

PRESS RELEASE – 17 DECEMBER 2018

Highly-skilled nurses from The Philippines boost the NHS workforce in South Tyneside and Sunderland



Highly-skilled nurses recruited in The Philippines have arrived in South Tyneside and Sunderland in time to boost the nursing workforce as the local NHS prepares to look after more patients who need hospital admission during the busy winter period.

City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust began recruiting in The Philippines in 2001 and since 2016 has renewed efforts, resulting in nearly 300 highly-qualified nurses from the country now working and living locally.

This year, for the first time, South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust also took part in a joint recruitment drive along with City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust to attract more nurses to join local teams working across the two Trusts.

About 100 job offers were made on the first joint trip in February 2018 and the most recent visit in October 2018 resulted in around 70 more job offers being made. In addition to the latest group of ten who have arrived in time for Christmas, more of those with confirmed job offers are expected to arrive in the coming months. They will be working in a variety of areas across both organisations with those at South Tyneside working in theatres, the Surgical Centre and the Emergency Admissions Unit, and those working at Sunderland predominantly on medical wards.

One of the new recruits, Carrie Bernasor, said: "I am looking forward to learning and adapting to a new culture and aligning our practices to the UK way of nursing, whilst maintaining excellence in delivering patient care."

Melanie Johnson, Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals for South Tyneside and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trusts, said: "We are always looking for nurses and midwives of the highest calibre and I'd like to extend a warm welcome to our new recruits who will, I'm sure, be a great asset to us. They are joining a fantastic workforce who do an amazing job providing compassionate care of the highest quality every single day and who are always looking at innovative ways of improving patient care and experience.

"We are committed to investing in more nursing and midwifery posts to enable us to continue delivering safe patient care of the highest quality. Whilst we are very passionate about nurturing our workforce here in the North East - hence our regular, local nursing recruitment events - our overseas recruitment drives also play a vital part. Our aim is always the same: to recruit the very best so we have the right person with the right skills in the right place at the right time."

There has never been a more exciting time to join the two Trusts which are currently undergoing a formal merger process to become one organisation – South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust – from April 2019. The coming together of both Trusts will help ensure long-term operational and financial sustainability and offer increasing opportunities to develop varied and interesting nursing careers at South Tyneside District Hospital, Sunderland Royal Hospital and Sunderland Eye Infirmary and in the community in South Tyneside, Sunderland and Gateshead.

Both Trusts are also currently progressing the 'Path to Excellence' programme of clinical transformation of local hospital services in South Tyneside and Sunderland to meet the future needs of patients and offer the best possible care for local people.

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The photo shows: *Three of South Tyneside and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trusts' newest recruits from The Philippines, Carrie Bernasor, Erlinger Navos and Janice Tingson, seated centre, pictured with some of the Trusts' other overseas recruits*

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