting diagnosis. This includes individuals living with early Parkinson’s, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, motor neurone disease, functional neurological disorder and other neurological conditions.

Participants are supported to build confidence in gentle movement and physical expression, use their voice through song and storytelling and support their overall wellbeing in a relaxed, creative environment.



Maternity Triage: community engagement events

We invited women and their partners who had used our Maternity Triage Service in the last three years to share feedback and help shape future improvements. In January 2026, community feedback sessions took place in Gloucester and the Forest of Dean.

“Feedback gathered through these events is helping to inform ongoing improvements to the Maternity Triage Service”

The community engagement events were designed to listen, learn and focus on what matters most to families using maternity triage. These drop-in events provided an opportunity for women and partners to talk directly with the Patient Experience Engagement Team, share experiences and highlight priorities for change in an open and supportive setting.

In February 2026, a joint co-production event was held at Redwood Education Centre at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital. This session brought together women, partners, community members and staff to agree improvement priorities and begin designing projects that would have the greatest impact on patient experience. Babies and children were welcomed to ensure the event was accessible to families.

Feedback gathered through these events is helping to inform ongoing improvements to the Maternity Triage Service. By working collaboratively with women, partners and staff, we are strengthening services so they are safe, responsive and centred on the needs of those who use them.

NHS
Gloucestershire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Your Voice. Your Priorities. Our Action.
Be part of meaningful change.

Shaping the Future of Maternity Triage

Co-Production Event

📍 Roots Café, 1st Floor, 69 Alvin Street, GL1 3EH

🕒 Between 10am and 12.30pm

📅 27 February 2026

We've listened to feedback from women, their partners, our community, and staff – and now it's time to turn those insights into action. We'll work together to select, design and implement projects that will be most beneficial for women and partners using our Maternity Triage Service.

Refreshments will be available. If you require an interpreter, or have any communication or accessibility needs please let us know so we can assist.

If you require any further information or are unable to make this event, but still wish to provide feedback please contact:
📧 rebecca.fell2@nhs.net

Reducing ambulance handover delays



At the beginning of the new year, we reviewed the progress made through our Clinical Vision of Flow programme, with some excellent results demonstrating the positive difference it is making for patients and colleagues. This clinically led programme aims to create a system where every patient's journey is efficient, seamless and centred on what is right for them.

Ambulance handover delays outside Gloucestershire Royal Hospital have reduced by 66%, falling from 3,343 hours per month in 2023 to 1,106 hours per month in 2025. This means, on average, around 12 ambulance crews are back on the road each day rather than waiting outside the Emergency Department.

The proportion of patients treated within 12 hours in the Emergency Department has also improved, increasing from 86.3% in 2023 to 90% in 2025.

“Ambulance handover delays
... have reduced by 66%”

The number of patients in hospital with a Discharge Ready Date (DRD), meaning they no longer require acute hospital care, has reduced by 25%, from 169 in 2023 to 126 in 2025. Working closely with partner organisations to achieve this reduction has helped create capacity across the hospitals, contributing to improvements including:

- ▶ Patients no longer being cared for in ward corridors
- ▶ Reduced waits in the Emergency Department for an inpatient bed. In 2024/25, the peak number of patients waiting for a bed was 30; while this increased again slightly during winter pressures, the average remains lower at around 18 patients.

These results demonstrate the impact of sustained improvement work and the commitment of teams across the Trust to delivering better care and experiences for our patients and colleagues.

Year in review

February

2026

- ▶ Robotic waterjet ablation enhances urology care at Cheltenham General Hospital
- ▶ Major upgrade to the Medical Vacuum Plant
- ▶ Induction of Labour Workshop supports hundreds of expectant parents
- ▶ Surgery Services at Cirencester Hospital
- ▶ Cervical screening appointments at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital



Robotic waterjet ablation enhances urology care at Cheltenham General Hospital



Robotic waterjet ablation offers an advanced treatment option for men living with benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). We first introduced Aquablation therapy in 2023, using the AquaBeam Robotic System from PROCEPT BioRobotics. The technology uses a heat-free, high-pressure waterjet to remove prostate tissue with precision, guided by real-time imaging and planning software. This approach provides lasting symptom relief while preserving sexual function and urinary continence.

BPH is a common non-cancerous enlargement of the prostate that affects many men over 50 and can cause frequent urination and reduced urinary flow. Traditional surgery can be effective but may involve longer recovery times and a higher risk of side effects. Aquablation is delivered in small, predictable passes of three to four minutes, regardless of prostate size, allowing treatment to be planned efficiently and safely.

Patients report quicker recovery and meaningful improvements in quality of life. Cheltenham General Hospital continues to act as the centre of excellence for urology services, keeping innovation, patient-centred care and training at the heart of the service.

Major upgrade to the Medical Vacuum Plant

Gloucestershire Managed Services (GMS) completed a major upgrade to the Medical Vacuum Plant at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, strengthening the resilience and reliability of essential hospital infrastructure.

The seven-month project saw the replacement of the existing system with a modern Medical Gas Vacuum System, which means the system now has additional capacity to maintain safe and reliable operation, even if one component becomes unavailable.

The medical vacuum system provides essential suction services across theatres, critical care, emergency services, maternity and wards, supporting a wide range of clinical activity including airway management, surgical procedures, chest drains and wound therapies.

Delivered by the GMS Estates Medical Gas Pipeline Systems team, the work required careful planning and coordination to ensure there was no disruption to patient care. Critical works and commissioning were completed during evenings and weekends, allowing clinical services across the hospital to continue safely throughout the upgrade.

The upgraded system includes improved filtration, drainage and automated controls, providing greater reliability and supporting safe, high-quality care for patients and clinical teams.

The project demonstrates the commitment of GMS teams to maintaining and improving the Trust's infrastructure, ensuring that the hospital's essential systems continue to meet the needs of patients and staff now and into the future.

Induction of labour workshop supports hundreds of expectant parents

Our Induction of Labour workshop continues to support expectant parents by providing clear, accessible information and helping them feel confident about their choices around induction.

Launched in August 2024 in response to feedback from parents, the weekly online workshop has supported around 750 attendees over 18 months. Led by Lead Midwife Claire Watson-Pople, each one-hour session is typically attended by around eight women and their birth partners, creating a supportive space to ask questions, share experiences and feel more prepared.

The workshop explains what induction of labour involves, the different methods that may be offered, what to expect during the process and how to make the experience as positive as possible. Parents and birth partners are encouraged to attend together, supporting shared understanding and decision-making.

To improve accessibility further, plans are in place to record a session and make it available online, including the use of automatic translation features. By running weekly, the workshop offers reassurance, builds confidence and helps parents make informed decisions about their care at an important time.

Surgery Services at Cirencester Hospital

In February, it was announced that planned day-case surgery in the community theatre at Cirencester Hospital was temporarily paused as part of a county-wide test of change affecting community theatres.

“These tests of change are temporary and are being closely monitored. No long-term decisions have been made”

The pause forms part of time-limited work across Gloucestershire to understand whether organising some services differently can improve patient care, reduce delays and cancellations and make better use of specialist staff and facilities. During this period, surgical procedures that would usually take place at Cirencester are being carried out at other hospitals in the county, including Stroud, Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester.

These tests of change are temporary and are being closely monitored. No long-term decisions have been made about Cirencester Hospital or its services. Each test is subject to formal evaluation, including patient experience, staff feedback and service performance data, with findings shared publicly.

Cirencester Hospital remains an important part of local NHS care, supporting people across the Cotswolds with services close to home. Further engagement with patients, staff and local communities will take place before any future decisions are considered.

Cervical screening appointments at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

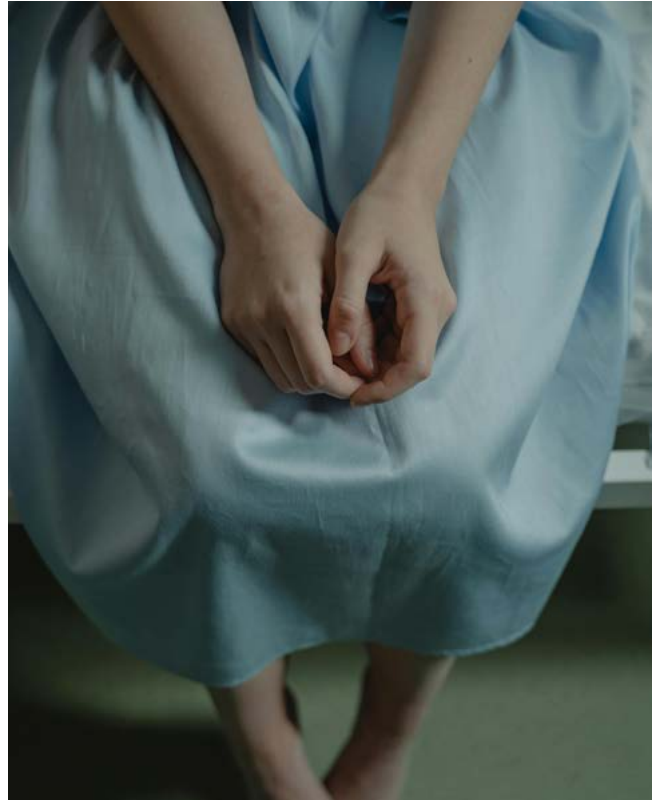
In February, an initiative was launched by our gynaecology service to offer cervical screening appointments at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital for staff and members of the public, providing a supportive and accessible alternative for people whose screening is due.

“Appointments are delivered by an all-female team of experienced nurses”

The service is designed for anyone who may struggle to book an appointment with their GP, feel uncertain about the screening process or prefer not to see a male clinician. Appointments are delivered by an all-female team of experienced nurses who provide friendly, understanding and non-judgemental care and welcome people from all backgrounds.

The initiative recognises that people from some cultural backgrounds and LGBTQ+ communities may face additional barriers to attending screening, including concerns around dignity, privacy or being misunderstood. The clinic is for anyone with a cervix, including women, trans men and non-binary people, and provides a calm, respectful and inclusive environment.

Appointments are unhurried, with time to ask questions, discuss concerns and take breaks if needed, helping more people feel confident to attend cervical screening.



Year in review

March

2026

- ▶ No Smoking Day 11 March 2026
- ▶ Phlebotomy colleagues vote to end strike
- ▶ CQC rates Dialysis Services as 'Good'
- ▶ Paediatric Diabetes Team focuses on inclusive care for children across Gloucestershire
- ▶ Multi-agency emergency services exercise successfully delivered at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital
- ▶ Baby friendly certificate for Neonatal Unit



No Smoking Day 11 March 2026



No Smoking Day on 11 March 2026 offered a chance for people who smoke to pause, reflect and take a positive step towards a healthier future. Across our hospitals, the Tobacco Free Team supports patients, visitors and staff to quit smoking, recognising that stopping can improve physical health, mental wellbeing and finances.

On the day, the Tobacco Free Team was available at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital to offer friendly, practical support. Stopping smoking brings rapid benefits, with improvements beginning within hours and continuing over time. Support is available for inpatients, including access to tobacco treatment advisors, nicotine replacement therapy and follow-up support after discharge. Specialist services also support people to stop smoking during pregnancy.

Whether someone is ready to quit or just thinking about it, No Smoking Day is an opportunity to start a conversation, access support and take the first step towards lasting change.

Phlebotomy colleagues vote to end strike

Our phlebotomy team, who take blood samples from patients to support diagnosis and treatment, voted to end almost a year of industrial action, marking an important milestone after a prolonged period of disruption to services.

Throughout this time, the focus remained on maintaining safe and effective patient care while working constructively with UNISON to find a resolution. Colleagues voted to accept an offer to proceed to an independent panel, which was first proposed last summer.

“As part of the agreement, the phlebotomy role will be reviewed through the national independent process”

As part of the agreement, the phlebotomy role will be reviewed through the national independent process. This provides a fair and transparent assessment of pay and banding, with all parties committed to the outcome. Phlebotomy teams began returning to work from Monday 16 March 2026.

During the period of industrial action, services were adapted to ensure urgent and essential care continued. These changes led to improved turnaround times for blood samples and supported earlier ward discharges compared with previous ways of working. Alongside the end of the strike, agreement was also reached to consult with colleagues on a proposed new service model, with the aim of sustaining these improvements in the interests of patient care.

CQC rates Dialysis Services as ‘Good’

In March, a Care Quality Commission report found that Dialysis Services at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital was providing good care across all key areas.

“The inspection assessed the service with a ‘Good’ rating in every domain”

The inspection, carried out in July 2025, assessed the service as safe, effective, caring, responsive and well led, with a ‘Good’ rating in every domain. The service is delivered by Diaverum Facilities Management Limited, working in partnership with The Trust.

The CQC found a strong learning and safety culture, with staff demonstrating a clear understanding of safeguarding responsibilities and responding effectively in emergency situations. Inspectors reported that the service is well staffed, with professionals who have the appropriate skills and receive regular supervision, education and appraisals.

The environment was described as clean and well maintained, with equipment and medicines managed safely. Patients were observed to be treated with kindness, dignity and respect and were actively involved as partners in their care. The report noted that patients’ views and wishes were listened to and reflected in care decisions. Effective multidisciplinary working was also recognised, including dietetic support and close collaboration with our hospitals.

Paediatric diabetes team focuses on inclusive care for children

The Gloucestershire Paediatric Diabetes Service supports around 290 children and young people across a large and diverse area, including the Forest of Dean, Stroud and the Cotswolds. The multidisciplinary team, based at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and Cheltenham General Hospital, includes consultants, nurses, dietitians, psychologists, family support workers and administrative staff.

Following participation in the nationally recognised ‘Poverty Proofing’ programme delivered by Children North East, the team reviewed how everyday practices might unintentionally create barriers to care. This work highlighted hidden pressures such as travel and parking costs, energy bills for medical devices and children missing free school meals due to clinic appointments.

In response, the team introduced practical changes to make services more inclusive. These include clearer information on affordable travel options, guidance on low-cost treatments for managing low blood sugar, improved access to digital devices through charity support, earlier conversations about financial pressures at diagnosis and reviewing clinic times to reduce disruption to school meals. The approach to offering diabetes technology also changed, ensuring all families are supported to access the tools they need.

By embedding poverty-aware practices into everyday care, the service continues to strengthen equity, confidence and outcomes for children and young people across Gloucestershire.



Multi-agency emergency services exercise successfully delivered at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

A large-scale multi-agency emergency services exercise was successfully delivered at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, bringing together partners from across the region to test how organisations work together during a complex hospital incident.

“The event demonstrated strong partnership working across emergency services and healthcare teams”

The exercise simulated a rapidly escalating fire in a storeroom on Ward 6B, designed to challenge emergency response, decision-making and coordination in a realistic hospital environment. It provided an important opportunity to test plans, strengthen joint working and identify areas for learning and improvement.

Hospital staff, patients and visitors observed the exercise and shared positive feedback throughout the day. The event demonstrated strong partnership working across emergency services and healthcare teams, helping build resilience, confidence and preparedness.

Regular training of this kind supports safer care by ensuring organisations are ready to respond quickly and effectively when incidents occur.



Baby friendly certificate for Neonatal Unit

In March 2026, our Neonatal Unit received a Certificate of Commitment as the first step towards gaining recognition from the UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative. The award marks an important milestone in strengthening support for infant feeding and early relationships for babies and families cared for in our neonatal services.

“The Certificate of Commitment recognises a clear dedication to implementing evidence-based best practice standards”

The Certificate of Commitment recognises a clear dedication to implementing evidence-based best practice standards that support breastfeeding and help parents and babies develop close, loving bonds, whatever their chosen feeding method.

Rachel Bray, Specialist Neonatal Infant Feeding Nurse, said the award reflected continued efforts to increase breastfeeding rates and improve care for mothers and babies. Breastfeeding is known to protect infants against serious illnesses in early life and later years, while also reducing health risks for mothers and supporting mental wellbeing for both parent and baby.

The Baby Friendly Initiative is a global programme led by UNICEF and the World Health Organization, working with healthcare services to ensure every baby has the best possible start in life. This achievement represents a positive step forward in enhancing neonatal care across our hospitals.



Proud to
care

Our review of the year, 2025–2026