



Southern Health and Social Care Trust Highlights – May 2026

Trust duo chosen for prestigious NHS innovation programme

Two Trust colleagues have been selected to take part in a prestigious national NHS programme supporting healthcare professionals to develop new ideas that improve patient care.

Daniel Harte, Clinical Lead Occupational Therapist in Hand Therapy, and Sinéad Lee, Operational Support Lead for Medicine and Unscheduled Care, have both been accepted onto the NHS Clinical Entrepreneur Programme. The programme helps healthcare professionals turn innovative ideas into practical solutions that can benefit patients and services across the NHS.

[Read more](#)

Learning Organisation

Remembrance service for babies and children

We are hosting a special service of remembrance and thanksgiving for parents and families who have been bereaved through pregnancy loss or the death of a baby, child or young person in Craigavon Area Hospital or the wider community.

The service will take place on Sunday 31 May at 3.00pm in Seagoe Parish Centre.

The event is being organised by the Trust's Maternity and Children Services with support from the Chaplaincy Team and Bereavement Coordinator.

[Read more](#)

Safety, Quality & Experience

Celebrating our midwives and nurses

We celebrated International Day of the Midwife on Tuesday 5 May and International Nurses' Day on Tuesday 12 May.

This was a brilliant opportunity to recognise the dedication, compassion and expertise of our wonderful midwifery and nursing teams.

We also welcomed the Chief Nursing Officer for the Department of Health Professor Maria McIlgorm and the board of the Royal College of Midwives to Craigavon Area Hospital on Wednesday 13 May.

The visits were a fantastic opportunity to showcase the passion and dedication that our staff bring every day to families across our services.

Safety, Quality & Experience

Foster care fortnight

HSC NI Foster Care was proud to co-launch Foster Care Fortnight™ in the Long Gallery, Parliament Buildings, Stormont, alongside The Fostering Network.

Attended by foster carers, care experienced young people, staff and supporters from across Northern Ireland, this event was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our foster carers, reaffirm our commitment to do the best for our children and young people, and also encourage more people to come forward and consider fostering.

[Read more](#)

Collaborative Working

Minister Visits Mullaghbawn GP Practice

We were delighted to welcome Health Minister Mike Nesbitt to Mullaghbawn GP Practice last week to see how the Southern Trust is promoting a neighbourhood model of care in this rural community.

The Trust currently has temporary responsibility for three GP practices, which had previously faced challenges – Mullaghbawn, Kilkeel and Rathkeeland in Crossmaglen.

Working in collaboration with the Strategic Planning and Performance Group, this approach has ensured that around 18,000 local patients in these South Armagh and South Down communities have continued to receive General Practitioner primary care services.

[Read more](#)

Community First

Bereavement guidance for nurses and midwives

Following Dying Matters Week, the Royal College of Nursing has launched regional guidance for Nurses and Midwives, developed by the NI Bereavement Network.

This document represents a significant step forward in our ongoing commitment to ensuring that the care provided at the end of life remains both compassionate and respectful, acknowledging the emotional and cultural importance of every individual's journey through bereavement.

[Read more](#)

Whole Life Approach

One year transforming care through encompass

Friday 8th May 2026, marked one year since the Southern Trust went live with encompass, Northern Ireland's digital health and social care record system, a major milestone in the organisation's journey of digital transformation.

The date also commemorated a landmark moment for health and social care across Northern Ireland. With the Western Trust also going live on the same day, 8 May 2025 saw the completion of the encompass rollout across all five Health and Social Care Trusts, creating a single integrated digital care record system for the region and fundamentally transforming how patient information is recorded, accessed and shared.

[Read more](#)

Safety, Quality & Experience

Royal college visit

Our Speech and Language Therapy team were delighted to host the Chief Executive of their Royal College, Steve Jamieson for a visit to Northern Ireland on Tuesday 5 May.

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists is the UK's main professional body for SLTs, responsible for setting standards and guidance, promoting research and education, and representing the profession nationally.

The visit gave Mr Jamieson the opportunity to meet frontline clinicians to learn how local services are helping to improve people's lives.

[Read more](#)

Learning Organisation

Support for maternal mental health

"If something doesn't feel right, trust your gut and reach out. It could be life changing."

That is the message from women who shared their experiences of perinatal mental health support as we marked Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week earlier this month.

This year's theme, *A Decade of Voices*, focuses on listening to women's experiences and continuing to strengthen support during pregnancy and after birth.

[Read more](#)

Safety, Quality & Experience

Team diamond set to sparkle

We have strengthened our continuity of midwifery carer model with the addition of a third team, Team Diamond, supporting women and families in the Armagh area.

This model improves care by providing support from a small, consistent team of known midwives throughout pregnancy, labour, birth and the early postnatal period, helping to build trusted relationships and more personalised maternity care.

Team diamond joins the established Team Emerald (supporting the Portadown, Craigavon and Lurgan areas) and Team Sapphire (supporting the Newry, Bessbrook, Camlough, Mayobridge and Rathfriland areas), to provide continuity of care across the Trust.

[Read more](#)

Whole Life Approach

Staff area of remembrance

A staff Area of Remembrance has officially opened at Daisy Hill Hospital.

The reflective space, close to the main hospital entryway, will honour and remember the contribution of those who have died and will be a dedicated area for colleagues, families and visitors.

In the heart of this area is a stone bench, generously donated by the McKeever family in memory of Majella McKeever. A second bench is dedicated to Liz Nugent, both fondly remembered staff of Daisy Hill Hospital.

[Read more](#)

Collaborative Working

Developing clinical research

The Southern Trust is strengthening its commitment to high-quality clinical research with a series of major developments designed to expand opportunities for patients to take part in innovative clinical trials.

Professor Patricia Campbell, recently appointed Trust Director for Research and Development, said the Trust already has a strong reputation for delivering world-class research across several specialties, including cardiovascular disease, renal medicine, respiratory care, stroke and diabetes.

[Read more](#)

Learning Organisation

Minister visit to Craigavon Hospital

Health Minister Mike Nesbitt has visited Craigavon Area Hospital to see first-hand the work of frontline teams delivering vital services across the Trust.

During the visit, Mr Nesbitt met with staff across a number of key areas, including Trauma and Orthopaedics, the Maternity Unit and the Healthcare Science team.

The Minister was welcomed by Trust Chair Eileen Mullan and then toured the Trauma and Orthopaedics department, where he heard about ongoing work to improve patient flow and reduce waiting times.

[Read more](#)

Community First

Health and wellbeing framework

We have launched our updated staff Health and Wellbeing Framework which sets out the Trust's approach to creating a safe, healthy working environment.

It focuses on three key areas – improving the workplace, strengthening relationships across teams and the way we work together and supporting the physical and mental health of staff.

Another key part of the plan is expanding the Trust's Wellbeing Champions network.

[Read more](#)

Collaborative Working

Rebuilding lives through cardiac rehab

A Trust cardiac rehabilitation programme is helping patients rebuild their lives after heart attacks and return to full, active living.

David Shortt (49) was left shocked and uncertain about his future after suffering a heart attack while on holiday, despite previously being fit and healthy. He required two stents and struggled to regain confidence in his heart.

[Read more](#)

Learning Organisation

Work wellbeing

We have celebrated the contribution of our Workplace Wellbeing Team at a Staff Health and Wellbeing Fair.

The event took place on the St Luke's Hospital site at the end of March and provided an opportunity for staff to explore a wide range of wellbeing initiatives, services and supports, connect with colleagues and reflect on the work delivered by the team over the past two years.

[Read more](#)

Collaborative Working

The hospital came here

Colleagues from the Southern Trust have contributed to the UK Hospital at Home Society Conference in Edinburgh earlier this month.

The Trust's Hospital at Home service was the first of its kind in Northern Ireland. It led the way in challenging the traditional model of hospital admission, demonstrating that high quality acute medical care can be safely and effectively delivered in a patient's own home.

The team had a total of 10 posters on display and a number of colleagues contributed to workshops showing the positive impact that this community first model is having for patients and families from a number of professional perspectives including physiotherapy, nursing, dietetics, medicine and pharmacy.

[Read more](#)

Community First

Bronze for biodiversity

We are the first Trust in Northern Ireland to be awarded a Business and Biodiversity Charter.

Business in the Community in partnership with Ulster Wildlife, delivers the Charter as a framework to help organisations to engage with biodiversity.

The Trust has achieved bronze level for taking active steps in improving its environmental impact and commitment to increasing biodiversity. A procedure is now in place to increase staff awareness, and training available to encourage biodiversity both in work and at home.

[Read more](#)

Collaborative Working