Derby & Burton Hospitals Charity prepares to make an even bigger impact on patient care



Derby & Burton Hospitals Charity is preparing for a change that will help it grow, build stronger community links and fund more of the extra touches that improve patient care and support hospital staff.

Derby & Burton Hospitals Charity

Making Lives Better

Charitable giving has long played an important role in supporting healthcare.

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Today, more than 220 NHS charities across the UK collectively contribute around £1.5 million every day to the NHS.

For Derby & Burton Hospitals Charity (DBHC), this support covers everything from small gestures that make a hospital stay a little more comfortable to major investments in medical equipment, research and services.



Together, these extras can make a real difference to the care provided by University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust.

“We tend to focus on things the NHS can’t afford or things you wouldn’t expect the NHS to provide,” explains Jill Matthews, Chief Executive of DBHC.

“For example, every year we give Christmas presents to patients who are spending the festive period in hospital, helping make their time a little easier.

But we’ve also helped the Trust invest in major pieces of medical equipment – such as a machine that delivers heated chemotherapy during surgery, improving outcomes for the most difficult to treat cancers – and funded research and innovation projects that can save lives and transform patient care.”

While the NHS does invest heavily in research and innovation, researchers often need to demonstrate that a proposed study is feasible before they can access larger sources of funding. This is an important gap that NHS charities often help to fill.

Recently, DBHC funded exploratory research into different approaches to breast reconstruction following breast cancer surgery.

The initial feasibility study is now nearly complete and the project is expected to lead to a much larger national research study.

The charity has also funded a role in the Trust's research team to explore how more diverse communities can be involved in research and clinical trials, helping ensure that research better reflects the people it is aiming to benefit.

More freedom to shape the charity's future

From 1 November, DBHC will become an independent charity with a newly appointed Board of Trustees. Currently, the charity operates under the governance of the NHS Foundation Trust, which acts as a corporate trustee.

Becoming independent means DBHC will have its own trustees and more freedom to decide how the charity is run and how it develops.

The move aims to bring together the charity's existing experience and history with new skills and connections from across the local community.





“Derby, Derbyshire and Staffordshire are very diverse, and we have lots of different groups and communities within that very wide geographical area.

“Having trustees with strong local connections will help the charity understand those communities better, build new relationships and, ultimately, reach more people.”

Jill Matthews
Chief Executive

Independence will also mean DBHC has more flexibility around how it operates. The charity will employ its staff directly, making it easier to attract and develop the fundraising and marketing expertise it needs.

It will also be able to access some larger grant-making foundations that are typically reluctant to fund charities operating under a corporate trustee arrangement.

Ahead of the change, those connections have already begun to blossom, with the charity talking to faith communities and local businesses about how they can get involved.

DBHC has set itself a five-year goal of at least doubling its income while building much stronger connections with the communities it serves. Jill is ambitious about what that growth could make possible, including more gestures that improve daily hospital life alongside bigger projects such as state-of-the-art medical equipment, new services and research.

Derby & Burton
Hospitals Charity



We are grateful to our supporters and fundraisers. Pictured: The Patterson Family who raised funds for the children's diabetes fund.

To find out more about your local NHS charity, or to donate, please visit:

www.dbhc.org.uk/donate

Every donation makes a difference.

In practice, this could also give DBHC more opportunity to support the Trust in bringing services closer to home. Jill highlights dialysis as one potential area for future investment, with some patients currently travelling to Royal Derby several times a week when a more local service in Burton could have a significant impact on their experience.

“I think those bigger things will really make the kind of difference we can’t currently make as often as we’d like to,” she says.



For a charity serving around a million people across Derbyshire and Staffordshire, the potential to make a bigger difference is considerable. The challenge ahead for Jill and her team is to build the relationships, partnerships and community networks that will allow the charity to reach more people and turn its ambitions into reality.

Working in partnership with local businesses for patients, staff and communities

For Jill, relationships with local businesses aren’t simply about asking them to give. She wants DBHC to build genuine partnerships where businesses can contribute expertise, products, and connections as well as financial support, while in return the charity shares its own knowledge and experience of health and care.

That could mean helping a business support the wellbeing of its workforce, sharing knowledge and expertise or finding practical ways for it to support the health of the local community.

Toyota, for example, has supported the charity with equipment and wheelchairs, while DBHC has worked with the company on its staff wellbeing centre and shared knowledge on topics such as prostate cancer and mental health. Sometimes the contribution can be as simple as a business doing what it already does well. Uniform supplier Simply Uniform, for example, has supported the charity to secure better pricing for its branded merchandise, using its expertise and connections to help DBHC make its money go further.

For Jill, these are the kinds of mutually beneficial relationships the charity wants to develop more widely.



Financial support will always be important, but businesses can also make a significant difference by sharing their skills, knowledge and resources and offering employee volunteering opportunities.

“This move to independence gives us a greater opportunity to work together across Derby and Burton to make a difference for all our families and their loved ones.”

Jill Matthews, Chief Executive, Derby & Burton Hospitals Charity

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Registered charity number: 1218561