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## Idea for helping patients clicks with Girls' Brigade

Members of the 1st South Shields Girls' Brigade Company put their knitting skills to the test to help patients at South Tyneside District Hospital.

The girls, aged between 10 and 14, made 'twiddle mitts' for orthopaedic patients on Ward 7. The hand muffs, which have buttons, tassels and other items sewn on to them, have practical uses in keeping patients' hands warm and in preventing them from taking out devices such as catheters and cannulas. Twiddling with them can also reduce anxiety and have a calming effect, particularly for patients with dementia.

One of the company's leaders, Margaret Watson, was a staff nurse on Ward 7 when she retired last year following a 40-year nursing career.

She said: "I know a lot of elderly patients with dementia are cared for on the ward and the twiddle mitts seemed a good project for the girls as we like to introduce them to traditional crafts and encourage them to do things for others."

Ward Manager Rachel Thompson said: "It was very kind of the girls to think of our patients; the twiddle mitts will be very useful."

**ends**

*Pictured above: Members of the 1st South Shields Girls' Brigade Company met members of staff when they took the 'twiddle mitts' they'd knitted to Ward 7 at South Tyneside District Hospital*

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

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