

# Annual Review

2023/24



The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt  
Orthopaedic Hospital  
NHS Foundation Trust

[www.rjah.nhs.uk](http://www.rjah.nhs.uk)

# NHS



Overall patient experience at RJAH was rated as the best in the country compared to other NHS Trusts, according to the annual Adult Inpatient Survey 2022.

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*Becky Warren, Enhanced Recovery Team Lead with patient*

*Alison Mannion, Occupational Therapist with patient*





# Introduction

We are proud to present this Annual Review, which serves as a more accessible summary of our Annual Report for 2023/24. Within, you will find details on some of our key achievements from the 2023/24 financial year, as well as details of how we hope to progress over the coming year and beyond.

**T**hroughout the year, our focus was on bringing down our waiting lists for both our English and our Welsh patients. We were mindful of the pressure this put on our people, and throughout the year we ran a busy and ambitious recruitment campaign to bring in additional expertise. We are pleased to say that we reaped the rewards of that campaign and had more than 130 additional staff by the end of the financial year compared to the start.

We recognise that this alone will not get us where we need to be in the long run and continue to look for new and innovative ways to improve our activity levels. This includes the use of new and exciting digital solutions which should help us to become more efficient and so see more patients during operating theatre sessions. We look forward to sharing more about that in the coming months.

There are so many reasons to look back on this last year with pride.

On 4 April 2023, we welcomed Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh to RJAHS to officially open the Headley Court Veterans' Orthopaedic Centre. This was a wonderful day for our staff and a fantastic opportunity to raise the profile of the fantastic work our Veterans' Centre does. The event received coverage nationally and internationally in a wide variety of publications that would not ordinarily focus on our work.

Overall patient experience at RJAHS was rated as the best in the country compared to other NHS Trusts, according to the annual Adult Inpatient Survey 2022 carried out by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). As part of the survey results, RJAHS was also named as one of just eight organisations placed in the top band of Trusts delivering results that are considered "much better than expected", delivering patient experience that is substantially better

than elsewhere. The same survey also saw the food we prepare and serve at RJAHS rated as the best in the country for the 17th time in 18 years, as well as the wards and rooms being highlighted as the cleanest in the country for a fourth year in a row. Since then, the 2023 survey has also been published and we have continued to perform strongly across all of these metrics.

The Trust also received a welcome early Christmas present, as we found out on 19 December 2023 that we had been successfully accredited as an Elective Surgical Hub. This accreditation scheme is run by NHS England's Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) programme in collaboration with the Royal College of Surgeons of England and assesses hubs against a framework of standards to help hubs deliver faster access to some of the most common surgical procedures such as cataract surgeries and hip replacements.

*Best wishes,*



**Harry Turner**  
Chairman

**Stacey Keegan**  
Chief Executive



# Who we are

The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (RJAH) is one of the UK's five Specialist Orthopaedic Centres. It is a leading orthopaedic centre of excellence with a reputation for innovation.

**T**he Trust provides both specialist and routine orthopaedic care to its local catchment area and nationally. It is a specialist centre for the treatment of spinal injuries and disorders and also provides specialist treatment for children with musculoskeletal disorders.

The hospital has nine inpatient wards including a private patient ward; 12 operating theatres, including a day case surgery unit; and full outpatient and diagnostic facilities.

In addition to the above, the Trust works with partner organisations to provide specialist treatment for bone tumours and community-based rheumatology services.

The Trust has contracts with a number of commissioners. The largest English commissioner in 2023/24 was NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care Board. The Betsi Cadwaladr University Hospital Board is the largest Welsh Commissioner, followed by Powys Teaching Health Board.

Commissioning for our specialised services is undertaken by NHS England, which is represented locally by the Birmingham and Black Country Local Area Team.

It is a specialist centre for  
the treatment of spinal injuries  
and disorders





# Overview of Financial Performance

The Trust experienced a number of financial challenges during the year as the funding framework reverted back to Payment by Results linking income to activity. There were material shortfalls in activity, with workforce availability being a major constraint as Industrial Action and vacancies in key areas stalled our progress with restoration.

**A**dditionally we experienced an increase in complexity of patients treated which – coupled with a high inflationary environment – elevated our operating costs above expected levels. The pressures were partially mitigated through the efforts of a financial recovery group, implementation of enhanced financial controls and through the full delivery of a £4.6m efficiency programme.

**As a result of these pressures the Trust ended the year with an adjusted financial performance deficit of £1.9m, which was £2.1m adrift of where we had planned to be.**

It is also important to note that the Shropshire, Telford, and Wrekin Integrated Care System continues to be in significant financial distress. As a partner in the system the Trust continues to be committed to improving the financial position collaborating with partners and leading key areas of development such as MSK Transformation.

The Trust has continued to invest significantly in its capital programme with expenditure of £12.6m in year, with notable projects including the continued implementation of a new Electronic Patient Record system (Apollo),

construction of new theatre to provide additional capacity and installation of solar panels across the site to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions.

Despite the challenging year, cash balances remain healthy at £21.7m which supports the Trust's day to day operating expenses and resilience as a standalone organisation.

## Key Priorities for 2024/25


Over the course of the 2024/25 financial year, our main priorities will be:

- Reduce waiting times to 65 weeks
- Maintain performance against the cancer waiting times standard
- Restore elective services to greater than pre-covid levels
- Optimise productivity and efficiency within our services



21.7m



A man, Mike Bowen, stands on a rooftop covered in solar panels. He is wearing a dark blue jacket, a high-visibility yellow safety harness, and blue jeans. He has his arms crossed and is looking towards the camera. A yellow safety rope is attached to his harness and runs across the solar panels. The background shows a cloudy sky and some distant trees.

The NHS needs to **respond to the health emergency that climate change brings**, which will need to be embedded into everything we do now and in the future.


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**MIKE BOWEN, CAPITAL MANAGER**



# Quality Strategy

In December 2023 the Trust agreed its Quality Strategy. In this we set out our Quality aims for a three-year period. The RJAH Quality Strategy is underpinned by the national NHS Patient Safety Strategy and its **three strategic aims**:

- 
- 1 Insight:** Improve our understanding of the quality and safety by drawing insight from multiple sources of patient safety and outcome information.
  - 2 Involvement:** People have the skills and opportunities to improve the quality of care provided throughout the services we offer.
  - 3 Improvement:** Improvement programmes enable effective and sustainable change in the most important areas.

**Our Quality Strategy sets out six objectives that embeds the Trust's appetite for continuous improvement and change to ensure that we maintain our excellent standards for quality.**





# Patient Experience Strategy



The Trust has continued to work towards achievement of the commitments identified in our Patient Experience Strategy, to provide the best experience of care at each phase of the patient pathways and interaction with our staff to put patient experience at the heart of everything we do.



## Our commitments are:

1

We will **work in partnership with our patients** and actively involve them in decisions about their care.

2

We will **communicate to our patients in a manner that is accessible and appropriate to their own individual needs** whilst listening to our patients about their priority of care and what matters most to them.

3

We will **involve our patients and services users, and the public generally, in decisions regarding the way we deliver services** and any future developments.

4

We will **engage with our patients to facilitate patients to manage their own health conditions** and get the best out of their wellbeing.

5

We will **further develop the role of volunteers to ensure we maximise their input** to enhance patient experience.



*I was blown away by the **level of care**  
**I received** at this hospital. Thank you for  
making my stay as comfortable.*

**MOLLY, PATIENT ON BASCHURCH**





# Key Highlights from 2023/24

# 1.

## Headley Court Veterans' Orthopaedic Centre



Our year got off to a hugely positive start, as we welcomed Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh to officially launch the **Headley Court Veterans' Orthopaedic Centre**. The Duchess unveiled a plaque to mark the opening of the £6 million building, which houses the first dedicated veterans' orthopaedic service in the UK.

# 2.

## Expansion to our Theatre building

There was further building work getting under way, as we began a state-of-the-art **expansion to our Theatre building**. The first phase of this project should open in the autumn of 2024, and will give us capacity to carry out an additional 1,200 surgical procedures a year.



# 3.

## Patient experience was rated best in the county



Patient experience at RJA was rated as the best in the country for the third year in a row, according to the 2022 edition of the **annual Adult Inpatient Survey** (which was published by the Care Quality Commission in September 2023). RJA was named as one of just eight organisations placed in the top band of Trusts delivering results that are considered "much better than expected," with patient experience that is substantially better than elsewhere.

## Key Highlights from 2023/24 (cont'd)

# 4.

### Cleanest wards and rooms in the NHS



The same report highlighted results showing that **RJAH had the cleanest wards and rooms in the NHS for the fourth year in a row**. Its food was also rated the best in the country – for the 17th time in the past 18 years.

# 5.

### Accredited as an Elective Surgical Hub

RJAH was accredited as an **Elective Surgical Hub delivering high standards in clinical and operational practice**. The scheme, run by NHS England's Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) programme in collaboration with the Royal College of Surgeons of England, assesses hubs against a framework of standards to help hubs deliver faster access to some of the most common surgical procedures such as cataract surgeries and hip replacements. It also seeks to assure patients about the high standards of clinical care.



# 6.

### Launch of the Enhanced Recovery Programme



In April 2023, the Trust launched an **Enhanced Recovery Programme, for all arthroplasty patients – aiming to get patients back to full health as quickly as possible following surgery**. Research around enhanced recovery has shown that the earlier a person gets out of bed and starts walking, eating, and drinking after an operation, the shorter their recovery time will be. The programme had seen more than 1,000 patients before the end of the year.



# Key Highlights from 2023/24 (cont'd)

## 7.

### Trust received Pastoral Care Quality Award



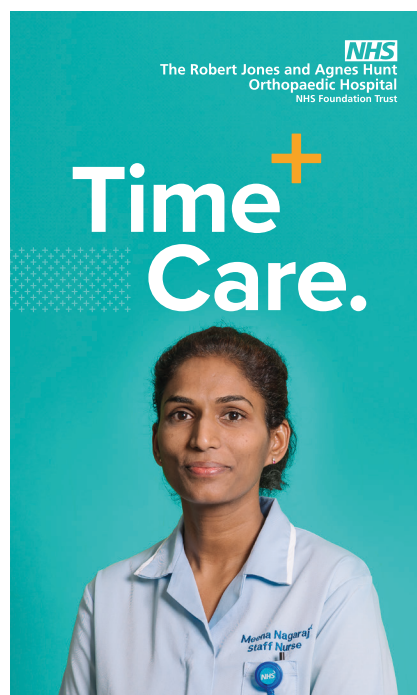
The Trust received the NHS **Pastoral Care Quality Award** in recognition of its efforts and commitment to providing gold standard quality pastoral care to international recruits.

In 2023, the organisation welcomed 22 international nurses to its workforce, from countries including Kenya, India, Saudi Arabia, Jamaica and more.

## 8.

### Delivered recruitment initiative – 'Time to Care'

We delivered a significant **recruitment initiative – titled 'Time to Care'** – throughout 2023/24, which saw a programme of recruitment days alongside a digital social media campaign. This proved extremely successful, and by the end of the financial year, the Trust had more than 130 additional staff compared to 12 months earlier.



## 9.

### Signed commitment to SAND covenant



The Trust joined together with **Safe Ageing No Discrimination (SAND)** in a bid to support the ageing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, or asexual (LGBTQIA+) community. We signed a covenant with the charity, committing to understand and respond to the needs of older LGBTQIA+ people in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.

# Key Highlights from 2023/24 (cont'd)

## 10.

### Chosen to join the NHS Exemplar Programme



RJAH was one of 21 Trusts chosen to join the **NHS Exemplar Trusts Programme for Catering for their innovation, high food standards and consistent service in providing food for staff, patients and visitors.** The Trusts selected as exemplar will serve as pilot sites for national initiatives and feedback to the wider group to raise standards. We are involved with topics such as menu choices, staff training, food safety management, food waste and much more.

## 11.

### Event to mark the end of ASCOT Trial

RJAH held an event to mark the end of the **ASCOT Trial – a major clinical trial which has helped to transform the lives of people suffering with damage to their knee joint or cartilage.** It has been running in partnership with Keele University and supported by the Orthopaedic Institute Charity, Versus Arthritis and the Medical Research Council.

## 12.

### Expanding series of cost-of-living measures

The hospital signalled its commitment to supporting its staff by **expanding its series of cost-of-living measures.** Offers such as free breakfasts of porridge or toast, as well as discounted lunches, proved popular. These offers were extended indefinitely, and the Trust also introduced free period products for staff and began running a series of financial advice workshops.

## 13.

### RJAH was again named as a National Joint Registry Quality Data Provider

RJAH was again named as a **National Joint Registry Quality Data Provider** – for the fifth year in a row, after successfully submitting a national programme of data audits.





*Design & Photography  
Medical Illustration*



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