

PRESS RELEASE – 17 OCTOBER 2018

NHS security staff wear cameras to improve safety and security at South Tyneside and Sunderland hospitals



South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust have invested in body-worn cameras for their security staff to further improve safety and security for patients, visitors and staff on their sites, including South Tyneside District Hospital, Sunderland Royal Hospital and Sunderland Eye Infirmary.

The cameras, of a type used by police forces, are known to act as a deterrent in incidents of criminal and anti-social behaviour and they can provide valuable audio and visual evidence for criminal prosecutions.

Staff wearing the cameras operate the equipment in stand-by mode only when patrolling the premises and if recording an incident must announce when they are about to start recording.

Steve Jamieson, Director of Estates and Facilities at South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust which partners City Hospitals Sunderland in the South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group, said: “Our security teams provide a vital service to ensure the safety and welfare of our staff, patients and visitors 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

“We have a zero tolerance approach to all forms of violence, aggression or abuse and, where appropriate, we always seek to prosecute. We already had sophisticated CCTV systems but evaluation of the use of body-worn cameras has shown they can also act as a deterrent and provide valuable evidence in confrontational incidents to support criminal prosecutions, helping us to make our sites safer for everyone.

“We have detailed policies regarding the cameras and our security officers have been fully trained in their use and, very importantly, they are aware of the need to preserve people’s privacy and dignity. We are already finding the cameras invaluable in terms of providing evidence and seeing them does seem to change people’s attitudes and act as a deterrent.”

Ends

Photo caption: Security officers Kyle Carr and Les Barnes wearing the cameras on duty at South Tyneside District Hospital

Issued by **Kay Jordan**

For press enquiries on this release, contact **0191 404 1128** or email

kay.jordan@stft.nhs.uk