



Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Highlights – June 2026

Minister Visit

Health Minister Mike Nesbitt visited Craigavon Hospital last week to meet the Frailty Integrated Team.

The service is supporting ED flow and reducing admissions for frail, older patients by enabling early decision-making and timely discharge through same day emergency care.

Frailty is a progressive, age-related physiological decline, reducing the person's ability to recover from illness or injury. Early identification and intervention helps people stay well and reduce risks such as falls, hospitalisation and deconditioning.

The consultant geriatrician-led multidisciplinary team provides rapid comprehensive assessment in a calmer, more appropriate setting than ED, reducing exposure to hospital related risks and supporting patients to return home as quickly as possible.

Safety, Quality & Experience

Celebrating Home Birth

To mark 'international birth at home' day this month, our home birth team hosted a special celebration event bringing together families who have benefited from the service.

Now in their fifth year, the team has supported the birth of 152 babies, welcomed into the relaxed surroundings of their own homes with their families nearby.

Team Leader Paula Murray said: "Supporting women's birth preferences is a priority for us as midwives and for many mums-to-be, giving birth at home offers a calm and familiar environment."

Team Leader Cherry Conway, added: "It is always such a privilege to be part of these special moments and to see so many babies being born safely at home."

[Read more](#)

Safety, Quality & Experience

Dietetic Care at the Doorstep

Dietitians across our Trust are helping patients to access specialist care closer to home.

The Home Enteral Tube Feeding service is supporting over 120 adults to manage tube feeding safely at home, while a new Advanced Practice Dietitian based in GP practices, is improving access to early assessment and support.

These services show the vital role our dietetic teams play in supporting patients and families every day. By working together across teams, we are delivering more care in the community, improving patient experience and ensuring care is provided as close to home as possible.

[Read more](#)

Community First

Postnatal Mental Health

A local mum has shared her experience of postnatal mental illness to help raise awareness and encourage other women to seek support.

During Infant Mental Health Awareness Week (8–14 June), we highlighted the importance of maternal mental health and its impact on babies, children and families through a new podcast featuring Holly's personal experience of recovery following severe postnatal mental illness.

[Read more](#)

Safety, Quality & Experience

Carers' Clinic

A new pilot Carers' Clinic has been developed to support carers in dealing with any challenges they may be facing.

Although still in its early stages, feedback has been very positive. Many have welcomed the chance to take time away from their caring responsibilities, speak honestly, feel listened to, and better understand what support is available to them.

[Read more](#)

Community First

RCN Success

We were delighted that a number of Southern Trust nurses have been recognised at the Royal College of Nursing Awards earlier this month.

The event provides the opportunity to highlight excellence within nursing and the contribution that nursing staff make to the health and well-being of the people of Northern Ireland.

Anthony McShane, an advanced nurse practitioner in the Newry Community Mental Health Team, was runner up in the Nurse of the Year category with Lucy Duke, a child and adolescent mental health service nurse winning the Chief Nursing Officer's Rising Star Award and Patrina Loughran, a learning disability nurse, runner up in the same category.

[Read more](#)

Safety, Quality & Experience

A Gift of Comfort for Breast Cancer Patients

A new dedicated comfort room has opened in the Glenanne Unit at Craigavon Area Hospital.

It will serve as a safe and compassionate space for breast cancer service users and families during some of the most difficult moments of their care journey.

The room is dedicated to the memory of the founder of Pretty 'n Pink, who was cared for by the nursing team in the Glenanne Unit in Craigavon Area Hospital.

[Read more](#)

Collaborative Working

Providing vital emergency support

The Trust has paid tribute to the outstanding dedication and professionalism of our Emergency Support Centre teams, who play a critical role in supporting individuals, families and communities during times of crisis.

Emergency Support Centres can be activated in response to evacuations, major incidents and a range of other community emergencies.

Working closely with partner agencies including the Police Service of Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, local councils and voluntary organisations, support centre colleagues, ensure people affected by emergencies receive immediate care, reassurance and practical help.

[Read more](#)

Collaborative Working

Dementia simulation

We have been strengthening dementia care by offering staff simulation-based training to help them better understand the lived experience of people living with dementia.

As the number of people living with dementia continues to grow, supporting staff to better understand and respond to their needs is becoming increasingly important.

[Read more](#)

Learning Organisation

Developing radiology workforce

Our radiology service has been taking a global approach to developing its workforce.

Like many other specialties throughout health and social care across Northern Ireland and the UK, the Trust's radiology services have been facing workforce challenges.

The Royal College of Radiologists has predicted that by 2029 there could be a 41% shortfall in radiologists in Northern Ireland, if no action is taken to recruit and retain the workforce – the worst shortage in the UK.

[Read more](#)

Safety, Quality & Experience

Heart attack survivor urges others to get involved in clinical research

A patient has shared his experience of taking part in clinical research with the Southern Health Trust, encouraging others to consider it if given the opportunity.

William Adams, 44, took part in a clinical trial after suffering a heart attack in 2017, during which he had a stent inserted. He was later diagnosed with heart failure and invited to join a study.

[Read more](#)

Learning Organisation

Keeping brothers together

During Foster Care Fortnight in May, we highlighted the life-changing impact of foster carers by sharing the story of a local family who have welcomed three brothers into their home to keep them together.

Leanne and Drew, have been caring for the siblings for almost four years. What began as a placement for three boys who presented as anxious and withdrawn has grown into a settled, loving family life. The children are now thriving at school, in sport and within their local community.

[Read more](#)

Collaborative Working