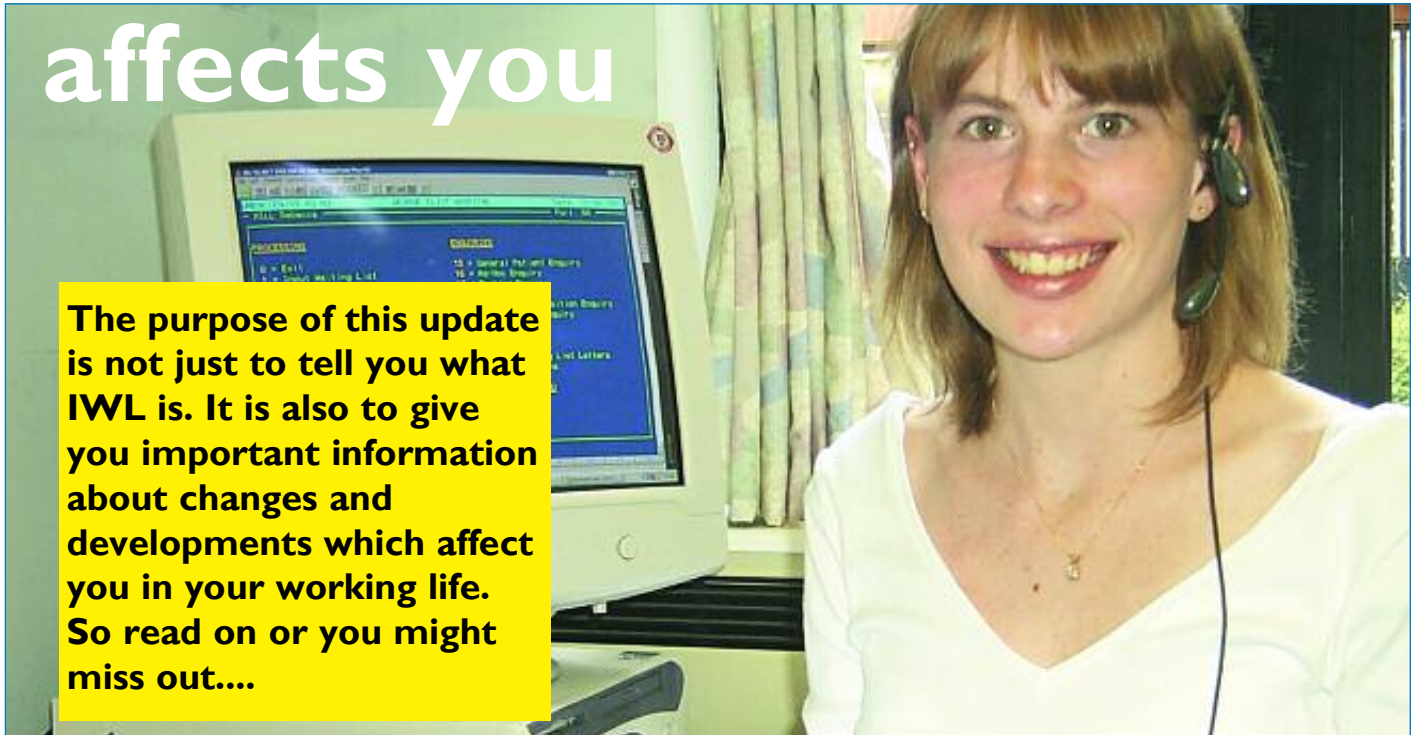


# How *Improving Working Lives*

## affects you

The purpose of this update is not just to tell you what IWL is. It is also to give you important information about changes and developments which affect you in your working life. So read on or you might miss out....



## George Eliot's IWL Commitment to Staff

- \* We recognise that modern health services require modern employment services.
- \* We understand that staff work best for patients when they can strike a healthy balance between work and other aspects of their life outside work.
- \* We accept joint responsibility with staff to develop a range of working arrangements that balance the needs of patients and services with the needs of staff.
- \* We value and support staff according to the contribution (both directly and indirectly) they make to patient care and meeting service needs.
- \* We aim to provide personal and professional development and training opportunities that are accessible and open to all staff irrespective of their working patterns.
- \* We are committed to having a range of policies and practices in place that enable staff to manage a healthy balance between work and their commitments outside work.

Here, on this page, we reproduce George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust's formal commitment to achieving the goals of *Improving Working Lives*. The document has been signed on behalf of the Trust Board by chairman Frank McCarney and acting chief executive Duncan Phimister

Frank McCarney,  
Trust Board Chairman

Duncan Phimister,  
Acting Chief Executive

### George Eliot's IWL Assessment

The Trust will be formally assessed for its compliance with IWL practice standards during the week commencing 3rd March 2003. An outside NHS team of experts will be looking for evidence of a wide range of policies and procedures that improve working lives. The outcome will influence the Trust's star rating this year.

# Fully Signed up to Equality and Diversity

In the June edition of *Bleep* there were a number of articles which reported on progress in relation to Equal Opportunities within the Trust. Since then there has been further work, with major progress being achieved through the Trust Board's adoption of the *EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY 2002/04 - IMPROVING WORKING LIVES AND SERVICE PROVISION*.

**The overall purpose of the Trust's approach is to:**

- \* build a workforce which is valued and whose diversity reflects the communities it serves, enabling it to deliver the best possible health care service to the community;
- \* ensure that it is a fair employer, achieving equality of opportunity and outcomes in the workplace and using its influence and resources as one of the biggest employers in the area to make a difference to the life, opportunities and health of the local community;
- \* ensure equality of access to services and information, and dignity and respect, irrespective of race or religion, age, gender or sexuality.

## Key goals to achieve over the next 18 months

**Employment Goal 1** - The Trust is committed to enabling everyone to achieve his or her full potential in an environment characterised by dignity and mutual respect.

**Employment Goal 2** - Everyone who works in the Trust, or applies to work for the Trust, should be treated fairly and valued equally.

**Employment Goal 3** - All conditions of service and job requirements should fit with the needs of the service and those who

work in it, regardless of age, disability, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, domestic circumstances, social and employment status, HIV status, gender reassignment or political or trade union membership.

**Employment Goal 4** - The Trust will strive to be a place where people want to work, and to be a leader in good employment practices.

**Service Goal 1** - The Trust aims to eliminate all kinds of discrimination and hopes that instances of direct discrimination are extremely rare.

**Service Goal 2** - The Trust strives for equality of access to services irrespective of race or religion, age, gender or sexuality.

**Service Goal 3** - The Trust will ensure equality of access to appropriate information for all service users.

## Opportunities for Disability Awareness Training

The Trust continues to work with Denise Barker of the Council of Disabled People of Warwickshire to offer staff specific training that will enhance their understanding of disability issues. Dates for these sessions are still available. If you are interested, just check out the on-line *Training Prospectus* and take it from there.

## Positive move: Trust awarded disability symbol for its efforts



George Eliot Hospital has been given permission to display the disability symbol. This reflects the fact that the Trust will:

- \* interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities;

- \* ask disabled employees at least once a year what can be done to make sure they can develop and use their abilities at work;
- \* make every effort, when employees become disabled, to make sure they stay in employment;
- \* ensure that staff develop the kind of awareness about disability that is needed to make these commitments work;
- \* each year review what has been achieved so far, plan ways to improve on those achievements, and keep staff fully in the picture about this.


# Communication and Staff Involvement

Are you up to speed with the IWL changes that are affecting you and your working life? If not, you should be. All parts of the Trust should have representation on the IWL multi-disciplinary team. So for more information you can contact the team member from your department or your Trade Union representative (see list below).

If you have access to the Intranet, there is an IWL web page which is kept up to date. In addition to including regular information in *Bleep*, which is distributed to all staff with their payslips, we have provided wards and departments with an information pack including copies of staff leaflets and key policy documents.



## People to contact to find out more about IWL

  
**Improving Working Lives  
Information Pack**  
containing  
guidance leaflets about  
staff entitlements,  
policies and strategies

**Maggie Morrissey - Unison**  
**Avril Butler - Radiology**  
**Rachael Greasley - CCU**  
**Carol Davies - CCU**  
**Martyn Cook - Staff Side Rep**  
**Maggie Jarvis - Maternity**  
**Janet Houldcroft - Drayton Ward**  
**Nina Heath - Community Midwife**  
**S/N C Bonsor - A&E**  
**S/N B Powell - A&E**  
**Frank Keogh - Staff Side Rep**  
**Cindy Crofts - Staff Side Rep**  
**Tim McPhillips - HR Development  
Officer**

**Carol Edkins - RCM Labour Suite 7**  
**June Armstrong - (Unison) Theatre**  
**Josie Spencer - Nursing**  
**John Findley (or other Facilities Rep)**  
**Lynne Whitfield - Senior Sister  
/Practice Educator, ITU**  
**Pat Orrill - Physiotherapy**  
**Ruth Tyrrell - Human Resources**  
**Julie Liggins - Human Resources**  
**Alison Durrant - Secretary, Dept of  
Dermatology**  
**Shirley Woolmington - Senior Tech,  
Pharmacy**

## Progress on Flexible Working: *Employment Break Scheme, Term-Time Working and Job Share*

In September 2002 the Trust introduced an *Employment Break Policy*. Essentially, the policy allows you to apply for an unpaid break from work in order to pursue other interests for a while or, for example, to spend more time with your family.

You can agree a break for a period of between three months and five years. The Trust will guarantee to allow you to return to your job, or another suitable post, if your job is no longer available. For more information, consult the guidance leaflet on the Intranet site or in the IWL Information Pack.

Although the Trust already has a number of staff who work flexibly, there is a need to formalise and update both the terms and conditions for certain flexible

contracts and, specifically, the process which staff should use for requesting changes to their current working arrangements.

The Trust is currently considering the following draft policies through its Policies and Procedures Committee:

- \* Promoting & Requesting Flexible Working
- \* Term-Time Working
- \* Job Share

As part of the consultation process, the policies will be placed on the Intranet for comment. So if you are interested, please look out for them in the future and make sure you have your say.

# Progress on Training and Development: Study Leave Policy Reviewed; Appraisal Scheme Launch Imminent

The Trust's Training Department continues to offer more and more in the way of training and development opportunities for staff, as outlined in the *Training Prospectus*. A key challenge for the year ahead is to ensure that all staff - regardless of their role or hours worked - have equal access to training.

The study leave policy has been updated and the revised draft now includes an equal opportunities statement.

The Training Department will also be spearheading the launch of the new appraisal system across the Trust. Training will be provided for staff being appraised, as well as those who conduct appraisals.

The new appraisal incorporates the *Personal Development Plan*, whose main function is to record an individual's training and development needs and set out an action plan for how this is to be achieved.



## NHS Staff Attitude Survey

This year's survey forms were sent out on 31st January. The deadline for their return is 7th March.

As in previous years, they have been sent directly to Trust employees' homes. Individuals' responses are treated as 'confidential'. Don't forget that the Trust undertakes its survey with a number of other Trusts from the North West (in order to keep costs down). So tick the box marked *George Eliot Hospital* and complete and return the form as normal.

As in previous years, the results will be posted in full on the Human Resources Intranet site. Any follow up action required will be discussed and agreed by the IWL Multi Disciplinary Group.

## Healthy Working: Targets for Reducing Accidents and Violence

The Trust's Health & Safety Committee has set clear targets for the reduction of violence against staff and accidents involving staff during work.

The aim is to reduce both by 10%. To ensure that the targets are achieved, an action plan has been agreed which will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Committee. Progress will be reported in the Trust's Health and Safety Bulletins, *Bleep* and in formal reports to the Committee.

## How We Are Judged

The IWL standard against which George Eliot will be judged is based upon good practice in eight areas:

- \* Human Resources Strategy and Management
- \* Equality and Diversity
- \* Communication and Staff Involvement
- \* Flexible Working
- \* Healthy Working
- \* Training and Development
- \* Staff Benefits and Childcare
- \* Staff Attitude Survey

## Childcare on George Eliot Site: Nursery Operator Appointed

The Trust has appointed the organisation that will operate a new staff nursery on its behalf. The contract has been awarded to *Jack In The Box*, a local organisation with a very good reputation.

Plans are now well under way for building contractors to be appointed. Construction work is due to start in the new financial year. The nursery will be located on land adjacent to Lewes House.

By the way, we are calling it a *nursery* and not a *crèche*, which is really a facility where children are left temporarily in places such as shopping centres. On the other

hand, a nursery offers longer term support to parents who place their children there on a regular basis while they are at work.

Don't forget that we now have a childcare co-ordinator (Charlotte) on site. If you are having difficulty with childcare while you are waiting for the George Eliot nursery to be built, contact her on extension 3030. She may be able to help.

Charlotte also has information on support for children with special educational needs, working families' tax credits, and other childcare issues.