Moorfields Accident and Emergency Service.

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The ophthalmic casualty department of Moorfields Eye Hospital is the biggest of its kind in the western world. This financial year 82,000 patients went through the department, accounting for around 25% of all outpatient activity in the Trust. In other words, every fourth patient attending the hospital for an outpatient consultation came to A&E. It is an extremely busy department but an incredibly efficient one and it is consistently one of the best performing A&Es in the country in terms of achieving the 4-hour government target. It regularly receives compliments from the patients it serves and we are extremely proud of the high standard of patient care that we deliver.

This is a far cry from the Cinderella Service reputation back in the 20th Century! Then the A&E department was a prison sentence for the Residents who did their allotted time in it and got out as quickly as possible. In those days Ophthalmic A&E was not a sub-specialty in its own right but instead a non-respected, inconvenient and inferior appendage of the hospital. No formal teaching was imparted because no consultant would be seen dead in such a disreputable part of the hospital.

The Trust’s massive drive to change the Cinderella A&E service was brought about on the back of the NHS plan, which demanded high quality, patient-centred care. So, as a result, at the beginning of the millennium came the appointment of the first ophthalmic consultant to work in A&E and we are now 9 consultant-strong. Each one of us works between A&E and another sub-specialty to ensure we do not expire prematurely. Teaching, audit and research now flourish in the department. The Moorfields A&E Course is currently in its third year and we have had to take it off-site due to increasing delegate numbers. We continue to lead the long-established GP Course, which attracts around 120-150 delegates annually.

The casualty department could not function without the hard work of our nurses and clerical staff. With yearly-increasing number of patients, the number of nurses and clerical staff has also increased. We also got our first dedicated departmental manager in 2003. Demand management of
ophthalmic services has necessitated the expanding role of nurses and optometrists; our dedicated ophthalmic Nurse Practitioners now see, treat and discharge around 20% of casualty patients and we also have four experienced hospital-based optometrists working alongside the medical and nursing staff.

In order to deliver the highest standard of clinical care to our patients, we have worked hard to establish fast-track clinics for patients requiring urgent treatment. We have been instrumental in establishing the Medical Retinal Emergency Clinic, such that no patient has to wait more than a week to be seen. There has also been an expansion of the Neuro-ophthalmology clinics and the appointment of a Fellow to be on-call for consultation. We have developed patient pathways in collaboration with UCL to fast-track patients presenting with arterial occlusions to UCH and we work closely with the Royal London Hospital for patients with neuro-surgical problems.

Good productivity in any department demands teamwork, high levels of morale, good pastoral care and a good working environment. I can say without hesitation that people do enjoy working in A&E; we work well as a team and we care for one another. Our department has recently been refurbished and has become a bright and welcoming place to work in with a much-needed bigger staff room. Finally, the proof that we all like to interact with each other lies in the fact that the A&E Christmas party is always oversubscribed! We work hard and we play hard but most of all we strive collectively to give the best patient care that is possible.

Consultant Staff:

- Richard Andrews A&E/ Medical Retina
- Claire Daniel A&E/ Adnexal
- Raj Das Bhaumik A&E/ Adnexal
- Badrul Hussain A&E/ Cataract
- Emma Jones A&E/ Glaucoma
- Dilani Siriwardena A&E/ Glaucoma
- Seema Verma A&E/ Cataract
- Tint Naing A&E/ Cataract (Locum Consultant)
- Lola Ogunbowale A&E/ Primary Care (Locum Consultant)