1. Blazing the trail for women in surgery

BSUH Trauma and Orthopaedic Consultant Laura Hamilton has sent a rallying call to women hoping to become surgeons. “The traditional view is that you can’t operate while you’re pregnant,” she says. “Well I’m the proof that you can.”

Under the title, “The Lesser Spotted Pregnant Surgeon”, Laura was speaking this week at the first Women in Surgery conference in Scotland.

Things are changing, she said, but there are still barriers to be overcome. The figures speak for themselves - 60% in medical school are female, yet the number of female consultant surgeons is just 12%.

Laura said: “During my training there were few female role models in orthopaedics and no pregnant surgeons. I’d never seen or heard of a surgeon being pregnant and was told ‘surgeons do not get pregnant’. That’s why I am passionate about telling my story and reassuring trainees that anyone can get pregnant if they want to, and they can continue their training.”

Laura had two babies while on her registrar training. “I did lots of research into why surgeons can’t get pregnant and found no good reason,” she said. “Once I’d had a baby as an Orthopaedic Registrar, I became famous locally and was always getting messages from secretly pregnant and very anxious trainees.

“I had radiographers refusing to take X-rays in theatre because I was pregnant. I had nurses trying to stop me going into theatre.” Her advice to others is to be prepared. “Be armed with the facts and get your senior managers on board.

“I want to let women know that it’s not an old boys’ network. If you love surgery, you can do it and you can still have a life and have children.

“BSUH is really very good on this. I’d never seen so many female consultants as I have seen here. In hand surgery alone, four of our five surgeons are female. I think it’s because BSUH is very open. It’s open to change and it’s open to doing the right thing.”

Laura concedes that knowing how difficult it was to become a female orthopaedic consultant was part of the challenge for her to succeed. “There’s nothing like someone telling you that you can’t do something, to make you more determined.”

If anyone would like to find out more, please email Laura direct at: laura.hamilton21@nhs.net.

2. Our BSUH Family: Lewes Victoria Hospital

Appreciative patients leaving a message after visiting Lewes Victoria Hospital tend to mention two plus-points – the first is that the staff are so kind and friendly.
Outpatients’ Staff Nurse Linda Beddow agrees. “We are a very friendly and adaptable team. We have to be quite flexible because we cover so many different disciplines and often we have to arrange clinics at short notice.

Outpatients and the day surgery unit at the Victoria Hospital became part of the Trust in April last year. “It’s more relevant for us to be part of BSUH,” Linda says. “We have had a few challenges, mostly just getting to know the way the Trust works, but we’re getting there.”

The outpatients’ department sees 1,000 patients a month and runs more than 10 clinics, covering specialties including urology, ENT, cardiology, orthopaedics, digestive diseases and a pain clinic, as well as two nurse specialist clinics for Parkinson’s and urogynaecology.

Linda says: “There is a bit of a cottage hospital feel here, but I say that in a nice way. We’re all happy to be working at the Victoria and we strive to give the very best care at all times.”

And the second mention in the feedback? Parking. “They love the free car park!” says Linda.

3. ED self-rostering and clinical fellowships offer solution to national issue

Tune in to BBC Radio 4 on Monday 10 June at 8pm to hear our ED consultant Rob Galloway, directorate manager Alex Shaw and clinical fellow Jonathan Matthews sharing the solutions developed at BSUH to improve the work/life balance, staff satisfaction and patient care in our A&E department on “My name is – Sammy. I’m leaving the NHS”.

Sammy is an intensive care registrar based at the Royal Surrey who previously worked in A&E at Frimley Park. She is just two years away from qualifying as a consultant, however caring responsibilities at home combined with the rigid nature of staff rotas mean that she is considering quitting the NHS.

Our team was chosen to be interviewed because we have developed an innovative approach to managing staff rotas and a flexible clinical fellowship programme – solutions which are now being adopted by other Trusts around the country to improve the work/life balance of staff who work in a high pressure environment such as A&E.

The programme will also be available on the BBC Sounds App shortly after broadcast.

4. Men’s health by numbers

Men's Health Week runs every year in the week before Father's Day. This year, it will run from 10-16 June.

The focus for 2019 is men's health by numbers...looking at the key numbers that men need to know about their own health and at the statistics that policy-makers need to know. Over the week we'll be sharing key numbers on our social media channels and encouraging you to test your knowledge and think about your own health.
5. A fond farewell to Caroline Davies

This week we said goodbye to our Nurse Director Caroline Davies, who is retiring after an impressive 21 years at the Trust.

Colleagues gathered in Trust HQ at RSCH to share their stories and wish her well – and enjoy a slice of the amazing cake.

We wish her all the best in the adventures that lie ahead. Her successor will be announced over the coming week.

BSUH Charity Update

Nurses thank young fundraiser

A young BSUH Charity fundraiser’s enthusiasm so impressed nurses that she was invited to visit the ward she has supported so that staff there could thank her in person.

Emma Bull was just ten years old when she raised more than £100 for BSUH Charity by doing a sponsored run in Hove Park and a sponsored bike ride. She was inspired to raise money after being impressed by the care her nanny received whilst a patient in Egremont Ward at The County.
Emma, her younger brother James and their mother Jessica, were greeted at the hospital by Ann Gibbins, Divisional Head of Nursing for the Medicine Division. She told Emma how impressed she and her colleagues were by her: “The things that people do for us, to raise money, make a massive difference to the patients that we look after. One example is the little fans that we have been able to buy for our respiratory patients. They make a real difference to how patients feel during the day.”

For her next fundraising challenge, Emma, who is now 11, is planning on walking 30,000 steps in a day on the South Downs Way.

Feeling inspired and want to get involved with some fundraising? Have a look at the Charity website events page or email our fundraising manager Jess – Jessica.Burgess4@nhs.net

There is also a video story of the visit on the charity’s Facebook page.

Did you miss?

- Revamped repatriation process: 05 June
- Death of Inspirational Paediatric Nurse: 05 June
- Change to Elderly Medicine inpatient referral process: 05 June
- BSUH - Armed Forces Community Staff Survey: 05 June
- Transport Bureau Products and Services: 05 June
- Bikes for Staff - Cycle to Work Scheme: 05 June
- Quality Visits: 04 June
- Critical Incident Declared: 04 June
- BSUH Charity - The Big Tea: 04 June

Events and training next week

Please see nww.bsuh.nhs.uk/news/events-calendar/ for further details of each event. All training events are on http://iris.bsuh.nhs.uk

- An Evening of Popular Chamber Music for Sussex Cancer Fund: 08 June
- Football: 11 June
- Pilates: 12 June
- Yoga: 12 June
- Staff Rounds at BSUHT: 12 June
- ‘Changing Minds’ conference: 13 June

Best of BSUH

Exceptional!: Attended the Princess Royal yesterday for a CT scan and then an assessment by the RAMU. In spite of the hospital being evacuated for an hour for a fire, the staff all caught up lost time quickly and efficiently while being profusely apologetic for something which they had no control over. The CT was carried out with amazing efficiency and the staff were kind and reassuring. I was then seen by the Rapid Access Medical Unit, and was welcomed and offered a hot drink by the kind receptionist. Despite having to have loads of blood tests and having to wait for results the staff kept us informed at all times. The head nurse, Luke, was kind and reassuring, and the SHO displayed a kind and thorough approach while again keeping me fully informed all day. I was then seen by the consultant who was equally kind, thorough and reassuring. We are very lucky to have such an exceptional team of professional people caring for us. Thank you.

Once again, a big thank you to all our volunteers
#VolunteersWeek2019

Follow us at: Your next Buzz will be published on Friday 14 June 2019.