

Balance | December 2022



Looking after ourselves means better care for our patients. That's why, as part of the NHS Long Term Plan, The North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (**NENC ICS**) has received funding to support the smokers in our workforce to quit for good.

Hundreds of employees across the region are struggling with tobacco dependency and the shocking truth is that one in two smokers will die prematurely because of their dependency. The NHS Staff Tobacco Dependency pilot is available to NHS staff working in Foundation Trusts across our region. This means you can now access a 12 week supply of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) or a refillable e-cigarette package, completely free of charge.

You will also be offered the opportunity to access a 12 week, one-to-one support programme with a dedicated stop smoking advisor. If you struggle with a busy schedule or irregular work patterns, free premium access to the Smokefree App will also be provided, enabling you to access 24/7 quitting advice and support.

Dr Ruth Sharrock, Respiratory Consultant and NENC ICS clinical lead for tobacco dependency and Consultant Respiratory Physician here at Gateshead, said: "You work hard for your NHS, so now it's time to look after your own health. If you smoke, the most important thing you can do for yourself is to stop smoking. Each time you make a quit attempt, you are getting closer to success.

"The benefits of quitting are real. As well as reducing the risk of serious disease, it can make you feel so much better, give you more energy and help you to breathe more easily, even if you've smoked for years.

"The free NHS Staff Tobacco Dependency Programme provides our staff who smoke with a choice of products and support options so that you can find a method which works for you. We know that quitting smoking is far from easy, but your work team and wider NHS colleagues are here to support you all the way."

For further information about the service and to join over 240 Gateshead colleagues who've already made a quit attempt through the offer since December 2021, please call 0191 445 8144 or email ghnt.qef-stopsmoking@nhs.net.

Gateshead Health
NHS Foundation Trust

Quit smoking. On us.

Free quitting aids and support exclusively for NHS staff.

For support, email:
ghnt.qef-stopsmoking@nhs.net
or call: 0191 445 8144

This offer is provided by the North East and North Cumbria ICS for NHS staff working across the region. For more information about this offer, please contact 07980969259.

[Visit the new stop smoking support webpage on balancegateshead.com](https://balancegateshead.com)

The Staff Wellbeing Hub

There is strength in asking for support #HubsTheWord



Trust news



Festive December: Decoration Competition

Throughout the month, we've been celebrating #FestiveDecember in a number of ways. Included amongst these was the distribution of a [festive meal voucher](#) for all colleagues, with thanks to QE Charitable Funds.

Festive meals will continue to be served from The Hub until Tuesday 20th December, meaning there is still time for teams to gather and enjoy a break together. All vouchers are redeemable until March 31st 2023, and can also be donated to the [Leg-Up Project](#) in boxes by tills in our catering areas.

Special thanks go to the catering team for their hard work as well as Claire Burkitt and Sarah White for their role in helping ensure all received a voucher.

Elsewhere, we've celebrated Christmas Jumper Day and enjoyed performances from both Cardinal Hume Choir and our own Staff Singing Group.

Now, we're inviting teams to get involved in our festive decoration competition. Five £50 Amazon vouchers are up for grabs, and all you need to do to get involved is complete our submission form below before judging!

[Enter the competition](#)

Share your feedback



John Paul Gowland recently joined the Occupational Health team, and is currently working to expand and improve its [Physiotherapy](#) service.

As part of these efforts, John is currently seeking feedback from colleagues around what they'd like to see from the service ahead of a relaunch in late January 2023. Please help shape the service by taking 5 minutes to complete John's survey.

[Complete the survey](#)

Upcoming Schwartz Rounds

The first three Schwartz Rounds topics for 2023 have now been booked in, and we're now seeking storytellers to share their experiences around the topics.

On Wednesday 25th January 2023, our first Round of the year will focus in on the topic 'Why I come to work'. The session will take place between 12:30pm - 1:30pm via Microsoft Teams.

February's round will take place on Tuesday 28th, also between 12:30pm - 1:30 pm over Teams. This time the topic will be 'An unexpected turn of events'.

And in March, the focus will be on 'Feelings of isolation in community



work – aren't we all one NHS team?'. This session will be held between 12:00pm - 1:00pm on Thursday 30th March.

To [learn more about Schwartz Rounds](#), tune in to the [video](#) above. Alternatively, to learn more about storytelling or how you can get involved as a participant in Schwartz Rounds, please drop us an email and we'll put you in touch with a trained facilitator.

[Drop us a line](#)

November Star

Congratulations go to Aimee Johnson, who has been named November Star of the month after a nomination by Julie Law.



Julie nominated Aimee after she supported a family and patient while undergoing a crisis event, providing outstanding care and compassion at a time of need, and working alongside the palliative specialist to provide end of life care to patient and family.

Congratulations to Aimee and well done on a fantastic job well done. Nominate a December star below!

[Make a nomination](#)

We love hearing your feedback! Help us improve by making use of our [virtual suggestion box](#)!



Upcoming events



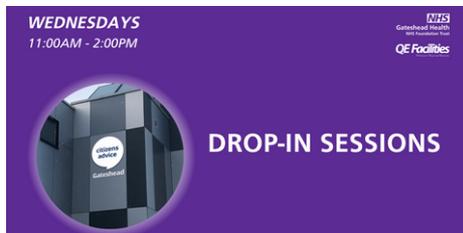
Citizens Advice drop-in sessions

Colleagues are reminded that drop-in sessions with Jacob, an advisor from Citizens Advice Gateshead, continue weekly at the Listening Space and monthly out of POD Meeting Room 3 at Bensham.

Jacob is next on site at the Bensham this Wednesday 21st Dec between 11:00am - 2:00pm, where he'll be available for colleagues to drop-in to Meeting Room 3 for a chat.

Citizens Advice will then return to the QE Hospital on a weekly basis, where they'll be in the Listening Space every Wednesday up until 25th January, when Jacob will return to Bensham once more.

Citizens Advice Gateshead continue to help colleagues from across Gateshead across topics including



finance, debt, energy, utilities, accommodation, housing, welfare and in-work benefits, illness, disability, general legal advice and issues, immigration advice, consumer service and more.

As well as drop-ins, you can also receive support in one working day through our priority access details 0191 490 4231 or on email via gestaffswa@citizensadvicegateshead.org.uk.

[Find out more on this support](#)

MHFA Training



Colleagues are reminded that they can sign up to be added to a waiting list for Mental Health First Aider training ahead of the launch of training in January 2023.

The next scheduled training sessions are likely to take place in March 2023, with further programmes to follow throughout the year. To express your interest, simply complete the form below.

[Express your interest](#)

Become a HWB Ambassador

If you'd like find out more about the work of our ambassadors and potentially become one in your area, please get in touch with the health and wellbeing team

 ghnt.hwb@nhs.net

Our ambassadors meet bi-monthly, and are also part of a WhatsApp group where idea sharing is encouraged!

 [@HWBGateshead](https://twitter.com/HWBGateshead)

 Search: [Gateshead Health NHS FT - Staff](#)

Free New Year Yoga



The Staff Wellbeing Hub alongside Yoga With Chloe, will be delivering more programmes of free online yoga starting January 2023.

To find out more about the programmes, which include sessions for starters, improvers and experienced yoga veterans, click below.

[Learn more and sign-up](#)

Long-term conditions

Also being promoted by the NENC ICS for the new year is another 8-week mindfulness-based cognitive therapy group programme for those suffering from long Covid and long-term conditions.

Starting Wednesday 11th January and running weekly between 2:00pm – 4:00pm until Wednesday 1st March, only 8 spaces are available for this programme so interested colleagues are advised to move quickly. To learn more about the course, its contents and how to sign-up and get involved, please click below!

[How to sign up](#)

For more Balance news, drop us a follow on Twitter, [@HWBGateshead](https://twitter.com/HWBGateshead). You can also get in touch with our team on ghnt.hwb@nhs.net.



Health & wellbeing support



Meet the Ambassadors

As we continue to develop our website, this month we've launched a number of new webpages to promote services and support available to you.

One of our latest additions is the health and wellbeing ambassadors page, which lists all of our ambassadors across the organisation, split by business units so you can more easily find one close to you!

And if you're interested in becoming a health and wellbeing ambassador within your team and area, you can also find out how you can get more involved in creating a wellbeing culture



here at Gateshead through further information around the role of health and wellbeing ambassadors.

Anyone interested in learning more about the role or becoming an ambassador can also contact us on ghnt.hwb@nhs.net. It is our hope to further expand this area in the future to include case studies and encourage more learning from each other's work!

[See our ambassadors](#)

Free app memberships

Both Unmind and Headspace have confirmed that they have extended their exclusive offer of free premium memberships for NHS colleagues until December 31st 2023!

The platforms promote mindfulness and wellbeing and aim to help with areas such as stress, sleep, meditation, mental health and more. To access this offer or learn more about it, please [click here](#).

You can also learn more about more free premium access to platforms and memberships over on our apps page on balancegateshead.com.

[Visit the Apps page](#)

 Citizens Advice Gateshead

The latest monthly bulletin from Citizens Advice Gateshead is focuses on [financial matters following a bereavement](#).

Remember, you can always gain priority access to Citizen's Advice Gateshead advisors via [email](#) or phone on 0191 490 4231.

To access more bulletins, or find out more about the services and assistance their advisors can offer you, click below or chat with an advisor at an upcoming [drop-in!](#)

[Visit the CAG web area](#)

Financial Wellbeing

As we enter December, many may be feeling the pinch of the festive season - particularly with rocketing energy costs this year.

Colleagues are reminded that our website is home to a range of financial wellbeing information support. Whether you're looking to make [energy savings](#), seek [financial support](#), make savings on [groceries](#) or [other purchases](#), we're aiming to build out a rounded hub of support.

And for those in financial hardship, please remember the Leg-Up Project - it's there to support you!

[More on the Leg Up Project](#)

Get fit for less!



Newcastle City Baths recently contacted us to offer all colleagues a [free one-day pass](#) to their gym facilities, pool and classes.

With 2023 around the corner, we thought now would be a good time to remind colleagues of a range of exclusive discount-rate memberships at local gyms across Gateshead and Newcastle - which we added more to only last month! Check out our full list of partners below.

[Check out our partners](#)

