

The Women's View



Robotic-assisted surgeries

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Welcome

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I am writing this welcome note with mixed emotions. After 40 years in the NHS, and 15 years serving as Chief Executive at Liverpool Women's, I will be retiring at the end of the year and therefore this will most likely be my final welcome note for *'The Women's View'*.

For the last 8 years, over half of my tenure as Chief Executive, a significant amount of my time, along with many other leaders and staff across the Trust, has been spent trying to plan for the long-term future of our services.

In 2015, the Board of Directors here declared that we felt our services were unsustainable in their existing form in the long-term and that change was needed. There were many reasons for this but in summary the challenges we faced then, and continue to face now, centre around the changing needs in healthcare over recent years, the limited access we have to other specialist care and facilities due to us being an isolated site, and the associated financial costs of mitigating all of these challenges and risks over a long period of time.

Following this, we began our Future Generations Strategy in 2015 to look at possible solutions to the challenges we face by working with our partner organisations across the NHS. Our aim has been to ensure that we continue to provide the best quality of care for people accessing women's services in the city and the wider region, for the long-term future. This has remained a priority for us over the last 8 years.

More recently in 2022, NHS Cheshire and Merseyside oversaw a review to look at how Liverpool's hospitals could work better together to improve care for patients. Addressing the challenges affecting women's health was one of three critical priorities identified as part of the review, and as a result a new programme of work has been established, with the aim of ensuring that the very best care for women and babies is delivered for the long-term future. A paper explaining how this programme will work was presented to the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board in February 2023.

Continued over...



A Women's Services Committee (WSC) was established earlier this year by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside to take this work forward. Read a recent briefing about this from their Chair, Raj Jain here:

www.cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk/your-health/liverpool-women-s-services/chair-s-briefing-august-2023

[View here](#)

It is important to say that no decisions about the future of our services have been made and any formal plans would be subject to a public consultation where everyone would have the opportunity to have their say. But I am encouraged that issues relating to the future of our services are now being discussed and led at a regional level to come up with the best solution for women and babies.

As this will most likely be my final Women's View before I retire, I want to sign off with the following messages.

We know that Liverpool Women's Hospital as a place is very special to people in the city and beyond. Since it was officially opened in 1995, around 215,000 babies have been born here. My two grandchildren were born here. However, what makes our services special is the staff who provide them, and the quality of care that our patients receive. Safety and quality of care has always been our number one priority throughout this journey, since 2015.

All healthcare needs to evolve and this region has a rich history of constantly evolving women's healthcare which goes back to 1796. Our work since 2015, and the work NHS Cheshire and Merseyside is now taking forward, is just the next step in discovering what services could look like in the future for the benefit of all women and babies in the region.

Read more about the work NHS Cheshire and Merseyside is leading here:

www.cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk/your-health/liverpool-women-s-services

[View here](#)

Finally, I would like to say a massive thank you to all the readers, staff and patients at Liverpool Women's, I have been touched by many of you during my time here and I won't forget you!

I will be following all things LWH throughout my retirement and I'm excited to see what the future holds. Wishing you all lots of good health and happiness.

Kindest regards,



Kathryn Thomson - Chief Executive

First in the Region to perform four Gynaecology Robotic-assisted surgeries on the same day

Liverpool Women's Hospital is the first in the region to undertake four Gynaecology robotic-assisted surgery cases on the same day, this is a big step forward for the organisation and women's health.

To help reduce the number of patients waiting on a hysterectomy this particular weekend a consultant at Liverpool Women's Hospital, Mohammed Otify and a team of anaesthetists performed four hysterectomies using robotic assisted surgery. Robotic-assisted surgery is less invasive and reduces recovery time for women following surgery and length of stay in hospital.

Mr Otify said:

"Liverpool Women's surgical staff unlocked new possibilities performing four major robotic gynaecological surgeries in a single day. I was supported by this wonderful and dedicated team, accomplishing four life-changing robotic gynaecology surgeries for four of our patients - enabling faster recovery and clearing waitlists."

Since the introduction of the da Vinci Robot at Liverpool Women's Hospital in 2020 this has enabled teams to evolve their knowledge and skills. Gary Price, Chief Operating Officer, said:

"Robotic assisted surgery is making a big difference to our patients. We are really pleased to have the da Vinci robot at Liverpool Women's Hospital. As well as improving and shortening recovery times after procedures for patients, the robot has also provided an opportunity for our staff to use cutting edge treatment and technology helping to provide a better experience for our patients."

If you are due to have surgery at Liverpool Women's Hospital and would like to discuss robotic-assisted surgery and if this is an option for you please speak with your consultant.





Liverpool Women's very own Miss Congeniality

Liverpool Women's Hospital Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) Danielle Smith, the current Mrs Galaxy UK has recently gone on to win the International pageant title of 'Mrs Congeniality'.

Our very own Miss Congeniality, Danielle Smith, who will be turning the big 50 next month is set to carry on the celebrations for some time after becoming 2nd runner up for the Mrs Galaxy UK national pageant and then went on to win the title of Mrs Congeniality in Florida. Danielle won the title after tough competition from women of all ages from around the world to take home the prestigious crown.

We caught up with Danielle to find out all things Pageant and how she's been feeling after such an impressive win...



What made you enter the pageant competition?

As we know some women's confidence and self-esteem can change particularly as we get older. Having always had a career centred around women from the age of 18 whilst working as a fitness/aerobics instructor and personal trainer and now caring for women throughout their surgery for obstetrics and gynaecology, I felt strongly about encouraging and empowering women to never be defined by their age.

I am proud to say that I am currently the oldest Mrs Galaxy UK, and what this shows is that the Galaxy system fully embraces all women regardless of their age. The system celebrates women and encourages us to be ourselves and stay true to yourself. George Eliot said, "It's never too late to be what you might have been" and this quote is perfect for us ladies who still have so much to do and give in life. We can show our younger generation that age is something that should not be dreaded or feared but should be embraced.

Your daughter is a National Pageant Winner, how did this come about?

My daughter started when she was 13 years old as she wanted to build her confidence and make new friends, she is now a national pageant winner and I am so proud of her, I am proud of both my daughters. I did see the positive impact that entering pageants had on her, so we both agreed that for one last time I would take the plunge and enter Mrs Galaxy UK 2023.

Tell us about the UK Galaxy Pageant.

Beauty Pageants have evolved over the years and one thing you realise as you do get older is that beauty is so much more about the person on the inside, and who you really are and that was my goal to prove to myself that I/we are enough. We can still be confident whilst ageing gracefully.

The UK Galaxy Pageant is one of the largest pageants in the UK, and the winners win a trip of a lifetime to America to compete at the Galaxy International Pageants! I couldn't believe it when I came 2nd runner up For Mrs Galaxy UK and then in August travelled to Orlando, Florida to represent the UK and competed against other winners from all over the world for the Mrs Congeniality international title and was even more shocked when I won this title!

How did it feel when your name was announced, and you had won the titles?

I literally couldn't believe it when I heard the words, and it still makes me giggle when I think about it. The first thing I thought when I walked away with the crown was, I'm almost 50 years old and if I have inspired just one woman who may have put her life on hold when becoming a Mum, getting married or her career, to go and do something she has always wanted to do, then my job as Mrs Galaxy UK is done. Just believe in yourself and give whatever it is a go.



Danielle with her colleagues, left to right: **Kayleigh Hickey**, Health Care Assistant; **Sally Kinsella**, Recovery Team Leader (RGN); **Febby Offeni**, Scrub Practitioner (ODP); **Danielle Smith**, PEF (ODP); **Lisa Evans**, Scrub Team Leader (ODP); **Katie Morgan**, Recovery Practitioner (RGN).

Tell us a little about yourself and what you do for the Liverpool Women's Hospital?

I am married with two beautiful daughters. I started work at the Liverpool Women's Hospital in 2009 and have two roles as an ODP, I'm a recovery and anaesthetist practitioner assisting surgeons and anaesthetists, by taking care of our ladies throughout their journey whether it be having a baby or a gynaecology procedure. I'm an advocate for Women's health and cancer. Having had numerous friends and family members affected by cancer, including two amazing friends that I've worked with for a number of years, who have both had a cancer diagnosis in the last year, these women are like family to me and they have been my biggest supporters on my *Mrs Galaxy UK* journey, I love them dearly, this crown is theirs too.



You do a lot for the Liverpool Women's charity, tell us more.

We look after so many of our wonderful patients who are undergoing treatment and surgery for cancer, so I simply want to help raise awareness and give something back to our patients and show support to every woman who has been through a cancer experience. So, for our amazing Fundraising Manager Kate Davis and the fundraising team here at LWH I agreed to abseil down the Liverpool Cathedral, and I have also completed a sky dive for our charity.

It doesn't stop there though, does it?

No, I'm also competing in our 'LWH Does Strictly' a black-tie event at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, on Saturday 2 December at 6.00pm and I will be performing the Jive. I will need all the support I can get for this one! Tickets cost £65 including a three-course meal, live performances, a raffle and entertainment. I'm not done yet as there is more to come, watch this space.

[View here](#)

Your friend and fellow ODP colleague Lisa Evans had this to say, how did this make you feel?

"Danielle is our very own superstar and inspiration to everyone she meets. Not only is she a full-time Mum, a full time Clinical Skills Facilitator and ODP she is also pageant queen ambassador, fundraiser and charity advocate. A full-time carer for her beautiful daughter and with all this she still manages to come to work every day with a smile which in turn puts a smile on everyone's face. Just when we thought we couldn't be any prouder she found the time to compete in Mrs Galaxy UK to inspire women of all ages that you can do anything you put your mind to, to go on to win a trip to Orlando to compete in the finals. She also did an abseil and sky dive to raise money for the Liverpool Women's Charity Mulberry Suite so that our palliative patients can spend their last days with their families around them in comfortable surroundings".

I am totally humbled by Lisa's message, I work with the most incredible multidisciplinary team, and I absolutely love my role as an ODP, the best part I love is taking care of our women. To me it's the perfect job and the Liverpool Women's is the number one place to work.





Baby Loss Awareness Week

9-15 October 2023

Each year the Honeysuckle Team here at Liverpool Women's work extremely hard to raise awareness through their work with bereaved families and the feedback they receive.

During this year's Annual Service of Remembrance the team premiered a project they have been working closely on for a number of months now called Honeysuckle FC. In partnership with Liverpool Football Club Foundation, the Team have set up a support group specifically for men affected by miscarriage, ectopic or molar pregnancy, termination of pregnancy for fetal anomaly, stillbirth and early neonatal death.

Honeysuckle FC brings bereaved men together through the power of football. Offering them a safe space to talk openly, followed by a game of football.

Watch the short video about Honeysuckle FC on YouTube.

[View here](#)

All abilities are welcome. For more information, please email: mark.henderson@liverpoolfc.com or honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk

Did you know the Honeysuckle Team run a monthly support group?

The sessions take place in a calm, welcoming environment with refreshments, crafts and a listening ear for anyone affected by baby loss. Unfortunately, due to the sensitive nature of the group children are unable to attend.

Upcoming support group sessions:

Thursday 9 November 2023, 6.00pm-8.00pm
Deysbrook Village Centre, Deysbrook Way, West Derby, Liverpool L12 4XF

Thursday 14 December 2023, 6.00pm-8.00pm
Blair Bell Centre, Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust, Crown Street, Liverpool L8 7SS

Please contact The Honeysuckle Team to book a place:
0151 702 4151 Email: honeysuckle@lwh.nhs.uk

Charity Update



Christmas Fayre

Our Christmas Fayre is back! Now in its tenth year, it's a great way to start or finish your Christmas shopping.

6 and 7 December 2023 10am-4pm
Liverpool Women's Hospital reception

Liverpool Women's Hospital Charity

Email: fundraising@lwh.nhs.uk

Liverpool Women's Hospital Charity

Strictly for Liverpool Women's Hospital



Buy your tickets here

Adelphi Hotel

6pm on Saturday 2 December 2023

Black tie event with three-course meal and live entertainment
Single ticket: £65 • Table of ten: £650

Email: fundraising@wh.nhs.uk for more information

Charity Update



Liverpool Women's Hospital will writing service

With the current cost of living crisis, more people are finding new ways to support the charities they love, and more gifts than ever before are being left in a Will.

Leaving a gift in your will doesn't cost you anything, however it can ensure our services are here for generations to come.



We've partnered with expert will writers, Guardian Angel, to make leaving this kind of long-lasting impact easier than ever before.

Your will is legally binding when it's printed and signed by a witness, saving you time and stress. Many people who use this service choose to leave a gift in their will to Liverpool Women's Hospital Charity but there is no obligation to do so.

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Otterspool ADVENTURE

LWH and Otterspool adventure Christmas day out

LWH Charity has teamed up with Otterspool Adventure Centre to offer staff, friends, and family the perfect Christmas day out.

Enjoy up to three hours of magical activities plus unlimited play on their ice rink and attractions.

Ticket includes:

- Visit Santa in his grotto and receive a gift.
- Visit the elves 'Make a bear' workshop.
- Watch a festive show.
- Gingerbread decorating with Mrs Claus.
- Amazing attractions including our Christmas skating rink.

Booking direct would cost £44.95 per person with LWH Charity discounted it will cost £36 per person.

This offer is valid for tickets on Saturday 16 December at 10.30am only.

To buy your ticket please visit the fundraising office or email: fundraising@lwh.nhs.uk

More information can be found at:
www.otterspooladventurecentre.co.uk

[View here](#)