

Message from the Chairman



As we reflect on the 2025/26 financial year, I am proud to say this has been one of the most successful years in RJAH's history.

Together, we have made significant progress in reducing waiting times for patients, delivered a strong financial performance, successfully launched our new Electronic Patient Record system, and expanded our surgical capacity through the addition of a new theatre. These are major achievements which demonstrate the hard work, dedication and resilience of our staff across the organisation.

The NHS continues to evolve at pace, and the recent announcement of the NHS Bill marks another important moment of change for healthcare organisations across the country. As a Board, we are working closely to understand the implications for RJAH and to ensure we are well placed to respond to both the opportunities and challenges ahead.

At the same time, we continue to strengthen our relationships across the healthcare system, particularly with our colleagues at the Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care Board. We remain committed to supporting the wider system and continuing our role as the specialist provider for neighbourhood musculoskeletal services.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our Council of Governors for their continued support and engagement throughout the year. Their contribution remains invaluable in helping us represent the views of our members, patients and communities.

Finally, I must once again thank our staff. The achievements of the past year would not have been possible without their dedication to delivering outstanding care for our patients every single day.

Staff thanked for helping cut national surgery waiting list

RJAH has recognised the dedication and hard work of its staff as national data reveals substantial progress in reducing waiting times for life-changing surgery.

The Government set a national target for 65% of patients to be seen within 18 weeks for elective treatment (planned surgery) by March 2026 – though Trusts starting from a lower benchmark were given an adjusted target. For RJAH, which was achieving around 46% a year ago, its prescribed target was 60%.

The latest figures, released this week on the national Referral to Treatment Waiting Times Dashboard, confirm that the NHS has delivered on its goal.

At RJAH specifically, the Trust exceeded its target, achieving 62.15% by the end of March 2026. That increase of more than 16% was the fourth biggest in percentage terms out of all hospital Trusts in the country over the 12-month period. The Trust's performance had deteriorated by May 2025 – a period when it was introducing a new electronic patient record – to around 44.5%, so the improvement of 17.66% in the 10 months from there was all the more impressive and was down to a focussed team effort across the hospital.

Progress on the waiting list comes on the back of a year where the NHS performed the highest number of surgeries, tests, checks and elective appointments.

Stacey Keegan, Chief Executive, said: *"It is a huge effort by everyone across the Trust to get us to this position."*

"The improvements we are making correlate directly with waiting lists going down, and we will not stop here. Everything we are doing is with the aim of offering patients the best possible care in terms of access, outcomes and experience."



Governors Meetings

30 September 2026 (AGM)
2 December 2026

For more information, please email:
rjah.ft@nhs.net

Your elected Public Governors

Shropshire

Victoria Sugden (Lead) / Colin Chapman
Gill Pitcher

North Wales

Shelia Hughes / Jan Greasley

West Midlands

Tony Wright

Cheshire & Merseyside

Neil Turner

Powys

Vacant

Rest of England & Wales

Russell Luckock

Staff Governors

Joy Chowdhury / Kate Betts / Nicki Bellinger

Stakeholder Governors

(appointed by organisations that work closely with the Trust)

Peter David – RJAHS Voluntary Services Committee

Councillor Craig Emery – Shropshire Council

Karina Wright – Keele University

Membership figures

At the end of May 2026, the membership figures were:

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| Staff | 1,398 |
| Volunteers | 381 |
| Public | 5,228 |
| Total | 7,007 |

Governor Profile



Mr Joy Chowdhury

Staff Governor

“I have been part of the RJAHS family for more than 22 years and have worked as a Consultant in Spinal Injuries and Rehabilitation Medicine for the past 17 years.

“During my time at the Trust, I have had the privilege of working alongside talented colleagues across a wide range of disciplines. From 2016 to 2022, I served as Clinical Lead for the Midland Centre for Spinal Injuries (MCSI), a role that allowed me to work closely with the Trust Board. It gave me valuable insight into the opportunities and challenges facing our organisation, while strengthening my leadership and decision-making skills.

“Alongside my clinical role, I have been the Training Programme Director for Rehabilitation Medicine trainees across the West Midlands for more than a decade. Supporting the development of future healthcare professionals is something I am particularly passionate about, and I greatly value the opportunities that education and mentorship provide.

“Having worked closely with multidisciplinary teams across the Trust, I have developed a strong understanding of the challenges faced by frontline staff. I am particularly interested in improving behaviour, communication and culture, and believe that when staff feel valued, supported and empowered, they are best placed to deliver excellent care and drive positive change.

“As a Staff Governor, I am proud to represent my colleagues and contribute to the continued success of our internationally renowned hospital. I am committed to ensuring that staff voices are heard and that we continue to work together to make RJAHS an outstanding place to work and receive care.”

Governors are always pleased to hear from our members and can be contacted by email on rjah.governors@nhs.net

Representing People

When Parliament created NHS foundation trusts, it provided them with independence from central government and a governance structure that ensured participation from within the local communities they serve.

NHS foundation trust governors are the direct representatives of local interests within foundation trusts. Governors do not undertake operational management of NHS foundation trusts; rather they challenge the board of directors and collectively hold them to account for the trust’s performance. It is also the governors’ responsibility to represent their members’ interests, particularly in relation to the strategic direction of the trust.

Legislation provides governors with statutory responsibilities to help deliver these key objectives. The legislation is the National Health Service Act 2006 and the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Please note that meetings of the Council of Governors are open to members of the public. The public are asked to notify the Trust of any matters they wish to raise in advance, as this will allow the Trust to be able to respond fully and will assist in the time management of the meeting.



If you would like to attend, please email: rjah.ft@nhs.net to confirm your attendance and also of any matters you wish to raise.

League of Friends Charity Update

The League of Friends have continued to demonstrate their commitment to enhancing patient experience and supporting staff at RJAH. Their recent projects highlight the wide-ranging impact of their work across the Trust.

A new anaesthetic trolley is in place and making a huge difference to both patients and staff. The trolley allows the anaesthetic team to prepare and organise equipment more efficiently, reducing anaesthetic time and supporting smoother running procedures.

In addition, the Friends have supported the refurbishment of two essential spaces on MCSI - the staff room and the psychology room. The project focused on improving both areas to better meet the needs of staff and patients. The result is two environments that support wellbeing on both sides of care - a restorative space for staff and a peaceful, welcoming setting for patients and their families during psychological support sessions.

Their support is not limited to financial contributions. Volunteer involvement continues to have a positive impact across the hospital, and the charity were pleased to celebrate the contribution of their volunteer family at an annual awards ceremony.

Collectively volunteers dedicate over 10,000 hours of their time to RJAH each year. From wonderful Ward Friends to Helpdesk heroes, they consistently make a meaningful difference to our hospital.



News from the Trust Much-missed nurse leader honoured

A hugely respected nurse leader who died suddenly has been honoured with a prestigious national award from the Chief Nursing Officer for England.

Sam Young was Interim Chief Nurse when she died following an accident in June last year. Her contribution to the nursing profession has been recognised with a special – and rare – Chief Nursing Officer for England’s Gold Award, which was presented to Sam’s partner Roo in a dedicated ceremony.

The Chief Nursing Officer’s Award is an accolade that recognises the exceptional contributions of nurses in their clinical practice, education, research, and leadership.

As part of the event, an Aeolian Wind Harp was also unveiled on the hospital’s Path of Positivity, as a tribute to Sam and her lifelong love of music, serving as a memory of her for all who pass by. The plaque alongside it is inscribed with a quote from the poem Invictus by William Ernest Henley: *‘I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul’*.



RJAH reaccredited Veteran Aware status for support to Armed Forces community

RJAH is celebrating after being reaccredited – for the second time – with its Veteran Aware status, from the Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA).

Veteran Aware status, which is awarded by the VCHA, signifies the Trust’s commitment to providing the best standards of care to the Armed Forces community, past and present, and their families, based on the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant.

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation ensuring that those who serve, or who have served, in the armed forces, and their families, are treated fairly.



Ask others to join

Over 6,500 people have chosen to become a member - anyone over 14 years of age can join and there are a number of benefits, including invitations to events.

As a member you:

- Become part of a wide network patients, carers, local community members and staff supporting RJAH for the future.
- Have a say in how the hospital is run through voting for governors (or by being elected as a governor) and by sharing your views in our member surveys.
- Receive regular news from the hospital, invitations to our members' events and a copy of the Governors' annual report.
- Support the hospital as an NHS Foundation

Trust by encouraging friends, family, patients and carers to sign up as members too!

To join online please visit: www.rjah.nhs.uk or for a membership form ring 01691 404394 or email: rjah.ft@nhs.net

Get Connected!

Join us on social media and keep up to date with the latest news and events going on across the Trust.

We have an active community on Facebook with over 13,000 followers.

If you've got anything you think we should be sharing on social media, why not let us know about it?



You can also find us on X and Instagram at @RJAH_NHS



Feedback matters

Do you have any feedback on this bulletin?

Is there any other information you would like us to include in the next edition? Do you have any articles you would like to submit? By passing on ideas and suggestions about the report - or any other feedback - you can help us carry out our role more effectively.

Contact the editors at: rjah.governors@nhs.net

RJAH partners with AccessAble to improve accessibility for all

RJAH have partnered with AccessAble, the UK's leading provider of detailed accessibility information, to launch comprehensive Detailed Access Guides for its wards, services and departments.

The guides provide clear, factual and easy-to-use information to help patients, visitors and staff plan their visit with confidence, reducing anxiety and supporting greater independence.

AccessAble has been producing detailed accessibility guides for over 25 years. Its work is co-produced with disabled people to ensure information is accurate, relevant and genuinely empowering. The guides go far beyond unhelpful terms such as "fully accessible", instead offering detailed insights into what people can expect before they arrive.

Each guide has been created by trained surveyors who visit the site in person. They capture detailed information on entrances, lifts, toilets, parking, lighting, signage, assistive listening systems and much more.

The guides support people with mobility needs, sensory impairments, neurodivergent users and anyone who may feel anxious in unfamiliar environments.

The Detailed Access Guides are free to use and easy to find by:

- Visiting the RJAH website: www.accessable.co.uk/the-robert-jones-and-agnes-hunt-orthopaedic-hospital-nhs-foundation-trust
- Or searching The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust on the AccessAble website

RJAH surgeons give knee replacements a robotic boost

RJAH has made a breakthrough in surgical technology with the introduction of the VELYS Robotic-Assisted Solution – an advanced system designed to enhance precision and improve patient outcomes.

The VELYS robot, developed by Johnson & Johnson MedTech, is now being used by arthroplasty surgeons to support them with knee replacement surgery.

The technology is designed to support surgeons in performing precise knee replacements using real-time data and surgical guidance. Unlike autonomous systems, the robot does not perform the surgery itself. Instead, it supports the surgeon throughout the procedure.

For patients, this offers a more personalised surgical experience, with the potential for less post-operative pain, improved recovery and shorter hospital stays. Ongoing research is also being undertaken to better understand the long-term clinical benefits.

Dr Ruth Longfellow, Chief Medical Officer, said: "The introduction of robotic-assisted knee replacement surgery reflects our commitment to innovation and to delivering clinical excellence.

"It's a major milestone for RJAH and ensures that we continue to keep abreast of new technology to ensure we provide our patients with an outstanding quality of care."