

Dear stakeholder,

I am delighted to report that Glemsford Surgery near Sudbury and the West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust have started a project to work together to improve patient care and have now officially joined as integrated partners in healthcare. It means the trust will support the surgery and work with it to create a new, innovative, strong and sustainable healthcare service, removing traditional barriers between the hospital, GPs and community services. This model of joined-up working has been successfully implemented by the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and has seen the benefits of linking up hospital and GP services, which has resulted in an 11% reduction in emergency attendances from the collaboration. A fantastic achievement.

This Sunday we're celebrating the 72nd birthday of our NHS. We want everybody across Suffolk and north east Essex to come together at 5pm to clap for NHS and social care staff, all other key workers and our communities. Several of our local landmarks will be lighting up blue to mark this special occasion. They include The Apex in Bury St Edmunds, St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Clacton and Colchester town halls, Colchester Castle, Colchester, Ipswich and Clacton hospitals and The Royal Hospital School.

Until recently, many local people have loyally been turning out on their doorsteps each Thursday evening clapping and showing their support for the NHS and key workers. This weekend we are encouraging communities to continue to show their support by enjoying themselves, but to act responsibly as pubs reopen. Our system has plans in place to deal with increased levels of demand. Let's hope 'Super Saturday' is 'super' for all the right reasons.

Meanwhile, tomorrow evening, I would also encourage everyone to pay their respects to those who have lost their lives during the coronavirus pandemic. Join in by placing a light in your window – an LED candle, a lamp or a torch.

Finally, congratulations to nurse Katrina Hardy who retired this week after 37 years within the NHS. Her colleagues within the Reactive Emergency Assessment Community Team (REACT) at Ipswich Hospital say Katrina has been a fantastic role model, an amazing nurse and a rock to the service who will be greatly missed. An NHS career spanning 37 years is an amazing achievement and I know I speak for everyone across the system in wishing Katrina a very happy retirement.

Stay safe,

Ed.