

Weekly News

My first day as UHMBT Chief Executive

I wanted to send a quick introduction as today (27 April 2026) marks my first day as Chief Executive of UHMBT. Please watch this [short video message](#).

I feel incredibly privileged to be joining you in Morecambe Bay, and at such a pivotal time of change. I know you have made some incredible achievements recently - such as maternity services being rated as 'Good' by the CQC, a reduction in waiting times for elective care, and a really significant journey of financial improvement. You should be immensely proud of these accomplishments.



I also acknowledge the ongoing challenges faced at UHMBT and across the region, and the impact they can have on how colleagues feel at work. This was reflected in the recent Staff Survey results, and I want to assure you that I take the wellbeing of colleagues very seriously and want to support you wherever I can.

Thank you to Scott McLean for his excellent leadership as interim Chief Executive for the past six months, I look forward to working with him in his Chief Operating Officer role as part of the executive team.

The plan for my first week and over the coming months is to visit wards and departments across our hospital and community services, and to speak with as many colleagues as possible to get your ideas and suggestions for the future.

I look forward to meeting you soon.

Steve Williamson
Chief Executive

UHMBT blood sampling for people with learning disabilities shortlisted in NHS Excellence Awards

A painless new form of blood sampling for people with learning disabilities and needle phobia pioneered by UHMBT has been honoured as a regional winner in the NHS Excellence Awards 2026.

The awards scheme is run by and for the NHS, shining a light on local projects and teams that are making a real difference to patients and communities, delivering on the ambitions of the NHS 10 Year Health Plan and inspiring others to adopt innovative approaches.



UHMBT has won the regional Quality Improvement Award and will represent the North West of England in the national final of the NHS Excellence Awards. The awards recognise outstanding work across ten categories, celebrating innovation and impact in health and care. Read the full story here: [UHMBT blood sampling for people with learning disabilities shortlisted in NHS Excellence Awards](#).

Reminder: April's Team Talk to take place on Thursday

The next Team Talk all-colleague briefing will take place on Thursday 30 April via MS Teams between 12pm and 1.30pm. This will be Steve Williamson's first time leading the session as Chief Executive. You will find the link to join the session in your calendar, or you can click here: [Join the meeting here](#).



Dee Houghton announces retirement from the NHS

Dee Houghton, our Interim Chief Operating Officer, has announced her retirement from the NHS after 36 years. Dee will be leaving the Trust on 30 April.

Dee started in post as Interim Chief Operating Officer in November 2025, following seven years as Deputy Chief Operating Officer at the Trust. In this time, Dee has led the successful transfer of South Cumbria Adult Physical Health Community Services and the TUPE of 900 staff from Cumbria Partnership Foundation Trust (CPFT) and Blackpool NHS Trust into UHMBT in 2018. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she led the development and delivery of three COVID Vaccination Hubs across South Cumbria and North Lancashire.



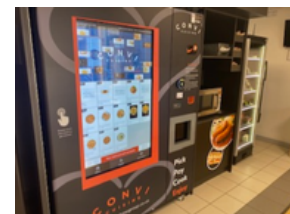
Dee was the Senior Responsible Officer for the Morecambe Bay Respiratory Network (MBRN) and the initial development and delivery of three Community Diagnostic Centres across South Cumbria and North Lancashire and more recently led the delivery and operational changes in ensuring effective provision of Patient Transport Services (PTS) across the Trust. Read the full update here: [Dee Houghton announces retirement from the NHS.](#)

Quarterly People Pulse Survey closes on Thursday

Our experiences at work can change, and it's important that we listen and respond to your concerns regularly so we can improve the support that we provide to you. With thousands of colleagues working across the bay, one of the best ways to have your voice heard is through our Quarterly People Pulse survey. The survey is anonymous, voluntary, takes five minutes to complete, and is open to all UHMBT and One LSC colleagues. This quarter's People Pulse survey is now open until 30 April 2026.

Update on new vending machines

The new vending machine contract is nearing completion and is now operational across our 3 main hospital sites (RLI, WGH and FGH). This new contract has seen the addition of two machines at FGH (located on Level 3, adjacent to the Doctor's Mess) and RLI (located on the corridor to the restaurant) which stock hot meals and ice creams, significantly improving the availability of food on a 24/7 basis and these machines are already proving extremely popular amongst staff.



Nutritional and allergen information can be found by using the large touchscreen on the front of the machines and there is provision for many dietary and cultural needs. Each meal has a barcode either on the cardboard wrapper or on the food pouch seal. This barcode should be scanned on the iWave microwave adjacent to the machine which will then cook the meal to the specific timing and temperature required for the dish.

We would like to thank staff and departments who have supported the Facilities Team whilst the mobilisation has taken place.

New branded graphics and templates

As part of the recent launch of 'Our Priorities 2026/27' and our brand identity, we have created a suite of branded graphics and templates that colleagues can use. They can be found at the following link: [Branding-and-Templates.aspx](#).

Chantalle Farrow and Linda Hilton to retire

Community Therapy & Rehab Service - North Lancashire will be saying farewell to two of our longest serving colleagues, Chantalle Farrow, Clinical Lead Community Physiotherapist, and Linda Hilton, Community Therapy Technical Instructor, at the end of April and the end of June (respectively).

Between them, Chantalle and Linda have a combined NHS service of over 65 years. Linda has remained delivering a similar service throughout her 35 years NHS service, remaining at the heart of Community Therapy through many challenges and successes.

Linda joined Community Occupational Therapy in 1991 and she has seen a whole host of name changes and other developments to the service in her time. She remained dedicated to the team and the patients she treated and plans to retire 35 years to the date of her first joining the team, on 26 June 2026.



Linda Hilton



Chantalle Farrow

Chantalle has worked for the NHS for over 30 years, starting in March 1989 in Edinburgh. She moved to Lancaster and MSK Outpatients Physiotherapy at RLI in 1998 and finally moving to Community Therapy in February 2001 where she has remained ever since.

Both colleagues have been a great support to the Community Therapy Team, contributing an invaluable amount of knowledge, experience and commitment over the years. They will be missed tremendously. Chantalle's last day of work will be Wednesday 29 April 2026 and Linda's last day of work will be 26 June 2026. The iCTRS Team would like to thank them for their many years of dedicated service and wish them both a long and happy retirement.

2025/2026 Flu Campaign thank you

We would like to thank all colleagues who had their flu vaccine as part of our 2025/2026 Flu Campaign. Colleagues who had their vaccine have helped to protect our patients, their loved ones and colleagues from the flu virus during a pressured winter season.

It is important to acknowledge the hard work and organisation from Occupational Health and Wellbeing colleagues and our Peer Vaccinators who delivered a staggering 57.95% vaccines in 2025/2026. I am proud to reveal that the Trust ranked first for the North West and fifth in the UK. We worked hard to make the flu vaccine accessible to colleagues working across all areas of the Trust to lead Fluathons, drop-ins and walkarounds.

We will be releasing details for our 2026/2027 flu campaign in the next few months, and we look forward to seeing more colleagues this year take up the offer to have their vaccine to help us in our fight against flu. If you have any suggestions for this year's campaign, we would love to hear from you at occhealth.referrals@mbht.nhs.uk. Colleagues can read national guidance for vaccines here: [National flu immunisation programme 2026 to 2027 letter](#).

Clare Hill, Head of wellbeing & Occupational Health, Clinical Lead

Changes to Lancaster Auction Mart car parking permits

The council Auction Mart car park across from the Royal Lancaster Infirmary (RLI) used to offer long term permits, for example, monthly/year long permits; this has now changed and they are only offering short stay parking. We understand that there are quite a few colleagues at the RLI who have these permits and there have been a number of them who have received Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) as a result. For further information, please contact General Office, RLI, on 01524 583200.

NHS smartcard software change

The NHS Smartcard software is being upgraded across the Trust over the next few weeks, starting with new build devices. This is required to support new NHS smartcards due to be issued from **May 2026**.

Key changes

- The software is now called **NHS Smartcard Connect**.
- Inserting your smartcard will **no longer automatically start applications**.
- You will be prompted for your **PIN when you open applications** such as Lorenzo.
- Each smartcard-enabled system (e.g. ESR) may prompt for your PIN separately.
- **Removing your smartcard will NOT log you out** of applications.
- This excludes VDI environments (ED / ICU / Maternity).
- You must **use the Exit option** in Lorenzo within the system before leaving your device using the exit button (image below).



Important: Always log out manually to maintain information governance and patient safety.

If you experience issues, contact the IT Service Desk - 01524 516000 (46000).

Trust wide – Use of property & space

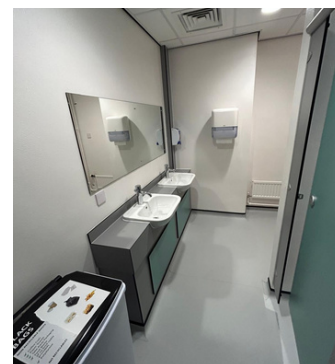
We are constantly looking at how we can maximise the usage of our properties within the UHMBT portfolio. We are currently looking at how we might further maximise the use of our premises across the region and intend to undertake a monitoring exercise over the next two years to measure the current occupancy of space across the Trust.

We intend to do this by implementing an occupancy sensor platform by Johnson Controls. This automates a process that previously used staff time to document which spaces are in use, and when, across our 24/7 operations. It relies upon a PIR sensor device that detects heat and movement and is placed under each desk. Read the full update on the intranet here: [Trust wide - Use of property & space](#).

Newly refurbished changing facilities now open at Westmorland General Hospital

Colleagues at Westmorland General Hospital are now benefiting from newly refurbished changing facilities, following a £153,000 investment from NHS Charities Together. The funding, awarded to Bay Hospitals Charity through the Stage 3 Covid-19 Recovery Grant, is part of a wider programme focused on supporting staff health, wellbeing and recovery across the Trust. Improving the changing facilities at WGH was identified as a key priority.

The refurbishment brings WGH in line with the high-quality facilities already in place at Furness General Hospital. Feedback from colleagues highlighted how valuable these improved spaces were during the pandemic, and it was important to provide the same standard at WGH. Read the full story here: [Newly refurbished changing facilities now open at Westmorland General Hospital](#).





Want to undertake an improvement in your area?

Start by doing the Improving Together eLearning

#Improvingtogether for a shared purpose

The Trust's Improving Together eLearning package is designed to give you an overview of what improvement is and guide you through the Trust's improvement framework – the 6 Improvement Steps. Completing this quick and easy course will get you started on your way to improvement.



The **Improving Together** eLearning is for **ALL** colleagues in all roles in the Trust.



Registering your improvement idea / project in AMaT ([here](#) or look for the symbol on your desktop) – via the Quality Improvement Projects (QIP) module - will help you to follow the 6 Steps from Start to Sustain. If you've never used it before, it will ask you for a few registration details, after which it will recognise you from your UHMBT login.

If you've not already completed it when you register your QIP on AMaT, we will add the Improving Together eLearning to your TMS to give you a head start



The Improvement and Redesign Team (IRT) work hard to support everyone that wants to bring about improvement. Whether that be a small change or something much bigger. We offer project and programme management for Trust priorities; training; coaching; guidance; tools/resources; and workshop facilitation

If you require support from the team, you can request it here: [IRT Support Request Form](#).

You can find out more information about the team on the [Improvement and Redesign Team Intranet site](#) and there is a wide-range of resources for improvement, project management, transformation, and redesign to support you, which can be found on [The Hive Improvement Centre](#).

Events and training

Data Protection Guidance on using Meta Glasses

It has been highlighted within the Trust that colleagues have been utilising Meta Glasses whilst in clinical areas within the Trust. Meta glasses are artificial intelligence (AI) powered smart glasses with built in technology to allow users to take photos, videos, listen to audio, livestream to social media and use Meta AI for voice-activated tasks. From a Data Protection compliance perspective, all colleagues should be aware of the following:

- To preserve the integrity, availability and confidentiality of data, Meta Glasses must not be used in any areas of the Trust to process person identifiable data
- This means that the functionality of the Meta Glasses for photography, video recording, live streaming must not be used
- The definition of person identifiable data applies to the processing of both patient and staff data

As a data controller, the Trust has a responsibility to ensure compliance with data protection laws. Read the full update here: [Data Protection Guidance on using Meta Glasses](#).

Update to Mandatory Information Governance Training (2026)

Over the next few weeks, the way you stay up to date with your Information Governance training on TMS is changing. To be classed as compliant, you now need to do two things:

- Finish the Information Governance (Core Skills) training
- Confirm the Information Governance Declaration

More information can be found at the following link: [Update to Mandatory Information Governance Training \(2026\)](#).

Events and training

- **Smokefree Lancashire** - Please note that the Smokefree Lancashire drop-in will change to 9am - 11am on Thursdays at Occupational Health.
- **Sands Charity Event** - Trek Together, Saturday 12 September 2026, 10-mile or 20-mile trek, Location: Lake District. Sign up: [Trek Together | Sands](#). More information can be found at the above link.
- **Reminder student drop in** - Wednesday 29 April, 10am - 11.30am, Education Centre, Room 3, RLI. Open to all students in the hospital. Hosted by Chaplaincy UHMBT. More details at the above link.



Surveys

- **Blackpool & The Fylde College and Furness College proposed merger** - The public consultation is now open on plans for the proposed merger between Furness College and Blackpool and The Fylde College. Feedback can be submitted via the online consultation at: [Feedback Form](#) or www.blackpool.ac.uk/merger.

Job vacancies

- **Band 3 Healthcare Assistant/Therapy post for South Lakes Rapid Response and Virtual Ward team.**

Newsletters

- **Cumbria Safeguarding Adults Board (CSAB) April 2026 newsletter.**

Awareness days

- **Action On Stroke Month (1-31 May 2026)** - Every day in May, 240 people will wake up to the life-changing impact of a stroke. This #StrokeAwarenessMonth, join @TheStrokeAssociation in raising awareness of stroke and help to support more stroke survivors at every step of their recovery.
- **Skin Cancer Awareness Month (1-31 May 2026)** - May is skin cancer awareness month. Whether you are directly affected by skin cancer, or you just want to find out more, @Macmillan have answered some of the top FAQs about skin cancer.

Library and Knowledge Service

Please see the link below for access to the Library and Knowledge Service website and online resources. If you have any queries contact us via e-mail at library@mbht.nhs.uk. [Library and knowledge services :: University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust \(uhmb.nhs.uk\)](#).

Trust Procedural Document Library

Please see the link below for procedural documents updated in the last 30 days. If you have any queries contact policy.coordinator@mbht.nhs.uk. [Trust Procedural Document Library - Documents Updated in the Last 30 Days](#)

Have you won the Bay Hospitals Charity Lottery this week?

This week's winning numbers are:

Draw date: Friday 24 April 2026

9 9 2 7 4 3

Play the Bay Hospitals Charity Lottery online now!

Visit www.bayhospitalscharity.org/lottery/

and help make a lotto difference across Morecambe Bay Hospitals.

