

Advertiser

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Inside the new ward...



**Exclusive report from
Rotherham Hospital as
60-bed Covid-19 unit is
built in just two weeks**

● PAGES 4 & 5

DO YOU NEED HELP?

**GET SUPPORT DURING
THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK**

www.rotherham.gov.uk/coronavirus



Candle started blaze

A BEDROOM blaze at Herringthorpe is believed to have been started by a scented candle, the fire service said.

Crews from Maltby, Aston Park and Rotherham were called to Chaucer Road shortly before 8.15pm on Saturday. The front bedroom was well alight on arrival but all occupants were out of the house and there were no injuries.

A fire service spokesperson said: "It is thought the fire started with a scented candle that had been left on a set of drawers."



Manhunt in child rape case

POLICE are searching for a 49-year-old man linked to an alleged child rape in Tinsley.

Vietnamese national Loi Le (above) is wanted in connection with an incident in either 2012 or 2013.

The victim, now 15, reported the attack two years ago but police have been unable to trace Le.

Det Con Lee Atkins said: "Since this matter was reported to us in 2018, we have carried out a number of complex enquiries to identify a suspect in connection with this offence.

"We have since been working with forces across the country and national agencies in a bid to identify and trace Loi Le.

"This has included circulating details to all forces and working with Immigration Enforcement to identify his current whereabouts.

"It's vitally important we locate Le so we can speak to him in connection with our ongoing investigation."

Le is thought to also go by the names Tai Le or Cho Ngay Hanh Phuc, and have links to Manchester, Birmingham and Bradford.

Det Con Atkins said: "If you recognise this man or the names he may go by, and you believe you know where he might be, please contact us."

Your Advertiser goes behind the scenes



ALL CHANGE: Victoria Hazeldine in the new 60-bed department 200466-9

INSET: Conversion work on the ward is expected to be completed tomorrow 200466-12



60-bed ward in 2 weeks

A 60-BED critical care unit — which would normally take a year to construct — has been built at Rotherham Hospital in two weeks.

Contractors have been working around the clock to get the work completed and enable Covid-19 patients to be given life-saving ventilation.

Victoria Hazeldine, head of nursing for the division of surgery, said: "In terms of what we have done so far, this type of building work can usually take up to 12 months to think about.



We've managed to turn this around in two weeks.

"We started off with 14 critical care beds within the trust and were tasked with creating a 60-bedded critical care unit from a general ward."

Coronavirus inpatients are currently being cared for on two wards on level B. The new 60-bed unit on level A over wards A3 and A4 is due to open next week.

"We are hoping to have at least 30 beds open by the beginning of next week, double our original number of 14," said Ms Hazeldine, who is responsible for medical areas in-

cluding critical care, general surgery, urology, and trauma and orthopaedics.

"As it stands, our unit has the capacity to have six ventilator patients and eight patients who need extra supportive care.

"This new facility will enable us to have room for 60 ventilator patients straight away, but we are hoping we won't need to fill the full 60."

There was already an oxygen supply in the ward but additional air supply was needed. It's the first time the hospital has needed such a high capacity.

Extra nurses have been brought in to help with the increase of patients and walkie-talkies are being used to help them communicate when wearing PPE (left).

Contractor Rob McCree (left), managing director of Medical Gas Service, said:

"We've been working on 60 beds to have an oxygen and air supply fitted at each bed space from a brand new air plant, craned in on the hospital's roof on Monday," he said.

"We started work on site last Wednesday and have piped and finished 33 rooms as of Tuesday, and we hope to complete the rest by the end of this week.

"We have been working 12-hour days, seven days a week and are doing everything we can to get these wards completed."

It is hoped the ward will be finished tomorrow.

Around 60 former employees have volunteered to return back to work in the critical care unit, and a new patient communication champion will start next week to help patients keep in touch with their families.

It's impossible to switch off...even at home

COVID-19 has changed the day-to-day running of critical care immensely. It's busier than ever as we care for the influx of patients.

No longer can we easily walk out to our critical care unit.

We have to put on full personal protective equipment (PPE) before entering, making the whole time on the unit uncomfortable and difficult to communicate.

The huge change to how the critical care unit works day-to-day is one of the most challenging parts of the job.

Working in full PPE, the rise in

by critical care unit consultant **CLARE WINDSOR**

the number of critically unwell Covid-19 patients and the continued planning for large numbers of critically unwell patients.

This is being done while all the staff take the risk of working and caring for Covid-19 patients all in their stride.

As a team, we continue to review all critically unwell patients who have Covid-19 with the same care, respect and dignity



that we offer any of our patients. The major difference is that we are fully dressed in PPE whenever we are caring for them.

It can be very daunting but we do everything to help reduce this.

The whole critical care team have demonstrated superb teamwork.

Everyone has gone above and beyond to put into place huge plans to help care for the patients. The team have adapted quickly to different ways of working and their priority continues to be the care of our patients. It's impossible to switch off

from what's happening...even when home.

There's always more to plan and questions to answer.

But spending time with family helps immensely, playing in the garden with my children whatever the weather, trying to make life as normal as possible for them even though it's far from it!

Ensuring social distancing when at home is essential to keep everyone safe.

And that's the main piece of advice I want to give people: continue to follow the social distancing rules. It's so important to keep everyone safe.

for latest on the hospital's biggest battle

90 virus patients are discharged



CALL ON US: Covid-19 helpline staff at the hospital 200466-13

Clapping in corridors for successful cases

NINETY patients who tested positive for coronavirus have been discharged from Rotherham Hospital — including a member of staff. But as of Wednesday morning, 49 people had died in the hospital from the virus and 64 inpatients were still being treated.

On Good Friday, staff lined the corridors, clapping and cheering as they watched one of their own — surgical registrar Dimitris Papachristos — be discharged.

Dimitris, who had been on a ventilator in the critical care unit after testing positive for the virus, was discharged and allowed to return home.

Victoria Hazeldine, head of nursing for the division of surgery, said it was a scary time for staff, patients and relatives.

"We have had a number of patients who have been successfully discharged from critical care," she added.

"One in particular was a staff member who was on a ventilator while on the critical care ward that was discharged from the ward areas last week.

"The euphoria that came out of that, among everybody, and to see him walk away after he was so sick, was just a real positive story for the trust. That's made people feel much more positive about coming to work."

Public Health England said there had been 364 reported coronavirus cases in Rotherham — but the overall number is expected to be higher.

George Briggs, the hospital's chief operating officer, urged people who still need other medical treatment to visit the Urgent and Emergency Care Centre.

"The thing we are really concerned about is we are not seeing many ill people," said Mr Briggs.

"If you are ill, we still have an A&E department, we still have a full service, so please use 111 or attend A&E if you think it is appropriate, and for minor injuries and illness, go through 111 and follow their advice.

"You can still get medical help and support if you need it. We are here if you need us."

Pregnant women who have any concerns about their baby's movements should call the

trust's maternity service.

Public car parking charges at the hospital had been suspended until May 31, subject to further review.

For further information, visit www.therotherhamft.nhs.uk.

From health reporter **CHLOE WEST** and chief photographer **DAVE POUCHER**



ALL QUIET AT THE FRONT: Empty foyer usually bustling with visitors and patients 200466-16



ONE OF OUR OWN: Surgical registrar Dimitris Papachristos heads home

Police chase injury appeal

OFFICERS appealed for witnesses after a 23-year-old passenger was seriously injured following a police chase.

A Land Rover Discovery failed to stop for officers on Bawtry Road in Brinsworth at about 11pm last Thursday.

A police spokesperson said: "A short pursuit followed, before the Land Rover is believed to have lost control on Manor Road, coming into collision with two parked, unoccupied cars.

"The Land Rover is then understood to have collided with the police car involved in the pursuit, which was stationary at the time.

"A 23-year-old Rotherham man travelling as a passenger in the Land Rover suffered serious injuries and was taken to hospital.

"The driver of the Land Rover is believed to have fled the scene on foot and has not yet been identified."

Anyone who saw what happened or may have dashcam footage is urged to contact 101 quoting incident 993 of April 9.



Bat CCTV is issued

DETECTIVES investigating a baseball bat assault in Conisbrough released this CCTV image of a man they believe can help with their enquiries.

Members of the public called 999 after finding a man with serious injuries on Ivanhoe Road.

The 35-year-old had been walking home when he was attacked at 9.30pm, police said.

A spokesman added: "It is believed a bat was used to assault him, causing serious facial injuries requiring hospital treatment.

"Officers believe the man pictured could hold vital information and are appealing for him, or anyone who recognises him, to get in touch."

The attack happened on March 19 and anyone who can help can call 101, quoting incident 782 of that date. Alternatively, contact Crimestoppers via www.crimestoppers-uk.org or 0800 555 111.

Anxiety-easing sessions for staff

DAILY mindfulness sessions are being given to help hospital staff cope with stress and anxiety during the pandemic.

The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust has also established a seven-day swabbing service to test patients and staff for coronavirus.

Dr Richard Jenkins, chief executive, outlined some of the key changes made at the hospital since the outbreak when he ad-

ressed last week's board of directors meetings, which was held remotely.

Dr Jenkins expressed his gratitude to staff and volunteers during this unprecedented time.

"Our whole organisation is working in an environment of rapid change and pace and I recognise how incredibly hard everyone is working to support our patients and each other," he said.

Free car parking for staff was introduced on April 1, and daily

mindfulness sessions are being run by Dr Sanjay Suri to help trust employees manage anxiety and stress.

Other changes included sharing public information, sending out letters to vulnerable patients, updating IT systems, stopping all visitors and collaborating with other local health organisations.

Martin Havenhand, chairman of the board, said the NHS had been challenged by the pandemic and he paid tribute to staff for the "incredible efforts" shown.

He added: "Our executive team have also shown great leadership, and the organisation has responded magnificently in looking after our patients in the hospital and in the Rotherham community."

Mr Havenhand said Covid-19 would be the trust's main priority for the next few months and would inevitably impact other plans and priorities during this period.



HOSPITAL CEO: Richard Jenkins