

# Media roundup

The Trust's communications team works closely with newspapers, television and radio broadcasters, and digital and social media channels on a daily basis – pitching ideas to promote our specialist care and research to national and international audiences. Here are some recent examples:

## March

Harefield patient Mike Adamson shared his experience of having a new type of aortic

valve replacement at Harefield with the *Daily Mail*. Not only does the Edwards 'Intuity' valve mean patients no longer need to take blood thinning medication for the rest of their lives, it is also 'sutureless', meaning it doesn't need stitching. Mr Adamson told the Mail: "I only needed to stay in hospital for a week, with just some discomfort on the first day. Now, just three months after the operation, I can run 10km non-stop with no ill effects – and I was back at work after six weeks." Mr Toufan Bahrami, consultant cardiac surgeon, told the Mail: "This valve should last 15 to 20 years – shorter than a mechanical valve but the risks are lower, the patient doesn't need to be on warfarin for life and it can be replaced easily."

Dr Mahmoud Barbir, consultant cardiologist, made two appearances in the *Daily Mail*. In the first, he spoke about the role of lipoprotein(a) in cardiovascular disease, and how a healthy diet, regular exercise and even cholesterol-lowering medication do little to affect its level in the body. In a separate piece, Dr Barbir discussed the effectiveness of statins. He explained: "We know they can make a significant difference in as little as two weeks but, as statins are a long-term treatment, it's better to measure results after a few months... You get the biggest drop in cholesterol from the first 10mg of the dose."

## April

Kate Harty, wife of a patient who was critically-ill and brought to Royal Brompton for ECMO (extra-corporeal membrane oxygenation) care but sadly passed away, explained to *Channel 5 News* that the hospital "was a miracle, because I had ten more weeks [with him], I could hear his voice again, and the person in that hospital bed was my husband again." This followed a previous broadcast from the adult intensive care unit in January, when health correspondent Catherine Jones visited to find out how the NHS treats the 'sickest of the sick' respiratory patients over winter.

In a feature on 'courageous youngsters diagnosed with diseases associated with the elderly', *The Sun* reported on a family under the care of Harefield's familial hypercholesterolemia (FH) service. Mother Jo Tidmarsh told the paper: "Dad had another bypass when he was 51, and was referred to Harefield Hospital, which has a research department looking into FH. The support was amazing. When I had Frank, now 11, and Alfie, they told me all the boys should be tested. They isolated dad's gene which causes his FH so they knew exactly what to look for. Doctors are confident they can disable the mutated gene in Alfie before he starts his own family."

**Daily Mail**

## May

During this month, our experts could be seen and heard in various national news outlets discussing topical healthcare issues:

Dr Johanna Feary, consultant in occupational lung disease, joined *The Guardian's* science podcast to explain how asbestos – banned from use in 1999 – is still a leading cause of death due to its role in causing mesothelioma, an aggressive cancer of the lining of the lung.

**theguardian**



Professor Pascal Meier, consultant cardiologist, urged caution over a supposed "wonder jab" to treat high cholesterol. In a *Daily Mail* report on the new injectable drug inclisiran, Professor Meier cautioned against relying on a single solution, saying: "PCSK9 inhibitors may be useful for some patients but the idea that a yearly vaccine-style injection is going to protect your heart is much too simplistic. We need to treat the whole patient."

Also featured in the *Daily Mail* was consultant cardiologist Dr Sanjay Prasad. In a feature on technology and health, Dr Prasad explained that fitness trackers can help people reach 10,000 steps a day, but "regular, moderate-to-intense exercise is a better option", being more beneficial for vascular function.



Professor of cardiology Martin Cowie spoke out in favour of making natriuretic peptide testing, a simple blood test that can identify those at risk of heart failure, universally available on the NHS. Professor Cowie told the *i newspaper* "the postcode lottery must end now... The right diagnosis quickly unlocks early treatment – with huge benefits for the patient."

