



# Southern Health and Social Care Trust Highlights June 2025

## Vision & Strategy 2030

This month, we officially launched our Vision and Strategy 2030, which sets out our clear direction of travel over the next five years as we embark on a journey of improvement.

'Our People' - are recognised at the core of what we do and are at the centre of our Strategy.

To mark the start of delivering this vision, five tree planting events took place throughout the Trust, each representing one of our five strategic themes.

A new vision statement has also been created – 'Together we will grow as a learning organisation focused on providing safe, quality care based on a community-first approach throughout the whole life journey' summarised as **'Together, Improving Care, Transforming Lives'**.

This reflects our commitment to what we are all about: working better together; learning and growing as an organisation; keeping a strong focus on safety and quality; providing more care in local communities and supporting people throughout their whole lives, from birth through to older age.

## Supporting domestic abuse survivors

Our Domestic and Sexual Abuse Support Service has held a special showcase event to celebrate five years since its launch.

The Southern Trust was the first in Northern Ireland to introduce this type of initiative, providing confidential on-site specialist support to women affected by domestic abuse within an acute hospital setting.

Co-managed with Women's Aid Armagh Down, the DASS pathway has supported over 500 women to date and delivered specialist training to more than 3,000 staff across the organisation.

[Read more](#)

*Collaborative Working*

## Clinics to crisis zones

Anyone listening or watching BBC earlier this month may have heard our colleague Dr Stephen Reaney, a GP with our urgent care service, share his experience of travelling the world to provide humanitarian aid.

Dr Reaney who received an MBE in the King's New Year Honours, devotes much of his free time volunteering in developing countries and is a member of the UK's Emergency Medical Team which assists at major global catastrophes. Locally he supports motor sport events and has acted as a director for cross community charities.

<https://bbc.pulse.ly/meavpl1yr>

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## King's Honours for Liz

Congratulations to our colleague Liz McGrath, Towards Zero Suicide Co-ordinator, who has been awarded a BEM (British Empire Medal) in the King's Birthday Honours for services to suicide prevention. A well-deserved honour which reflects her dedication and compassion to building a programme that brings hope, support and safety to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

*Collaborative Working*

## Volunteer Week 2025: Celebrating the heart of our Trust

On Tuesday 3 June, we hosted a special celebration event to mark Volunteers' Week 2025 at South Lake Leisure Centre in Craigavon. The day brought together volunteers from across the organisation to thank them for the vital role they play in supporting service users, families, and staff. Organised by the Trust's three Volunteer Coordinators, the celebration featured lunch and a variety of health and wellbeing activities — including Chi Me and the inclusive ball game Boccia.

[Read more](#)

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## Nurse of the Year

We are delighted that our staff were recognised at the prestigious RCN NI Nurse of the Year Awards on 5 June.

Agnes Dee won the Team Manager Award. The judging panel noted her "positive impact upon team morale, skill mix and standards of care, as well as her capacity to challenge an existing culture through her initiative and visibility."

John McAteer was joint runner-up Learning in Practice Award and was commended by the judges on his "visible approach, willingness to go the extra mile in supporting newly qualified nurses and his positive impact on workforce retention."

[Read more](#)

*Learning Organisation*

## Cutting long waiting lists

An innovative Trust project has significantly cut hand and wrist waiting times. The Hand and Wrist Backlog Project, part of the Trauma and Orthopaedic service, was set up to tackle a list of nearly 2000 people waiting for their first outpatient review. Launched in October 2023, the pilot saw Consultant Trauma and Orthopaedic Practitioners run extra clinics to help reduce delays. By March 2025, more than 1800 patients had been seen, cutting the waiting list by 89%, with only 201 patients still waiting.

[Read more](#)

*Learning Organisation*

## Heart Failure Service is first in UK

We are so proud to be the first organisation in the UK to receive pre-accreditation as a Specialised Quality of Care Centre by the European Society of Cardiology. This prestigious recognition represents the gold standard in heart failure services as part of an international programme led by the Heart Failure Association.

[Read more](#)

*Safety, Quality & Experience*

## **Seasons of Life**

A unique programme using art and storytelling, is supporting young people across the Southern Trust area to cope with bereavement or loss of a family member or other significant life events.

Co-designed by young people and health and social care professionals, 'Seasons of Life workshops are delivered in schools by a multi-disciplinary team, including specialist school nursing, paediatric psychology, the Trust bereavement co-ordinator and Cruse bereavement support services.

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*Whole Life Approach*