

Cover Sheet

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Executive Summary

1.	COVID-19 at OUH – Two Years On
2.	Infection prevention and control rules to keep patients and staff safe
3.	Thank you to our vaccination team
4.	No Excuses for abusive or violent behaviour towards our staff
5.	<i>Building a Greener OUH – our Green Plan is launched</i>
6.	Funding announced for new NIHR Oxford Clinical Research Facility
7.	More than 2,000 staff take part in Housing & Accommodation Survey
8.	OX5 Run returns to raise money for children in our hospitals
9.	Oxford Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) news
10.	Oxford Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) and Oxford Academic Health Partners (OAHP) news

Chief Executive Officer's Report

1. COVID-19 at OUH – Two Years On

- 1.1. Tuesday 4 February 2020 was the date when the first COVID-19 positive patients were admitted to our hospitals and so, two years on, we felt it was important to provide our staff with the space to reflect on a period of unprecedented challenges.
- 1.2. Reflection is one of the three key pillars of our *Growing Stronger Together – Rest, Reflect, Recover* programme which is supporting our people as we emerge from the pandemic.
- 1.3. In a personal email to all OUH staff on Friday 4 February 2022, our Chair, Professor Sir Jonathan Montgomery and I thanked staff for everything they have done over the last two years.
- 1.4. We said: "Thank you for caring for not only the patients, families and carers who depend on you, but also each other in your teams and across divisions and departments. All the way through this difficult period, we have consistently heard stories of unity, professionalism, and excellence about our people – each and every single one of you has played an important part."
- 1.5. Staff from across the Trust reflected on their personal experiences of the pandemic in a series of videos which we shared via our social media channels – including [Staff Nurse Maude McDonald](#) and [Deputy Ward Sister Rosalie Maneclang](#).
- 1.6. We recognise that, even as there are promising signs that the country is beginning to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, this remains a challenging time for our staff as we see high levels of attendances at our Emergency Departments and as Elective Recovery continues.
- 1.7. We are grateful to our staff for everything that they do every day to provide high quality and compassionate care for the communities that rely on our services.
- 1.8. Council and NHS leaders in Oxfordshire took the opportunity to thank staff across local authorities and the health and social care system for their tireless efforts to provide services and support communities, in a joint public statement on 7 February.
- 1.9. Our Chair, Professor Sir Jonathan Montgomery said: "Throughout the pandemic, we have worked together with our colleagues across the health and social care system. COVID is not yet behind us, and we would ask people to continue to do all that they can to keep themselves and those around them safe."

2. Infection prevention and control rules to keep patients and staff safe

- 2.1.** The Government's relaxation of some COVID-19 rules does not apply to our hospitals, in order to protect vulnerable patients and our staff who care for them.
- 2.2.** All staff – and visitors who see loved ones in clinical areas such as inpatient wards – must wear a face mask, and all visitors must wear a face covering when not in clinical areas on our hospital sites in Oxford and Banbury.
- 2.3.** Safe distancing (the 2 metre rule) remains in place in all healthcare settings and we are also maintaining the 'Rule of One' visiting restrictions which have been in place throughout much of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.4.** In addition, anyone visiting a loved one in our hospitals must take a lateral flow test **before** attending.
- 2.5.** [More information – including full details of special visiting arrangements for certain groups of patients – is available on our website.](#)

3. Thank you to our vaccination team

- 3.1.** I would like to thank all staff who played their part in the development and running of our OUH COVID Vaccination Centre on the Churchill Hospital, which came to an end on 24 February.
- 3.2.** Our vaccination team administered almost 60,000 first, second and booster vaccines since the vaccine hub opened its doors on 8 December 2020 as one of just 50 hospital hubs to launch the UK's COVID-19 vaccination programme.
- 3.3.** We can be very proud of the special role that we have played in vaccinating and keeping as many of our staff and patients, as well as members of the community, as safe as possible.
- 3.4.** It has been a real OneTeamOneOUH effort and it would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of staff across the Trust, not only clinical colleagues but also staff working in our Digital, Estates and many other teams.
- 3.5.** For any OUH staff who have not yet been vaccinated, we continue to promote and publicise the NHS booking system to find the nearest vaccination centre and book an appointment.

4. No Excuses for abusive or violent behaviour towards our staff

- 4.1. People are reminded that there is no excuse for abusive or violent behaviour – whether physical or verbal – towards our staff in a new campaign which we launched in January.
- 4.2. The *No Excuses* campaign urges everyone using local health and care services to treat staff with kindness and respect.
- 4.3. In November 2020, there were 80 reported incidents around violence and aggression within OUH. In November 2021, this had more than doubled to 180 reported incidents.
- 4.4. Sam Foster, our Chief Nursing Officer, said when she launched the campaign in January: “Please treat our staff with respect – they are working incredibly hard in challenging circumstances to keep you, your family members, and their colleagues safe after an extremely difficult two years. Everyone should be entitled to work in an environment where they feel safe.”
- 4.5. As Sam noted, abuse takes many forms. Verbal abuse and aggression can be damaging and takes a toll on people’s wellbeing. It is not always face-to-face but can sometimes happen on the phone or even via email. And so the *No Excuses* campaign will aim to focus on the various different aspects of abuse moving forward.
- 4.6. [More information is available on our website.](#)

5. Building a Greener OUH – our Green Plan is launched

- 5.1. Following its approval at the Trust Board meeting on 19 January, our Green Plan – *Building a Greener OUH* – was formally launched to staff and external stakeholders on 24 January.
- 5.2. *Building a Greener OUH* is the result of a major staff and public engagement exercise in Summer 2021 when hundreds of people took part in an online survey, focus groups, and virtual listening events.
- 5.3. This feedback helped shape the Green Plan, which sets out our priority areas for action including travel and transport and digital transformation.
- 5.4. *Building a Greener OUH* will develop further the passion for sustainability which many of our teams have already demonstrated and which is making a positive difference, [such as in the Orthotics team at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre](#) and [a cycle courier service \(delivering medication to OUH\)](#), which is improving patient care and delivering sustainability benefits.
- 5.5. [Building a Greener OUH is available to read in full on the OUH website](#)
- 5.6. [Congratulations to the Orthotics team who recently won a High Sheriff’s Award for their sustainability work.](#)

6. Funding announced for new NIHR Oxford Clinical Research Facility

- 6.1.** The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) announced the funding for its Clinical Research Facilities (CRFs) on 28 February and I am delighted that we will be hosting the new NIHR Clinical Research Facility here at OUH.
- 6.2.** Oxford is one of 28 sites that will benefit from more than £160 million over five years to expand early phase clinical research to benefit NHS patients.
- 6.3.** The [Oxford Experimental Medicine Clinical Research Facility](#), based at the Churchill Hospital, will act as the hub of the Oxford CRF. It is central to the clinical translational strategy of the NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre (BRC), providing service to all specialties in the BRC Themes.
- 6.4.** This announcement is very welcome news because it will enable us to significantly expand the early phase clinical trials we conduct in Oxford, which can have life-changing benefits for our patients.
- 6.5.** It is also another excellent example of close partnership work between the University of Oxford and ourselves at OUH because strengthening our research infrastructure in this way will enable us to test new therapies in order to improve patient care.

7. More than 2,000 staff take part in Housing & Accommodation Survey

- 7.1.** Oxfordshire is an expensive place to live, and finding good quality, affordable accommodation within an easy commute of Oxford and Banbury is a real problem for our staff and their families.
- 7.2.** It is also one of the major issues impacting on the Trust's ability to recruit and retain staff.
- 7.3.** Where they live impacts on the wellbeing, work life, and home life of our OneTeamOneOUH staff and so we launched a survey in January to give our people an opportunity to tell us what they want and need from a home, now and in the future.
- 7.4.** I personally led the communications campaign to encourage staff to take part in order to demonstrate our Board's commitment to supporting our people.
- 7.5.** More than 2,000 staff took this opportunity to have their say and make their voice heard on this important issue during the survey window which was open from 24 January to 11 February.

7.6. Once the survey results have been analysed in detail, what staff tell us will be used in the Trust's future work with housing partners to put solutions in place.

8. OX5 Run returns to raise money for children in our hospitals

8.1. Oxford Hospitals Charity's annual fun run, the OX5, is a five-mile event taking place in the grounds of Blenheim Palace on Sunday 20 March to raise money for Children's areas across OUH including at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury.

8.2. The OX5 has been held virtually for the past two years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and so it is great news that it is returning this year to a face-to-face fundraising event to celebrate its 20th anniversary.

8.3. The event was launched in 2002 to help the fundraising efforts to build the Oxford Children's Hospital on the John Radcliffe site and since then it has funded state-of-the-art equipment, created play rooms and sensory spaces, contributed towards parents' accommodation, the dedicated Children's Emergency Department (A&E) at the Horton General, and even a [play specialist to help children having important scans](#).

8.4. Participants are welcome to run, jog or walk the beautiful route, and the good news is that there is still time to sign up to take part via the Charity website – see www.hospitalcharity.co.uk/ox5run for all the details.

9. Oxford Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) news

Cancer Research UK has [invested £11 million](#) in the University of Oxford and Oxford-based NHS to accelerate the translation of cancer research for patient benefit, with a further £3 million being given for training over the next five years. The funding for Oxford will draw together academics and experts from across its fundamental, translational and clinical research communities, including from cancer doctors, mathematicians, computer and data scientists, vaccinologists, immunologists, cellular biologists, drug discovery experts, clinical trialists, imaging experts and public health specialists.

A groundbreaking new imaging technology, the [photon-counting CT](#) (computerised tomography), has been installed at the John Radcliffe Hospital, making it the first in the UK to benefit from the system. The NAEOTOM Alpha from Siemens Healthineers is also the first in the world to sit within a hybrid catheterisation laboratory. The new system produces quicker and more detailed images, potentially speeding up diagnosis and transforming treatment pathways for patients presenting with symptoms of a heart attack. Patients are also exposed to lower levels of radiation in the new scanner. The new technology will also facilitate ground-breaking research at the Oxford Acute Vascular Imaging Centre (AVIC), based at the John Radcliffe.

Oxford researchers have identified [abnormalities in the lungs](#) of Long COVID patients who are experiencing breathlessness that cannot be detected with routine tests. The EXPLAIN study, which is supported by the Oxford BRC, is using hyperpolarised xenon MRI scans to investigate possible lung damage in Long COVID patients who have not been hospitalised with COVID-19 but who continue to experience breathlessness. As in a previous study of patients who had been hospitalised with COVID-19, these initial findings show that there is significantly impaired gas transfer from the lungs to the bloodstream in these long COVID patients when other tests are normal. The announcement received widespread national media coverage.

There have been [dramatic reductions](#) in hospital admissions for common and severe childhood infections in England since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a study by researchers from Oxford Population Health, supported by the Oxford BRC. Their analysis included data for all children aged 0-14 years admitted to an NHS hospital in England with an infection from March 2017 to June 2021. After 1 March 2020, substantial and sustained reductions in hospital admissions were found for all but one of the 19 infective conditions studied. Hospital admissions for influenza fell by 94% in the 12 months after 1 March 2020, while admissions for bronchiolitis fell by more than 80%. However, more recent data indicate that some respiratory infections increased to higher levels than usual after May 2021.

A new building at the University of Oxford's Botnar Institute for Musculoskeletal Sciences has been [opened by The Duchess of Cornwall](#), Patron of the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC) Charity, which raised £9 million for the new building. The Botnar Institute for Musculoskeletal Sciences, on the site of the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC), carries out research, much of it supported by the NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre, into improving the treatment of arthritis, osteoporosis and other bone and joint diseases. The new Marcella Botnar wing will focus on bioengineering, with researchers working on developing new technologies, materials, and interventions to treat patients with musculoskeletal conditions.

Oxford orthopaedic researchers have found that [hip replacements](#) using cement improved the quality of life of patients, compared to uncemented implants. The White 5 trial, which is supported by the Oxford BRC, looked at a procedure called hemiarthroplasty, in which the head of the femur is replaced with a metal implant. The research team found that patients having the cemented treatment showed a statistically significant improvement in quality of life at one month and four months after the procedure, and were less likely to have a secondary fractures at the site of the implant.

The use of metal K-wires, commonly known as 'pins', to hold broken wrist bones in place while they heal is no better than a traditional moulded plaster cast, a study by researchers from the University of Oxford's Nuffield Department of Orthopaedics, Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Sciences (NDORMS) has found. The DRAFFT2 study, which is supported by the Oxford BRC, found that there was [no statistically significant difference](#) in recovery or quality of life in patients who had had their broken wrist 'pinned' and those who had had a cheaper plaster cast.

The Oxford and Oxford Health BRCs' Diversity in Research Group has [met in person](#) for the first time to celebrate the important contributions they made to health research during the pandemic. The group members, who are from communities currently under-represented in research, such as black and minority ethnic communities, met at a networking and thank you event at St Anne's College, Oxford.

10. Oxford Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) and Oxford Academic Health Partners (OAHP) news

10.1. Oxford Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) news

The Oxford AHSN has published its [latest quarterly report](#) covering October-December 2021. It details activities supporting local and national healthcare priorities and highlights how the AHSN works with partners in the NHS, research and industry to encourage innovation and improve patient outcomes.

The latest cohort of the Oxford AHSN's successful practical [programme supporting NHS innovators](#) starts this month. Applications are particularly encouraged from allied health professionals. Almost 300 people have taken part in this Masters-level programme – free to participants – since its launch in 2016.

The Oxford AHSN hosted a [webinar on mechanical thrombectomy](#) for acute ischaemic stroke on 1 March, linked to the publication of the second edition of a practical guide to implementation.

The Oxford AHSN is working with patients, the public, clinicians and Ufonia in developing Dora, an autonomous telemedicine platform which has just won [almost £100,000 through the SBRI Healthcare Greener NHS award](#). The AHSN focus is on ensuring patient views and experience inform how this AI solution can be incorporated effectively into triage of head and neck cancer.

The AHSN Network and Health Education England have published a [report on end of life support](#) for patients and families.

The AHSN Network won the patient safety category at the *HSJ Awards* for supporting the implementation of [COVID Oximetry @home and virtual wards](#). The judges said: "This was an outstanding example of a true system-wide collaboration." This remote monitoring model was first established in the South East with the Oxford, Wessex and Kent Surrey Sussex AHSNs playing a leading role. It went on to be delivered across England, safely supporting thousands of people at home.

10.2. Oxford Academic Health Partners (OAHP) news

The Board of the OAHP met on 14 January – key areas for discussion and action included:

- The Board received a briefing on the activities of the [NIHR Applied Research Collaboration \(ARC\) Oxford and Thames Valley](#), led by Professor Richard Hobbs – the ARC works very closely with the Oxford AHSN on a number of joint projects

- The Chairman of the Board, Professor Sir John Bell, and the Director raised the question of how the OAHP and its partners might best respond and get actively engaged in the Life Sciences Vision and the Seven Missions – the Board agreed that it had many strengths across the Missions and it would consider this in much more detail, involving all partners and taking the opportunity to review and redefine the objectives for the OAHP
- The Board noted that, following the welcome news that both the Oxford BRC and the Oxford Health BRC have been invited to proceed to Stage 2 of the BRC renewal competition, potential interview dates are in early April and preparations for this next stage of the process are underway
- The Board approved the development of an Award Scheme aimed at developing research capability and capacity, with a focus on non-medical healthcare professionals, which will be launched in April and delivered through the OAHP Charity – the awards have been developed in association with both the Oxford and Oxford Health BRCs and OUH BRC and the Oxford Institute of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Research at Oxford Brookes University
- The Board also approved the submission of the Annual Return, the Annual Report and the Annual Accounts for the Oxford Academic Health Partners Charity #1174725 – the documents were submitted to the Charity Commission by the deadline of 31 January

Regular updates about the OAHP are available at www.oxfordahsc.org.uk.