

# News Release

**22 March 2017**

## **New role to help eye patients**

Dorset County Hospital has teamed up with the Dorset Blind Association to improve support for eye patients with the creation of a new joint post.

From April the eye department will welcome an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) to the team.

The role will be shared by Leah Cross and Bev Jones who currently work for the Dorset Blind Association.

The Dorset Blind Association is a local charity who provide practical help and emotional support to enable people with sight loss to stay healthy and happy. Established in 1918 the charity now helps over 1,000 people every month, due to the dedication of its 400 volunteers. For more information, to make a donation or volunteer, contact 01202 712864 or visit [www.dorsetblind.org.uk](http://www.dorsetblind.org.uk).

The hospital's eye department is a very busy area dealing with some 22,600 appointments, 4,000 procedures and 1,600 operations a year. Many frequently encountered conditions such as age related maculopathy, diabetic retinopathy and cataract are treated at the hospital and the department is able to refer patients to specialist centres for more complex conditions.

Lucy Howe, consultant ophthalmologist said: "The role of an ECLO is to act as the link between the eye department and available services for people with sight problems and to provide them with both emotional and practical support. We are very happy that we have managed to establish this post and think it will be of real benefit to patients attending Dorset County Hospital."

**ENDS**

**PHOTO: Jonathan Holyhead Chief Executive Officer of the Dorset Blind Association (far left), with members of the Dorset County Hospital eye department.**

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