

PRESS RELEASE

Tuesday 28th June 2016

Balcony garden officially declared open

A volunteer at The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust has helped to create a therapeutic balcony garden for patients at the Corbett Outpatient Centre to provide rehabilitation to patients in a relaxing outdoor environment.

Steve Saul, who is also a former patient, came up with the idea with Occupational Therapist Erika Keshelya during one of his routine appointments because of his passion for gardening.

“We have had such a huge amount of support from staff and patients. People have been bringing in plants and offering help. It’s been wonderful and I just don’t want the project to ever come to an end,” said Steve.

The balcony garden, opened by the trust’s Chief Executive Paula Clark, features a greenhouse, rose arch and large plant troughs filled with plants and flowers such as strawberries, tomatoes, curly kale, clematis, petunias and coriander.

Erika Keshelya, who organised the balcony build project, wanted to transform the bare, unused balcony for the benefit of patients and thanked all those who donated to the project.

“We’ve all worked very hard to get to this stage and it is amazing because we know what a difference this balcony garden will make not only to our patients but also to their families and our staff.

Paula Clark, who declared the balcony garden open at an event attended by patients, visitors and staff, was bowled over by the results of such hard work.

“This is such a fantastic and much needed addition for all patients of Corbett Outpatient Centre. I am so pleased to see such a wonderful transformation,” she said.

The balcony garden, which encourages sensory development and provides patients with a peaceful outdoor space, has been funded by The Dudley Group NHS Charity along with donations from Wilkinsons and Highdown Nursery. Patients and staff also donated plants and crafts to the garden and fundraised by arranging cake sales and raffles.

***** ENDS *****

Notes to editors:

- Picture caption:
 - **Front L-R: Patients Dennis Trueman and John Apperley, Chief Executive Paula Clark, Occupational Therapist Erika Keshelya,**

Volunteer Steve Saul, Physiotherapists Faye Smith and Ellie Morrison

- For more information, please call Chace Smith, Communications Assistant for The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, on (01384) 456111 extension 1064 or email chace.smith@dgh.nhs.uk