

Ground breaking partnerships give patients access to surgery and procedures

Providing top quality patient-centred care is the Trust's number one priority and for some of our patients we have to be innovative in how we can give them the surgery or treatment they need. Ground breaking partnerships are helping the Trust to give the people of Lincolnshire access to new surgery and procedures that would not otherwise be available at the Trust at this moment in time.

In December, a 29-year-old mother of one, who was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis needed surgery to remove her large intestines, colon, rectum and anal passage known as a panproctocolectomy, as all previous treatments had failed.

Mellissa Gerwal asked if the procedure could be performed using single-incision keyhole surgery through the opening made for her stoma as it known to result in less post-operative pain, less risk of infection, a better cosmetic appearance and also a quicker recovery time. This surgery had never previously been performed at the Trust. It was only possible as ULHT's Consultant Colorectal Surgeon Mr Amit Shukla arranged with Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust's colorectal department for their Consultant Mr Bala Bharathan to come to Lincoln for the surgery.

Mellissa said: "I now have my health back, there is no greater gift anyone could give me. I really hope this collaborative working attitude and partnerships between hospitals will grow and flourish to ensure the people of rural Lincolnshire can access the same medical expertise and modern surgical techniques as larger cities."

This is just the latest example of the Trust sharing expertise, developing staff skills and enabling patients to choose to have the surgery they need in their local hospital.

Patients with heart failure or irregular heart rhythms who need cardiac implants can now have the procedure closer to home thanks to a partnership between the Lincolnshire Heart Centre and Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust.

The East Mercia Urology Alliance sees ULHT and University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust bring together urology expertise into a single department. It is thought to be the first time hospitals from different NHS trusts have come together in this way to offer robotic assisted surgery.

In another partnership with University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust we are enabling ULHT consultants to deliver advanced vascular surgical procedures to Lincolnshire patients.

The Trust is also sharing its expertise and knowledge to help other hospitals. The Lincolnshire Heart Centre has helped hospitals in western Australia and New Zealand to establish procedures to fit heart loop monitors outside state-of-the-art cath labs after they became one of the first in the country to use the new injectable devices to record heart rhythms.

Working with colleagues from around the country we are able to give our patients treatment and care that previously had only been available at specialist centres, thus helping us to provide excellence in rural healthcare.

Agenda Item 14.2