In an effort to improve the environment for young cancer sufferers, the Trust has teamed up with Friends of the Cancer Centre to provide an area specifically for use by young people and teenagers who are receiving either chemotherapy or radiotherapy in the Cancer Centre.

The room is located within the ward area so nursing and medical support is readily available, however it is a place where patients can go to listen to music, play games and watch TV. There’s a microwave and facilities for making tea and coffee, and the hope would be that the room will provide a spot where young patients could bring friends who visit while their treatment is ongoing. This has the added benefit of ensuring that the main ward area remains calm and tranquil for the more mature patients.

The room was ‘christened’ by Cool FM DJ Pete Snodden who is patron of friends of the Cancer Centre and called in to meet staff and chat with some of the patients.

NEW LINEAR ACCELERATOR
speeds up treatment

We have just recently installed three new Linear Accelerators in the Northern Ireland Cancer Centre, complimenting our existing seven machines. The latest Truebeam technology allows us to deliver very precise dosages of radiotherapy to tumours with image guided radiotherapy. These machines allow us to see the tumour while treating it therefore enabling us to treat more complicated tumours. These new machines will treat up to 30 to 40 patients per day over the next ten years making it extremely cost effective. Health Minister Edwin Poots officially opened the new accelerator at the end of 2012 in the Cancer Centre.
KNOCKBRACKEN WOODLAND

reducing our carbon footprint

Staff and patients joined together to plant a large number of the trees.

The Knockbracken woodland is a partnership between our Trust and the Woodland Trust. It has been made possible by grant funding from the Forest Service Woodland Grant Scheme, and covers 23 acres of land. After taking advice from the Woodland Trust, the species in the new woodland are all indigenous. These include oak, cherry, rowan, maple, birch and alder species.

The trees will not only start to provide a habitat for wildlife but also act as an amenity for staff, patients and public in the future. With many properties and buildings all over Belfast ranging from large hospitals, to Wellbeing Centres and community units, the Trust is undoubtedly a contributor to the city’s carbon footprint.

As a provider of healthcare it is our responsibility to reduce this. The 20,000 trees represent more or less a tree for every member of staff in the Trust. Although the trees are still small they are clearly visible to commuters on Belfast’s busy Saintfield Road.

Belfast Trust has completed a massive environmental project with almost 20,000 trees planted on its Knockbracken site.

MIDWIVES

making a splash

Following the consultation on the future of maternity services in the Belfast area, this year saw the launch of a new midwifery-led unit in the Mater Hospital.

Existing maternity accommodation underwent a refurbishment to include an increased number of birthing pools and to create a cosy environment for both women and their families.

The new service offers care for women with straightforward pregnancies and is available as an option for all women within Belfast Trust. More specialist obstetric care for women who have particular complications continues to be provided by the Royal Jubilee Maternity Service.

REDESIGN OF URGENT CARE

for older people

We are developing a consultant-led urgent care pathway as an alternative to Emergency Department (ED) attendance or admission to hospital.

Working initially with three GP practices as first responders for older people who may need to be sent to hospital, to date we have provided 36 patients with alternative acute care at home. Older peoples services has developed an ambulatory care centre at Meadowlands in Musgrave Park Hospital to provide improved access to falls services and comprehensive geriatric assessment as a quality alternative to ED attendance/ admission.

BELFAST TRUST

fostering service

Belfast Trust’s Fostering Service was reconfigured in 2008, with the amalgamation of North and West and South and East Legacy Trusts. Based across two sites, the Service consists of five specialist teams including two Support and Development teams and a dedicated recruitment and assessment team.

The Fostering Service actively recruits, assesses, trains, supports and develops a range of foster carers, to provide safe and stable family placements for children who are unable to live with their birth families. A total of 343 stranger and kinship foster carers currently provide placements for 526 children across the Belfast Trust area.

The Fostering Service strives to provide comprehensive support for its foster carers. A coordinated training programme ensures carers are equipped with a high level of skills necessary to undertake the fostering task. Organised social activities for carers and their families are an important aspect of what the Service provides. In the last year the Fostering Service has held a number of social events including the annual Christmas coffee morning for foster carers at Belfast Castle, the annual Children’s Christmas Party at Dundonald Ice Bowl, and a number of events with the Service’s corporate partner, the Belfast Giants. The highlight of the year is the Fostering Achievements Awards Ceremony, where young people in foster care are presented with awards at the iconic Titanic Building.

Belfast Trust’s retention levels for foster carers are higher than the average, with some carers having more than 30 years’ service.

Waste heat from boiler flues is recycled to heat the swimming pool at Muckamore Abbey Hospital and the hydrotherapy pool at Musgrave Park Hospital.

By installing more efficient boilers and using the waste heat for hot water and heating at Musgrave Park Hospital and Mater Hospital we have reduced our carbon emissions at both sites by more than 20%.

All Belfast Trust drivers have been trained in fuel-efficient driving.

With an annual budget of £1.2 billion and a workforce of 17,000 (WTE), we are one of the largest Health Trusts in the United Kingdom.

In the community we are corporate parents to 669 children in care, the majority in foster care.

As well as providing health and social care to 340,000 citizens of Belfast and part of Castleragh we also provide a range of specialist services Province wide.

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SIGHT IMPAIRMENT in older people

Belfast Trust has developed a newly reconstituted service that provides state-of-the-art treatment for a devastating ocular disorder known as neovascular age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Neovascular AMD is the commonest cause of sight impairment in older adults. It affects the macula which is responsible for detailed vision and without treatment results in sudden and severe central visual loss. The majority of people afflicted by neovascular AMD will develop the same pathology in the fellow eye and thus its impact is huge with most people rapidly losing the ability to read, see faces and drive.

Belfast Trust’s Regional Macular Service based at the Fairview Unit on the Mater Hospital campus, is rapidly growing year on year and is now dealing with double the number of patients that it dealt with in its first year in mid 2009. Modifications and redesign to the patient care pathway have allowed speedier assessment and treatment delivery. The potential for using highly skilled optometric staff for clinical assessments is currently being explored. In summary the development from a fledgling service to a highly professional comprehensive multidisciplinary service has evolved within the space of 18 months.

In April 2012 the Fairview Unit was successful in achieving the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) Northern Ireland Model of Excellence Award as an exemplar service for blind and partially sighted people.

Our decontamination unit sterilised 80,777 trays of surgical instruments and 315,757 units as well as 9,288 endoscopes.

We have over 500 CCTV cameras which have proved beneficial in the detection and deterring of crime and ensuring a safe environment for patients, staff and visitors.

To keep updated on developments in the Belfast Trust follow us on facebook.com/BelfastTrust

SELF CARE CENTRE for renal patients

A new service, Self Care Haemodialysis, has been established in the Knockbreda Wellbeing and Treatment Centre that will provide greater flexibility and improved health for haemodialysis patients.

Most of our patients attend the Belfast City Hospital Renal Unit for conventional haemodialysis and we also have a large number who use the option of home haemodialysis. There are some patients due to space or other constraints who cannot avail of the home service but are ideal candidates for self care haemodialysis in the Knockbreda facility.

Following successful completion of their training self care patients are equipped to begin their treatment. This training is undertaken by specialist nurses for a minimum of five weeks and covers all aspects of haemodialysis and including: setting up the dialysis machine, monitoring their own blood pressure before, during and after treatment and being aware of any safety issues such as alarms. The patients must also administer their own dialysis related medications and also clean down the dialysis machine, trolley and chair after treatment.

The Self Care facility will be operational on – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 8am-4pm with the eventual goal to open 24/7. Nurses will be working independently in a supervisory role supporting the patients who have been trained to undertake Self Care Haemodialysis. There will be one nurse on duty to support up to five patients at a time. Self Care Haemodialysis is cost effective for the Belfast Trust.