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Sti testing at home

Free, discrete and confidentialCheck out the SH:24 blog: your trusted guide to reliable, friendly and accurate sexual health advice.We work alongside the NHS to constantly develop our services and make them better.Our expert team is supportive, approachable and never judgmental. Our clinicians have over 50 years of experience in sexual health.Plain packaging that fits through your letterbox. You'll be the only person who knows what's inside.Since 2014, SH:24 has been making it easier to manage your sexual health - and winning awards along the way.Our online services are supported by our team of specialist clinicians. SH:24 is designed to meet your needs, offering innovative, discreet and convenient sexual health. As a proud not-for-profit, we're committed to delivering safe, user-focused and holistic care.Working with partners across the country, delivering free digital sexual healthcare to your door.Our paid for service - get your choice of STI tests and contraception, available everywhere in the UK. Everything you need to know to take your blood sample at homeBefore you take a blood sample:drink plenty of water - being hydrated helps with blood flowget your hands and body warm, the best way is to have a bath or showerif you might faint or you're feeling worried, ask someone to help or be with youwatch our video to see how to take the sampleWe have recently updated our testing kits. If your kit came with a plastic case to put your sample tube in and a return envelope instead of a cardboard box, watch our previous video. and follow the instructions included in your kit.1. Take the yellow lid off the sample tube. Put the tube on a low, flat surface so it can stand up.2. Twist and pull the tip off a lancet then use a wipe to clean one of your middle 2 fingers.3. Lay your hand palm upwards on a flat surface. Press the lancet firmly into the side of your fingertip. If the finger-prick doesn't work, try another lancet - it's why we've given you some spares.4. Keep your arm straight, and hold it over the tube. Massage down your finger so blood drops into the tube.5. Aim to fill the tube to the upper line marked 600. If you can't get to 600 but are over 400, send it back anyway. If it's hard to get enough blood, warm yourself up or start using a different finger.6. Use a sterile wipe to clean your finger, then apply a plaster. Press the yellow lid back onto the tube so it clicks. Wipe any blood off the outside of the tube. Turn the tube upside down 5 times.Put the tube into the specimen transport bag. If you have more than 1 kit, take all your samples and put them in the same bag.Peel off the yellow strip, fold and seal the bag. You do not need to add your name, we've already labelled the tube with your unique code.Write the date on your lab card. Put the lab card and your sealed bag of samples into the Freepost box. Close the box using the security seal sticker.Note down your tracking ID which starts with a # - it's under the barcode on the address label. Post in any Royal Mail post box. Track it with Royal Mail.What happens nextOnce you've posted your kit:when your results are ready, they'll be sent to you in a text messagesometimes we'll need to speak with you on the phone if you need treatment or any support, we can help you We re London s first NHS clinic that s open seven days a week, offering a full range of sexual health services. Our clinic is run by a team of doctors, nurses and health advisers, and is a walk-in only service. Taking a blood sample can be tricky, especially the first time you do it. If you're struggling to fill the sample tube with enough blood, but you've managed to fill it to the 400 line, you can send this to the lab. They will try to use this for the tests. If there's not enough blood for them to test, we'll let you know and send you a new test kit.If you cannot fill the sample tube to the 400 line, we can send you a new test kit so you can try again. Contact us and include your mobile number, date of birth and postcode, so that we can find your record and organise this.Here's some things you can try to make it easier to take a sample and improve the blood flow:Get very hydrated before you start - drink more water than usual the day before you take the testTake your sample with the tube sitting below you and keep your arm straight. This way gravity can play a part and make it easier. Putting the tube on a low flat surface - like a toilet seat or low bench - and positioning yourself over it can help.Being warm really helps too. You could try holding a warm drink for a few minutes, running your hand under warm water or doing the test after you've had a bath or shower. We've heard from some people that using their thumb or the side of a fingertip can often produce more blood. You will need to 'milk' your finger to help the blood to flow out, if you start at the knuckle and gently squeeze down towards the tip of your finger this can help the blood to come out more easily.If you'd prefer to have a clinician take the blood sample for you, you can do this at a sexual health clinic.If your test kit contains swab or urine tests as well as blood, you can send back these samples without the blood sample and we can test those for chlamydia and gonorrhoea.Yes, you can. But your test will be more accurate if you do it on a lighter day of your period or if you wait until you've stopped bleeding.Use the return packaging included in your kit to securely send your samples to our lab. This has our address label already attached and the postage has been paid.This is UN3373 packaging. It's approved for transporting medical samples and will keep your samples safe.You might like to make a note of the # number on the address label. This can be used to track your samples with Royal Mail.Then you can just put the sealed package in any local postbox. There is no need to visit the post office. If you did not get any return packaging in your kit, let us know by replying to one of our text messages, or emailing us at sh24.info@nhs.net. Include the mobile number you used to make your order, your date of birth and your postcode, so we can find your order and organise new packaging to be sent to you. Our lab cannot accept samples received in any other packaging. Or samples that we have not sent you. This is because different packaging may allow your samples to become contaminated on their journey.Some parts of the test kit will expire, but usually you can keep the kit for a few months and use it when you're ready.You can find expiry dates written on the sides of the individual pieces of your test kit, for example, on the side of the sample tube.If you've had your kit for over 6 months, we recommend ordering a new one in case our testing or posting has changed.Our simple home STI test kits are highly accurate and reliable when you:follow the instructions carefullywait for the recommended window period before you testdo more tests in a clinic after a reactive result for HIVYour samples are sent to our partner laboratory to be processed by specialist technicians. We use the same tests that many NHS and HSE clinics use.The window period is the time it takes for an infection to show up in tests. This period starts from the time of your sexual health risk - when you think you may have been exposed to infection.At our labs, we use the nucleic acid amplification tests (NAATs), run on the Hologic Panther platform to test for chlamydia and gonorrhoea.Our HIV test is a fourth-generation assay test. This tests for HIV I and II antibodies and p24 antigen (a protein often present in the blood soon after infection). This is the most up-to-date test as recommended by BHIVA (British HIV Association)Our syphilis test is an ECLIA (ElectroChemiLuminescence ImmunoAssay). This test looks for antibodies known as immunoglobulins IgG and IgM. Our lab screens for both HIV and syphilis using the Roche Cobas E Modular platform. Step-by-step instructions for taking a urine sample at homeBefore you take a urine sample:drink plenty of water to help you peedo not pee for at least 1 hour before taking your sample1. When you're ready to collect the sample, wash and dry your hands.2. We need the urine from the start of your pee for this sample, so pee straight into the urine collection container.3. Keep the sample tube upright so the liquid does not spill and unscrew the lid. Use the pipette to take urine from the collection container by squeezing the bulb of the pipette, putting the tip into the urine, and releasing the bulb so the pipette fills up.4. Empty the pipette into the sample tube. Keep adding urine until your sample reaches the fill area between the 2 lines marked on the side of the tube. Securely screw the lid onto the tube so it cannot leak.Put the tube into the specimen transport bag. If you have more than 1 kit, take all your samples and put them in the same bag.Peel off the yellow strip, fold and seal the bag. You do not need to add your name, we've already labelled the tube with your unique code.Write the date on your lab card. Put the lab card and your sealed bag of samples into the Freepost box. Close the box using the security seal sticker.Note down your tracking ID which starts with a # - it's under the barcode on the address label. Post in any Royal Mail post box. Track it with Royal Mail.What happens nextOnce you've posted your kit:when your results are ready, they'll be sent to you in a text messagesometimes we'll need to speak with you on the phone if you need treatment or any support, we can help you We've detected that JavaScript is disabled in this browser. Please enable JavaScript or switch to a supported browser to continue using x.com. You can see a list of supported browsers in our Help Center. Help Center With the SH:24 STI test kits, you'll take samples from parts of your body at home. We give you all the instructions and kit you need to make this simple and straightforward. Post your samples back to our lab for testing. And get your results by text, quickly and confidentially.Order through our website - we'll ask you a few questions so we know which kit to send you.Your test kit arrives in the post - our STI tests arrive in a plain, letterbox-friendly pack, delivered by Royal Mail.Take your samples - inside the kit you'll find everything you need to take some samples at home. Set aside 10 minutes to do the kit, and read the instructions carefully before you start.Post them back - post your samples to our lab on the day you take them, from any Royal Mail postbox.Results and support by text - you'll usually get your results within 72 hours of your samples arriving at our lab. We might ask to call you to talk about your results. Our clinical team are only a text away if you have any questions or need further support.If you get a positive result - we'll help you get the treatment you need. In some regions, we can send you treatment for chlamydia through the post.If our free service is not available in your area, you can contact your local NHS sexual health clinic. Or you can buy STI test kits from our sister service Fettle.When you order, we'll let you know what samples you'll need to take to get tested. Our kits will test for the most common STIs using a blood sample, a urine sample or a vaginal, throat or rectal swab.All kits come with everything you need to take your samples and post them back to us. Including full instructions, helpful tips and advice and a Freepost pack for returning them.Make sure you read the instructions before taking any samples.All our test kits come with detailed step-by-step instructions to help you take samples at home. Here you can take a look at how to use our kits.Use this kit to take a finger-prick blood sample that can be tested for HIV, syphilis, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. Check out our instructions and advice for taking your sample.If you have a penis, we'll ask for you to send a urine sample to the lab so we can test for chlamydia and gonorrhoea. Read our step-by-step instructions for taking your sample.If you have a vagina, you can test for chlamydia and gonorrhoea by wiping a swab inside your vagina. Find out more about using your kit.It can be possible to get gonorrhoea or chlamydia in your throat. If we send you a throat swab, you'll need to take a sample from the back of your throat to test for these infections.Gonorrhoea and chlamydia can be passed on during anal sex. If we need to check for infections in your anus, we'll include a swab in your kit so you can take a sample from your anus.Once you've posted your samples back to our lab in the Freepost pack, we'll keep you updated by text message.We'll text you when your results are ready, usually within 72 hours of your samples arriving at our lab. If there's a delay, we'll let you know.We may need to call you to talk about your result. If we do, we'll always text you first to arrange a time that suits you.If you have an infection, our clinical team will help you get further support and treatment. In certain regions, we can send you chlamydia treatment by post, or we can help you find a sexual health clinic that can treat your infection. If your test result for HIV, syphilis, hepatitis B or C comes back as reactive or postive, our clinical team will support you to get further tests.When do STIs show in tests?Most STIs don't show in a test straight away. So you need to wait a few weeks before a test will be accurate. This time is called the window period. The window periods are different for different infections. Free, discrete and confidentialCheck out the SH:24 blog: your trusted guide to reliable, friendly and accurate sexual health advice.We work alongside the NHS to constantly develop our services and make them better.Our expert team is supportive, approachable and never judgmental. Our clinicians have over 50 years of experience in sexual health.Plain packaging that fits through your letterbox. You'll be the only person who knows what's inside.Since 2014, SH:24 has been making it easier to manage your sexual health - and winning awards along the way.Our online services are supported by our team of specialist clinicians. SH:24 is designed to meet your needs, offering innovative, discreet and convenient sexual health. As a proud not-for-profit, we're committed to delivering safe, user-focused and holistic care.Working with partners across the country, delivering free digital sexual healthcare to your door.Our paid for service - get your choice of STI tests and contraception, available everywhere in the UK. Written by a patient I have been a patient at Burrell for more than 2 years now. The service the doctors and nurses offer is not good but, it is outstanding. However, what really lets this clinic down is the wait time. Each and every time I have attended, the wait time alone is in excess of 1 hour. The display in the reception area reads that the aim to see patients within 30 minutes and this is not the case from what I experience and not others who also attend when I asked them. Both the doctors and nurses are consistently outstanding with the service but the management is so very bad. The reception staff are not at all approachable and normally if any clinic is running unusally late, the job of reception is to update patients but they do not but sit between themselves and reflect their irritation when you ask how much longer the wait maybe. This review is not intended to be unkind but, upfront and honest in the hope that the management can somehow improve the unacceptable wait times and improve communications so that patients are given a choice if they want to reschedule instead of having to walk out because their extended lunchtime has exceeded their time calculation. My neighbour expressed that she waited in excess of 3 hours when she visited in December so what I am expressing is not an isolated experience as others too share this same view. Page 2 Written by a patient My first appointment was on time, a real first for such clinics. I then had to wait an hour to see another specialist, but this was because it was unscheduled and I totally understood that I would have to wait. Very positive experience. Interesting cat-theme... Page 3 Written by A wonderful location which engages with the population and demographic which it serves. I've always found the doctors, nurses, healthcare assistants and front of house team to be open and honest and treat you with care and respect. It is really easy to get an appointment and gain access to the tests and treatment which you made need. Thank you Burrell Street. Page 4 Written by a patient Really nice clinic, clean (this makes a difference), state of the art and easy to find. The nurse was really good, non judgmental. The receptionists were a tad 'off' but you only see them when you walk in, you then fill out the form, hand it back and are directed to a waiting room round the back. I went on a Friday morning and it was a really quick process. Page 5 Written by a patient I was disappointed by the lack of information on the website. I had booked an online appointment only to find on arrival that the type of appointment I required was not available through the online booking system, however this was not at all clear on the website which was impossible to navigate. Secondly I was unable to have an IUD inserted as I was at risk of being pregnant (due to my cycle etc.), there is no information about this on the website under the section of IUDs, or anywhere else for that matter, and so I waited for 2 hours just to hear that I couldn't have the procedure. More information on the website, as well as an easier to navigate website, would have made my experiences much better. Page 6 Written by a patient I had to write a review about how good this clinic was. I know sexual health clinics get a bad rep, long waiting times, rude staff and so on, but this was nothing like I expected. Admittedly the reception staff weren't very friendly but the lady that dealt with my query informed me that there was only one person ahead of me in my respective queue and that it could be about a 30 min wait but it was much shorter. The thing that made this visit great was the nurse who dealt with me. Possibly one of the nicest nurses I have ever encountered. She made me feel so comfortable and at ease, I wasn't just a number or made to feel rushed. It seemed as if she actually loved her job which can be a rarity. I didn't get her name but she was a lovely nurse and made the whole process less terrifying. If you read this I'm sure you will know who I am, I was the one who desperately needed the lucozade and was worried about getting back to work on time. I just wanted to let you know how wonderful you were :) Page 7 Written by a patient Had a great experience, will recomend to everyone! Amazing attitude, friendly staff. Being checked for STI/STD was never so easy and fun as it was in this clinic! Definitely coming back for my all my annual check ups! Page 8 Written by a patient I cannot praise Burrell Street or their staff highly enough - I was absolutely terrified by what was happening to my body and felt emotionally drained by the time I found out about the centre. I was checked out by a practitioner called James who was respectful, kind natured and straightforward with me. He and the assisting Nurse made my visit go totally smoothly and sent me out the door feeling informed, safe and in control of my situation. Absolute Angels. The centre is comfortable, clean and friendly - it is now my go-to for all future treatments and I would highly recommend it to anyone. Page 9 Written by a patient Hello, i had my first visit to burrell street yesterday, having come out if 15 years if self imposed celibacy one year ago , the last year i have had to visit many of the sexual health clinics in central london as blimey there are a lot of s. T.d.s going about! So going back to yesterday i realized i had a problem because i was in pain in my genital area, i wanted treatment fast so i went to 56 dean street, at 8.15 am but was told i had to return at 6.30pm. Im not dissing dean street as they have a good service, but i was in considerable pain so thought i would try burrell street as a friend recomended them , im so glad i did , they are open 7 days a week unlike many other clinics that seem to close or have restricted hrs at weekends , a time when many of us put are health at risk, or can go to a clinic because if work commitments. . I was most impressed buy the texting service they have that ment i could see exactley were i was in the que to be seem , that meant i could go over the road and grab breakfast and have a fag while i waited for my turn. When i was seen the staff were great the health adviser i saw was particularly good 'thane i think his name was and john the very experienced specialist un syphilis that saw me and is what i was diagnosed with. So got treatment straight away , great! As i was in pain ., so to round up my review i will be using burrell streets services as my main sexual and psychological health clinic from now on . Goodc luck to you all . X Page 10 Written by a patient Great service, wonderful staff but waiting 3 hours to be seen is too long. There should be more staff, more clinics like this to ease the situation, not more cuts! It was a huge relief to talk to someone about sexual health matters in a open environment, there should be more services like this. However I got there at 8.00am when the doors opened and didn't get seen until 11.45, missed the whole morning of work. Page 11 Written by a patient Waited for nearly 10 minutes at reception before any of the three people even looked up at me - there was one person ahead of me at the counter, the staff just all had their heads down. Then the staff were snotty and off-hand about information. It took several further phonecalls to get clear information and I still haven't actually seen a medical professional. Getting tests like this can be stressful and nervous, it should be simple and the first point contact staff should be encouraging, not dismissive and condescending if you get things wrong. Stereotypically acting doctors reception staff. I won't go back there. Page 12 Written by a patient April 11.2017 It was not easy to make an appointment as you have to wait until Fridays at noon for available appointments for the week after. I managed to make for 9am, I arrived just before 8am and there was a long queue for 30 people in front. when i got to the reception i was given a form to fill then i went back to the reception and told the lady i had an appointment at 9am i had made through Zesty. She said take a sit. 15 minutes later i was called to come in. I went for a coil fitting; the week before i had been at the GP who was not able to fit it in so i was very nervous. The nurse that saw me Irene was absolutely amazing, she explained in very detail everything to me, and even called a senior Doctor to come in as she was concerned that as it didn't work before maybe it was going to be a challenge. But she was just amazingly good she had such a gentle hands that i didn't feel much and in less than 5 minutes after she inserted it, it was all over. They said it is all done and i couldn't believe it. i didn't have any pain at all, just a bit of discomfort when they opened the cervix but all was done with so much care and quick that didn't even notice when went in. It was definitely worth it waiting until Friday to make the appointment online and I feel very please i went with this clinic. My experience was very good, Irene looked after me, she was very professional and very caring. I would recommend Burrell Street without a doubt based on my experience. Best Regards Rocio del Pilar Page 13 Written by a patient The only downside to this clinic is that you need to arrive at least an hour before they open to be anywhere near the front of the queue. That said, you get a link to a queue app so you can go off and come back later once you've signed in, and no need to sit in a waiting room for a couple of hours. Small thing, some staff could be louder/clearer calling names in the waiting room. Page 14 Written by a patient I visited the clinic from advice of my GP. I was told that it should be a waiting list. However, I received a link with my patient number. In my opinion it is an excellent service as gives an opportunity to see what is your number and plan your time. I left the clinic and came back when my number was called for an appointment. The nurse, Natalie Hardings, provided a services at a very professional level. She solved my problem in a couple of minutes time, and I did not even feel any pain. I want to thank your Natalie and all clinic staff member for the great care. Page 15 Written by a patient This is the 4th or 5th time visiting Burrell Street clinic, the doctors have always been professional me informative. However, I have been repeatedly shocked at the unprofessional manner of the young man in reception with glasses. He is repeatedly rude to patients and today to my absolutely shock, read out the symptom I circled on the option sheet. This is horrendous behaviour in such a discreet environment and I've never felt so embarrassed in my life. That begging said, the other reception staff are always friendly, helpful and DISCREET. Page 16 Written by a patient In spite of the old fashion queuing/waiting system, it feels very effective with numerous people served every time. What makes the system effective, I feel, is the staff who are very skillfull, good listeners with great attitude to help. Especially Rita who comes out and makes sure every patient in the room is being seen accordingly or put in the system, etc. Rita comes across not only very knowledgeable but very accurate when answering. She was also very helpful towards a colleague who were not as skilful. Rita had such a beautiful attitude and effectiveness when helping me and the rest of the patients waiting in the room. Equally she was very helpful at reception too though she didn't served me directly - Thanks Rita and all!! Page 17 Written by a patient What an incredibly poor experience. I came in as a walk in to receive a follow up vaccination, on the correct day as per the instruction my last appointment. From the very minute I walked in the treatment from front of house staff has been particularly unfriendly and really ineffective at providing a comforting environment. They seem to have an a poor attitude to patient care and absolutely no empathy - especially Michelle, who I can only describe as smiling through gritted teeth! First off, why does a patient have to complete the same initial form as had been completed previously? This is clearly inefficient but the least of my worries when compared to the wait time. I've now been waiting 2 hours and 30 mins and still haven't been called. When I asked reception they said I was next which was 50 mins ago... and there have been around 10 people called since then. I've been waiting for an hour more than the next longest. It was down to just four persons in the waiting room an hour ago. Out of desperation I feel like walking out, such a waste of time. Why they cant just provide an orderly appointment system? I was eventually seen and the clinician apologised for the wait. The appointment lasted all of two full minutes. I don't intend to come back. I may be feeling somewhat exasperated, but I want to be treated fairly and with respect, and have a proper wait time. Its worth noting that I have never had this problem at Dean Street. Page 18 Written by a patient There is doctor working there by the name of doctor Ann . Who is very stand- off Ish . And feels she does not have give her name to you. She very cold , abrupt and not comforting , understanding or empathetic in anyway if you are concerned about test symptoms or medication that has made you sick. Regarding reception staff a couple of them are really good , there are some who are unaware of what on earth they are talking about . I was due to attend for some injection , I called up and asked one of the receptionists regarding coming in for an injection, I was advised sorry you have to come to walk in, And we full to capacity today. I replied maybe you should listen to people first before telling them how things should go, and continued to explain I was given an appointment, she appolgised , I replied you need to be careful someone less informed than I would Have missed important medication. There was a senior consultant and nurse called Denise who are very good. They have a lab onsite which is good. But the overall professionalism here is dire. Page 19 Written by a patient I made an IUD fitting appointment through Zesty. I was very apprehensive and nervous. I turned up at my slot time, I was seen within that hour. The building and facilities are like none I have seen before, so clean, modern and light! I saw Irene, who fitted me, she was quick but caring and efficient and made it painless. I couldn't recommend this service more. One of the largest Trusts in the UK, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust comprises five of the UK's best known hospitals – Guy's, St Thomas', Evelina London Children's Hospital, Royal Brompton and Harefield – as well as community services in Lambeth and Southwark, all with a long history of high quality care, clinical excellence, research and innovation. We work closely with a wide range of health and care partners to deliver the best care to our local population, and we play an active role in the integrated care systems (ICS) in south east and north west London. We have a long tradition of clinical and scientific achievement and – as part of King's Health Partners – we are one of England's eight academic health sciences centres (AHSCs), bringing together world-class clinical services, teaching and research. We are rated Good overall by the Care Quality Commission, and have one of the lowest mortality rates in the country. With around 23,600 staff, we are one of the largest employers locally. We aim to reflect the diversity of the local communities we serve and continue to develop new and existing partnerships with local people, patients, neighbouring NHS organisations, local authorities and charitable bodies and GPs. The dedication and skills of our employees lie at the heart of our organisation. We strive to recruit and retain the best staff to ensure that our services are high quality, safe and patient focused. Primary Westminster Bridge Road London, SE1 7EH, GB Get directions Great Maze Pond London, SE1 9RT, GB Get directions Hill End Road Harefield, UB9 6JH, GB Get directions Sydney Street London, SW3 6NP, GB Get directions Westminster Bridge Road London, SE1 7EH, GB Get directions We have joined forces with Aneira Health to develop an innovative women's healthcare service, beginning this Spring amongst a cohort of Guy's and St Thomas' staff. It's our ambition that this pioneering collaboration will revolutionise healthcare provision within the workplace and provide women with seamless, AI-enabled healthcare designed to fit around their lives. It aims to improve access, experience and health outcomes for those who dedicate their careers to caring for others. This is a collaboration that reflects Guy's and St Thomas' commitment to championing innovation and harnessing technology for the benefit of our people as well as our patients. With over 23,000 staff, Guy's and St Thomas' is one of the UK's largest and most respected NHS Foundation Trusts, recognised for its commitment to innovation, research, and staff wellbeing. By partnering with Aneira Health – a leading women's health provider known for its digital-first, but not digital-only approach – the Trust is enabling a small cohort of the workforce to be amongst the first to access and test the approach from Spring this year. This marks a major step forward in delivering personalised, proactive healthcare that truly works for women. This initial offer will provide Guy's and St Thomas' staff with high-quality, convenient healthcare designed around their needs, empowering them to take charge of their health with confidence. Daghni Rajasingam, Deputy Chief Medical Officer and Consultant Obstetrician at Guy's and St Thomas' said: "We recognise that great healthcare starts with those who provide it. The health and wellbeing of our staff is incredibly important to us and we hope that this healthcare offer will transform how better women's health is delivered in the future." Nadine Hachach Haram, Director of Innovation at Guy's and St Thomas' said: "This is an exciting innovative collaboration between Guy's and St Thomas' and Aneira Health and a demonstration of how committed both organisations are to improving the health and wellbeing of women." Voting is still open for our Council of Governors elections. All members are eligible to vote and will receive an e-mail from our election partner, Civica Election Services (CES), with instructions on how to do this. Voting closes on Monday 19 May. Are you interested in a career in the NHS? Come to an exciting virtual careers event to learn about clinical and non-clinical roles. There is information available about roles at all levels – no matter where you are in your career journey. The careers fair is on Thursday 22 May (11am to 3pm). • Visit stalls run by Guy's and St Thomas' and other NHS organisations • Speak to NHS careers advisers about career and study options • Hear from NHS professionals about what their roles really involve • Participate in webinars and watch helpful videos about different opportunities • Find out about roles that are available right now • Receive tips on writing a great application Register: Our mental health can change from week to week, and it's influenced by what's happening in our lives. Things like stress, sleep, and our relationships can really impact how we feel. The theme for this year's Mental Health Awareness Week is "communities". We know how powerful communities can be in protecting mental health. Statistics show that people who are more socially connected to family, friends, or their community are happier, physically healthier, and live longer, with fewer mental health conditions than people who are less well connected. We had a chat with Jackie Waghorn, the mental health lead at Guy's and St Thomas', who shared some helpful advice on how you might get involved with your community to promote good mental health, as well as where to find support if you're struggling: 1. Connect with people - Spend time with your family and friends, or take a break from your desk and enjoy lunch with a colleague. 2. Join others in learning a new skill - Joining a club or picking up something new can really help build your confidence and reduce loneliness. 3. Enjoy the outdoors – Get out in the fresh air and engage with nature for more mental health benefits. Go for a walk and smile or say hello to the people that you pass. 4. Find like-minded people – Build connections with people who share your interests and values, but also be adventurous and try reaching out to people who may be different to you; it could open new avenues! 5. Be kind – Connect with your community through small acts of kindness, which will benefit both you and others. Why not set yourself a goal to offer a compliment to at least one person every day, it could make their day and also boost your sense of well-being. 6. Check in on others – Check in on your friends, family and people around you. Ask people how they're feeling, and listen. You don't need to have the answers, but you can support them in the moment and point them in the direction of help and support. 7. Seek support if you're struggling - The most important thing is to ask for help if you need it. There's no shame in saying you're finding it difficult at the moment. Share how you are feeling with someone. Don't be embarrassed to ask for help. Things can and will get better. Remember, there is support available if you need help. For a list of services, including who to speak to if you need urgent support in a crisis visit . #mentalhealthawarenessweek [Document description: an 8-page PDF containing the tips listed in this post] We had a wonderfully successful Nursing and Midwifery Week last week. The sun shone and our nursing and midwifery colleagues did too There was an impressive line-up of information stands and a range of activities including speeches, live music and dance acts around our sites. Staff showcased our services, and their skills, as well as career opportunities at the Trust. Our senior management team joined in the celebrations visiting wards and community teams, and our catering staff laid on a special lunch-time menu at our restaurants, in honour of our nursing and midwifery colleagues. A thanksgiving service was also held in the chapel at St Thomas'. The Nightingale Awards and Nursing and Midwifery Awards gave another chance to acknowledge and praise our inclusive, caring and ambitious teams and individuals who provide exceptional care. Check out the photos from another spectacular Nursing and Midwifery Week! Well done to our Nursing and Midwifery Award winners. We've been honouring our incredible nursing and midwifery staff who go the extra mile for patients and colleagues. Our Chief Nurse Avey Bhatia, said at the ceremony: "This past year has been filled with challenges but it has also highlighted the remarkable strength and adaptability of our nursing and midwifery teams. You have navigated these with grace and determination, ensuring that our patients receive the best possible care, even in the most trying times. "We celebrate not only the achievements of our award nominees and winners but also the collective efforts of everyone within the nursing and midwifery team who has gone above and beyond in their roles. Your dedication to patient care, your commitment to continuous improvement, and your ability to inspire and support your colleagues are what make our healthcare system truly exceptional." "I joined as a food services assistant and now I lead 25 nurses!" Say hi to Emily Ologe, a clinical nurse lead with our Akerman Neighbourhood Nursing Teams. Emily told us about her fantastic career story. She said: "I began my journey in 2011 as a food service assistant at St Thomas' Hospital. In 2013, I resolved to apply for a nursing assistant role advertised for Richard Bright ward at Guy's. "I wanted to care for the patients more directly. That moment marked the beginning of a purposeful path into nursing. "I was encouraged to apply for the nursing assistant diploma, and eventually moved into a senior nursing assistant post in 2014, with the reproductive sexual health service at our Streatham Hill, Walworth Road and Vauxhall clinics. I was taking charge of clinical room preparations, managing supplies including pharmacy items, and supporting asymptomatic patients. "In 2015, I was seconded to study nursing at the London South Bank University and had the opportunity to have my 12-week student management placement with the neighbourhood nursing team. "I knew early on that I wanted to be a community nurse, so I joined the team after qualifying as a neighbourhood nurse in 2018. "I completed and signed off all my clinical competencies within six months, like giving IV antibiotics, catheter management, leg ulcer care and ear irrigation. "Community nursing demands both independence and ingenuity. You're not just applying clinical skills, you are giving holistic care. "You may go into a patient's home to give antibiotics but notice that the house is very cold or super cluttered, or that a spouse caregiver is unwell. In those moments, we go beyond the nursing intervention. We advocate, we coordinate care, we care holistically. That's what makes community nurses exceptionally skilled. "In 2020, I went on to complete the specialist practitioner district nursing (SPQDN) course. Today, I serve as a clinical nurse lead, managing two teams with a total of about 25 nurses. "They say success is about being in the right place at the right time. But I believe it is also about seizing the opportunities that come your way. "I reached for mine, and look where it led. When people are given a chance to grow, they can truly thrive." Congratulations to our Nightingale Award winners! This unique professional award, inspired by Florence Nightingale, celebrates our outstanding nursing and midwifery staff. Their exceptional care makes them worthy modern day Nightingales! This year nursing assistants, maternity support workers, healthcare assistants, and nursing associates are also being recognised for the first time. Liz Allibone, Head of Nursing for the Nightingale Academy, said: "These awards are special, it's about celebrating the legacy of Florence Nightingale who set up the first school of nursing in the world at St Thomas'. "Award winners are given an engraved badge, and they wear it with pride. The badge is designed to celebrate the achievements of the next generation Nightingales who deliver outstanding care to our patients. "It gives recipients the confidence to pursue further academic studies, is recognition, and most of all it's that sense of belonging."