

31<sup>st</sup> March

Good Morning,

### **Reflection on a Challenging Year**

Our year at Holy Cross comes to an end today and there is one thing that everyone agrees on. It's been very challenging!

For patients, the prioritisation of safety has meant that our therapy services and well-being/day activities programmes have been limited. We have had no hydrotherapy for inpatients, no volunteered activities for nearly a year, a short season for patient visits to the holiday cottage in Selsey, no theatre outings, and periods of time when visits from loved ones were suspended. This week we have seen the return of some of our volunteers and art activities will begin again next week. A step in the right direction - with more to follow!

For relatives, the anxiety of not being able to visit for many weeks cannot have been an easy yoke to bear. With visiting having resumed recently it has been great to welcome both new and familiar faces to Holy Cross – albeit dressed in PPE! But another step forward.

And for staff it's been very demanding. Having come through 2020 with limited impact from the pandemic, the outbreak of January 2021 was very difficult and had a substantial impact on everyone at a practical, personal and emotional level – especially with the loss of patients and a valued member of staff. Although vaccines were not available to Holy Cross in December 2020, staff and patients receive their second vaccination today. Another step....or maybe it's a walk now?

We look forward to a relaxation of restrictions and a measured return to usual ways of working. Our aim is to get there as quickly and safely as possible.

### **Progress**

Most of our communication within the year has been about the pandemic, so I wanted to take a moment to update you on some other developments/achievements that took place during the year\*:

Nursing: two nurses joined from our international nurse recruitment programme. We developed a number of HCAs into extended role positions and supported others undertaking their NVQ level 3 course in Health and Social Care. Some senior nurses were trained in advanced respiratory and ventilator management. Training for nurses was provided in dialysis. Other team members took the step forward from associate nurse to registered nurse, or from HCA to Snr HCA.

Equipment/and Upgrades: we purchased the following new equipment– a blood gas monitor, bedside CRP test kits, a bladder scanner, a shower chair, and replacement vital signs monitors; the Friends of Holy Cross funded the purchase of a new ambulance; and interior décor was updated at the Selsey Cottage.

IT/Information Systems: a virtual patient visiting programme was introduced; an electronic patient record system was developed and is being trialled; e-induction and e-learning was developed; all staff are now on email; and home working was enabled for those who need it.

Outpatients: virtual physiotherapy outpatient sessions were delivered and the post-natal physiotherapy programme was re-launched. The Physiotherapy Centre reopened again in March 2021.

Research: 2 academic articles were published by the physiotherapy team in 2020 and then in early 2021.

Academic Achievements: Our Director of Clinical Services, Rasheed Meeran, completed his MBA, and to our Chaplain, Fr David Murphy, completed his MA in Philosophy.

### Looking forward

There will be some new developments at Holy Cross throughout 2021/22: the completion of the 'Treehouse' in a few weeks' time. This is a wheelchair accessible platform into the woodland to the east of the hospital; solar panel installation; additional car parking spaces including the installation of some car charging points; and hopefully later in the year the start of works to enlarge and develop St Joseph's (the former convent building) to create an additional 10-bed ward (more information in due course!). Some refurbishment of the bathroom areas in Selsey might also take place next winter.

### Thank You

I wanted to say thank you on behalf of Trustees, The Advisory Committee, and The Management Team at Holy Cross for walking this journey together. I believe we are already moving from 'strength for today' to 'bright hope for tomorrow'.

Kind regards and Happy Easter for this weekend\*\*.

Ross

ps 'Your Say' sessions, including a discussion about Covid, will be organised in April (details to follow).

*\*this list is not exhaustive*

*\*\*early Easter greetings for our Orthodox colleagues*