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You are warmly welcome to the Critical Care Newsletter of the AICU for April-June 2025.

No matter whether you are a member of the AICU, or a former patient, a family member or a carer, or a member of the general public, you can read about the AICU of the Royal Brompton Hospital, a part of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust.

First, I am grateful for Matron Anoma for giving me the opportunity to publish this newsletter. Thank you for all the resource persons who gave the updates despite their busy schedule, caring for critical care patients.

This newsletter would not have been possible if I did not get time in parallel while doing the administration job, particularly on the weekends. Nurses In Charge (NIC) Mar, Sam, Nirosha, Catarina, Asoka, Rabin Ramanie and Kami – thank you for this. Finally, Chamindri, who managed the images of the bulletin, deserves a thank you.

We would be delighted to know what you have liked and especially disliked in this newsletter. Please email when you have time.

Thank you. And enjoy!

Asitha Jayawardena
Critical Care Administrator/
Editor

Critical Care NEWSLETTER

The Adult Intensive Care Unit (AICU)
Royal Brompton Hospital London

April-June 2025

Message from the Matron



I am pleased to share with you the first issue of the Critical Care Newsletter. This makes an exciting step forward in how we communicate, celebrate our achievements, and stay connected as a team.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Asitha for taking this initiative and responsibility to create this newsletter. I am confident this platform will help us share important updates on the amazing work happening across the unit.

Over the years, I have been incredibly proud in the way our team continue to uphold high standards of patient care, even during the challenging times. Your dedication, professionalism and teamwork are the backbone of everything we do.

A few highlights I'd like to share:

- Cleaning standards - Thank you to those who raised concerns and supported recent audits. Improvements are underway, and your vigilance helps to keep our environment safe.
- Professional Development - Congratulations to all staff who have become band 6 recently after completing ICU course.
- Team Wellbeing - Please remember there is support available for anyone in need. Whether it's a quiet chat, access to the wellbeing hub, or structured support, you're never alone. VIVUp is the Employee Assistance Programme and contact them on 0330 380 2056.

Thank you once again for your continued hard work. I look forward to seeing this newsletter grow into a valuable space that reflect the heart of our team.

Anoma Gunawardena
Senior Nurse / Matron
The AICU
Royal Brompton Hospital

A broken heart...?

The heart is the only broken instrument that works.

- T. E. Kalem

Health & Safety

The health and safety inspection was conducted on 19th of May 2025.

The inspector, Jon Halstead, was very impressed by how well-organised, tidy, and clutter-free the unit was. He also noted the positive changes and recommendations we implemented following the H&S inspection and AICU fire evacuation drill in July 2024.

Just to mention a few improvements:

- Oxygen holders at each bed
- A full oxygen cylinder in the wall holder for emergencies
- Clearly labelled sharps bins
- Unobstructed fire exits
- Windows free of wedged objects
- Locked storeroom



He was especially pleased with the overall attention to detail and safety.

Well done, everyone, for helping us achieve this. Please keep up the great work!

Safety

The safety of the people shall be the highest law.

- **Marcus Tullius Cicero**

Patients Day 2025



Patient Day 2025 of the AICU Royal Brompton Hospital was held on the 7th of June with a total of 15 patients and their relatives in attendance.

It was a lovely day with several patients and relatives talking about their experiences during their admission, all with themes of thanks and gratitude for the amazing care we provided them and their relatives during this difficult time.

We also had the opportunity to give them a tour of the unit and provide some education on basic life support.

Annually, this event gives patients, relatives, and staff a chance to reflect on their experiences during their admission with us but also the amazing progress they have made since then.



One patient has even managed to get back to her hobby of making resin art and made us this lovely piece of art!

Internal communication

Effective internal communication is a powerful force that not only helps organizations to be more successful but also helps enrich employees' lives in meaningful ways.

- **Paul Barton**

Health

I made a commitment to completely cut out drinking and anything that might hamper me from getting my mind and body together. And the floodgates of goodness have opened upon me - spiritually and financially.

- **Denzel Washington**

Critical Care NEWSLETTER

The Adult Intensive Care Unit (AICU)
Royal Brompton Hospital
Sydney Street
London SW3 6NP

Heart, Lung and Critical Care
Clinical Group (HLCC)
Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

International Nurses Day on 12 May

'Caring for nurses strengthens economies' is this year's theme of International Nurses' Day 2025, which we celebrated on 12 May every year.

This year, the focus is on the incredible skill, dedication, and impact of nursing. Nursing is not a 'vocation' but it's a highly skilled and safety-critical profession, requiring remarkable dedication, professionalism and expertise.

Nurses work in a variety of settings – from GP surgeries and hospitals to care homes and prisons. Wherever you are, the public trust you, turning to you not only for your care and compassion, but for your knowledge, your training and your skills.

Like many other professions today, nursing is facing huge challenges. That's why it's more important to recognise the incredible skill, dedication and impact of nursing.

Hearts

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart.

- **Helen Keller**

If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.

- **Nelson Mandela**

If you carry joy in your heart, you can heal any moment.

- **Carlos Santana**

When you fish for love, bait with your heart, not your brain.

- **Mark Twain**

Vision and Mission of the AICU, Royal Brompton Hospital London

AICU

AICU Vision

Our vision is to be the leading-edge service for patients requiring specialist cardiorespiratory support by providing excellence in care, safety and innovation.

AICU Mission

AICU Mission. We will...

...Deliver

The highest standards of individualised, patient-centred care, using benchmarking and the best evidence to provide care that is safe, consistent, dignified and which prioritises the patient's wishes.

...Create

An environment that is clean, tidy, free of clutter and comfortable, which minimises disturbance and optimises patients' rest, privacy and dignity – always striving to improve the patient/ family experience.

...Promote

A professional culture, and behaviours that are calm, respectful and welcoming at all times.

...Drive

Forward proven initiatives that enable and enhance the safety of patients, staff and our environment.

...Value

And guide our colleagues, advancing their professional development, leadership, education, well-being and worth to the AICU team, while promoting a good work/life balance.

...Support

Patients, their families and carers by providing honest, understandable and clear communication that is timely and responsive, and by addressing concerns when they occur.

...Embrace

Equality, equity and inclusivity by valuing the cultural, ethnic and religious diversity of every colleague, patient, relative and carer, and by demonstrating respect, candour and professionalism.

...Innovate

Discover, investigate and develop novel innovations, therapies, guidelines and care pathways for Cardiothoracic Critical Care and to share them globally for the benefit of patients across the world.

NHS

I wouldn't be here today if it were not for the NHS. I have received a large amount of high-quality treatment without which I would not have survived.

- **Stephen Hawking**

The NHS is the closest thing the English have to a religion.

- **Nigel Lawson**

Education update

In July 2025, five AICU staff currently are on Intensive care course (ICC). The interviews for next ICC will be held in September for 2026 January ICC cohort.

Two staff from Elizabeth ICU have completed the 4-week placement in AICU as part of the ICC rotation between May and June.

Two staff are starting the in-house Cardiac Module course with GSTT from the 6th of August. For future course cohorts, do enquire with the practice education team.

Between April and June, four pre-registration nursing students have completed their placements, 2 of 4 were on transition (final) placements. We expect two more students in July, and one of them on transition placement. Students have continued to provide very good feedback on their placement experience in AICU.

Please find training and events in the future on page 9.

Allied Health Professionals (AHP) update

We have recruited a new B8a clinical lead speech and language therapist who started in post in June – Claire Mills. She replaces Lee Bolton.

Terpsi B8a dietitian started her PhD in May. We are in the process of recruiting to her post.

Julie McCarthy, Occupational Therapist (OT) presented poster at Intensive Care Society (ICS) State of the Art (SOA) on 'Patient centred goal setting processes within an ICU multi-disciplinary team (MDT) – an Allied Health Professionals (AHP) approach using quality improvement methodology'.

Update from Clinical Audit/QI (Quality Improvement)

In the last financial year, the Adult Intensive Care Unit (AICU) had 870 patients and the Elizabeth High Dependency Unit (EHDU) had 2168.

Intensive Care National Audit & Research Centre (ICNARC) Annual Report will be published shortly. For the first time we will be requesting a site report from ICNARC as we have 100% coverage for this site. This is the first full year that ICNARC Case Mix programme has been captured in EPIC.

This is working with ICNARC and other sites of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust (GSTT) to improve the capture of Patient Experience data. This is a top priority in the new government 10 year plan for the NHS England. Work continues on capturing the patients with Cardiogenic Shock (ICNARC Module) and we hope to have a report in due course.

Audit team have provided support and are name contributors for Isabelle Soo's, Dr Singh and Dr Chua's study. An abstract is to be presented at the Winter British Thoracic Society meeting. The abstract will look at the mortality rates associated with new onset and established Interstitial Lung Disease (ILD).

Audit team are working with Bogdan, Suheyra and Rosie on targeted QI training coupled with the development resource pack. This QI project has been shortlisted for a QI Poster competition with the winners to be announced in November. We are looking to develop this program cross-site in due course.

Congratulations to both Princy Nediaparambilus, Catherine Chepkong'a and Dhanya Jose for being shortlisted as well.

Audit team are very keen to encourage staff to get training in Clinical Audit and Quality Improvement. Mike Gribbon can put you in touch with the relevant personnel.

Basic Practice Audit

Monthly 'Basic Practice Audit' demonstrates the current standards in practice in the AICU. The findings continue to be shared on various communication platforms, meetings, and teaching sessions.

On infection prevention and control (IPC), hand hygiene and PPE (Personnel Protective Equipment) compliance across all AICU MDTs remain greater 90% as per Trust target. Changes to the IPC guide for staff will be available on Trust website from July onwards.

Employees

Caring is the essence of nursing.
- **Jean Watson**

Let us never consider ourselves finished nurses ... we must be learning all of our lives.
- **Florence Nightingale**

Medicine cures diseases, but only doctors can cure patients.
- **Carl Jung**

A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work.
- **Colin Powell**

Research update

We are proud to be a research-active critical care unit, with patients enrolled every month into research trials designed to answer the key questions, such as why patients get critically unwell, which treatments work best for which patients, how can we predict treatment response and how can we get the best outcome from procedures like organ transplantation. Some of these multicentre and international trials are led by researchers from AICU Royal Brompton Hospital.

Team members have recently published evidence reviews and primary research. A recent publication '*Taste, Hunger and Satiety in Critical Illness: A Scoping Review*' included several team members as authors: congratulations to Laura Mooney, Lova Green, Alice Brown, Terpsichori Karpasiti, Rhiannon Lewis and Professor Suveer Singh. Tim Jenkins, previously a physiotherapist at RBH, published his observational study on the '*Metabolic Cost of Physically Rehabilitation in Mechanically Ventilated Patients in Critical Care*' along with co-author and supervisor Dr Brijesh Patel.

The countless interventions we deliver to patients each day – from vital signs monitoring and diagnostic tests to drugs which treat infection, prevent blood clots and protect the heart, not to mention ventilator adjustments, delirium prevention, and mobilisation – as well as the hundreds of daily treatment decisions made at the bedside are based on research evidence. Here are some ways you can engage with research in AICU:

- Become a Research Champion – speak with Keir Stirrat from the Critical Care Research Team about this important role.

- Complete Good Clinical Practice (GCP) training – this [free online module](#) from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) explains how to conduct research that is ethical, protects participants, and produces reliable and credible results.
- Join a journal club session – Dr David Ransley runs a weekly journal club for all, and the AICU Education Team runs a monthly nursing journal club. Last month, James Kuffour presented an article on Myocardial Infarction after Cardiac Surgery.
- Get updates on the latest research in our specialty by signing up to a newsletter like [Critical Care Reviews](#).

For more information about research trials in our intensive care unit and resources to develop your research skills, please read the [RBH Critical Care Research Newsletter](#) or speak to Research Lead Dr Brijesh Patel or Joy Pinguel, Keir Stirrat, Binsu Mathew or Kamal Liyanage from the Critical Care Research Team.

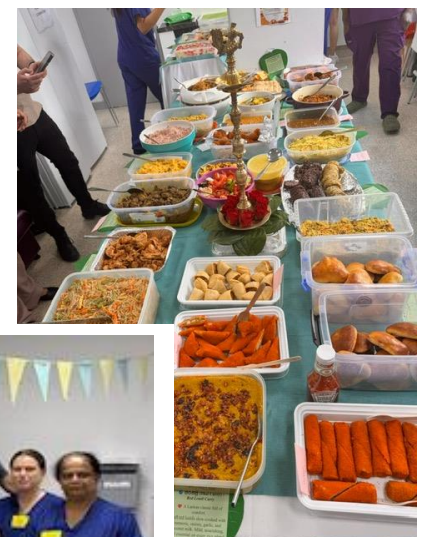


International Food Day – Sri Lanka

An episode of the International Food Day took place at 12pm on 16 April 2025 at the AICU. This time, it was Sri Lankan food but others could bring in their favourite dishes. Sri Lankan dishes include rice, fried rice, string hoppers, dhal, chicken, ambul thiyal (fish), and manioc (cassava).

In mid-April every year, Sinhala & Tamil New Year dawns, and we at the AICU proudly celebrate cultural diversity through events such as International Food Day. These occasions bring our team together to share food, traditions, and experiences, fostering unity, appreciation, and stronger connections in a positive and inclusive way.

AICU International Food Day is an opportunity to celebrate the rich cultural diversity within our team, bringing staff together to share food, traditions, and strengthen relationships in a positive and inclusive way. This event is held quarterly, each time with a different theme.



Printing Drug Labels on Epic

New updates on Epic are as follows:

Medication additive labels will be moved to Epic with the new label printers installed in each clinical rooms in AICU. This is going to be a precursor to a wider implementation of BCMA (bar-coded medication administration) in AICU. Training and implementation will begin within the month.

How to print drug labels on Epic:

Go to your Patient's Chart and go to Medication Administration Record (MAR).

EPIC story in a nutshell



Founded in a basement in 1979 with three half-time employees, Epic develops software to help people get well, help people stay well, and help future generations be healthier.

More than 325 million patients have a current electronic record in Epic.

Our software is used in:

- Hospitals, clinics, hospices, independent practices, urgent care, diagnostic labs, and many more...
- Patient homes and their pockets (e.g., MyChart)

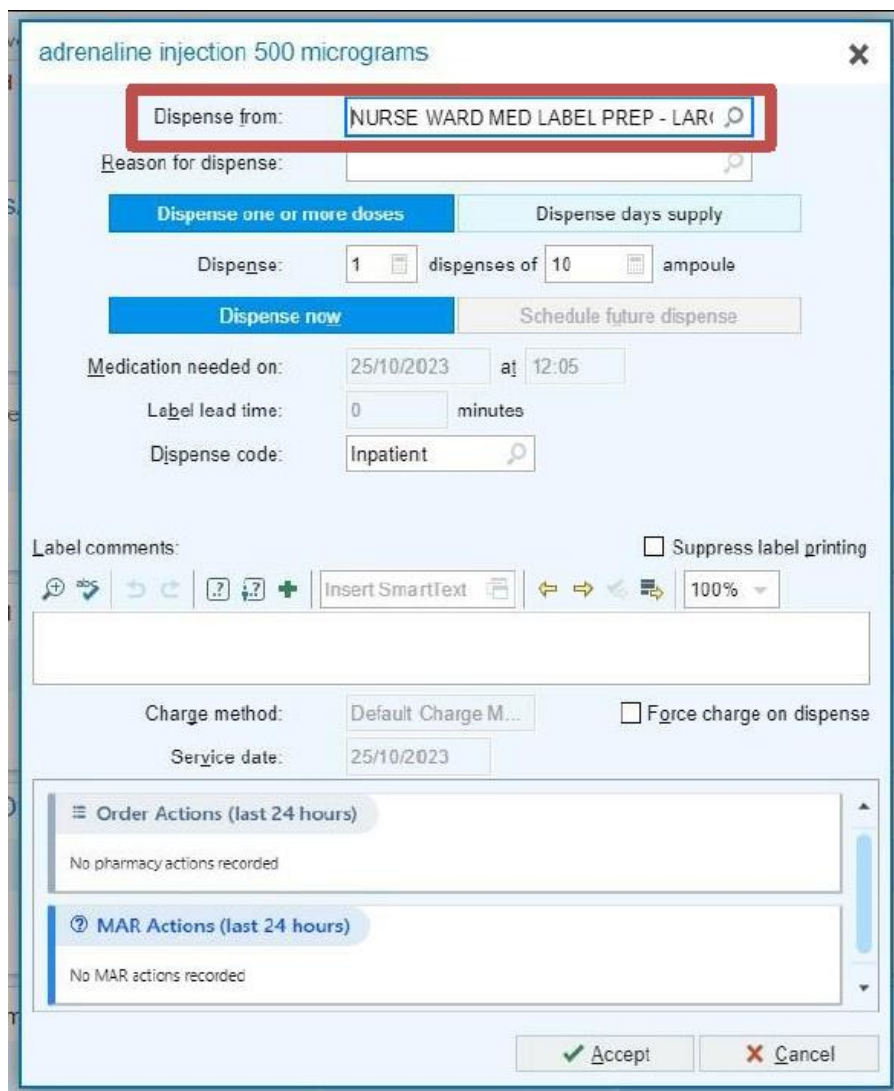
An 'epic' is a glorious recounting of a nation's events. Like the Iliad or the Odyssey, our electronic health records chronicle the story of a patient's healthcare over time.

<https://www.epic.com/about/>

A screenshot of the Epic Medication Administration Record (MAR) interface. The top navigation bar includes 'Summary', 'Chart Review', 'MAR' (highlighted with a red box), 'Flowsheets', 'Notes', 'Education', 'Care Plan', 'Orders', and 'Navigators'. Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for 'Report', 'MAR Note', 'Messages', 'Legend', 'Infusion Verify', 'Show All Actions', 'Select Medication', and 'Lir'. The main content area displays medication details for 'adrenaline injection 500 micrograms'. It includes fields for 'Dose: 500 micrograms', 'Intramuscular', 'As needed', 'anaphylaxis', 'Ordered Admin Dose: 500 micrograms = 0.5 mL', 'Concentration: 1,000 micrograms/mL', 'Priority: Routine', and 'Dispense Location: STH - INFANT PHARMACY'. A red box highlights a small icon in the top right corner of the medication details section.

Check the medication you need to prepare and click the mortar and pestle icon.

Select 'Nurse Ward Med Label Prep – Large' on the dispense from field.

A screenshot of the Epic 'Dispense' dialog box for 'adrenaline injection 500 micrograms'. The 'Dispense from:' field is set to 'NURSE WARD MED LABEL PREP - LAR' and is highlighted with a red box. Below this, there are fields for 'Reason for dispense:', 'Dispense one or more doses' (selected), 'Dispense days supply', 'Dispense:' (set to 1), 'dispenses of' (set to 10), 'ampoule', 'Dispense now' (selected), 'Schedule future dispense', 'Medication needed on:' (set to 25/10/2023 at 12:05), 'Label lead time:' (set to 0 minutes), and 'Dispense code:' (set to Inpatient). There are also checkboxes for 'Suppress label printing' and 'Force charge on dispense'. At the bottom, there are sections for 'Order Actions (last 24 hours)' and 'MAR Actions (last 24 hours)', both showing 'No actions recorded'. The dialog box has 'Accept' and 'Cancel' buttons at the bottom right.

Once set-up, click accept on the bottom right.

After accepting, you should see a 'Print Job Submitted' message on the upper right corner of the screen. Your label should print thereafter.



Feel free to still attach the colourful drug labels to make your syringes easier to identify.



A social evening

A social evening was organised on 23 May 2025 at Sydney Arms. Laura Corti, the social coordinator, organized the event.



A stroke survivor's new life at Royal Brompton AICU

When I joined the AICU Royal Brompton Hospital in December 2023, I was recovering from a stroke that happened on 14 August 2018.

The first month or two since the stroke, I began to walk again. I wear a leg support in my right leg. With time, I learnt to write with left hand, hoping the right hand would work again.

Please visit my stroke story, almost 7 years old:

A stroke survivor's new life at Royal Brompton in London, focusing on healthy hearts, lungs and brains
<https://sustain-blog.com/2025/05/16/a-stroke-survivors-new-life-at-royal-brompton-in-london-focusing-on-healthy-hearts-lungs-and-brains/>

In the early days, I received the guidance, support and motivation from the members of Administration team – Verna Aquino, Joel Alvarez, and Claudine Farrugia. They were excellent.

While doing the admin job, what I could do to the unit is to prepare a newsletter, rallying round mainly all good things that they do to critically ill patients and their families, friends, and carers in London and beyond.

And this is the newsletter. Enjoy!

Medicine

A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures in the doctor's book.

- **Irish Proverb**

Eat food, not too much, mostly plants.

- **Michael Pollan**

Life

Life is made of ever so many partings welded together.

- **Charles Dickens**

Pride 2025: Visibility, Voice, and Values



At Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust (GSTT), our values—**Ambitious, Caring, and Inclusive**—are not just words on posters. They are how we work, how we lead, and how we treat people. Every July, **Pride Month** is a powerful opportunity to reaffirm those values—not just for some, but for *everyone*.

This year, our theme is **Visibility, Voice, and Values**. Why? Because at a time when LGBTQIA+ communities are being legislated against, erased in policy, or silenced in public life, being seen and heard is a vital act of resistance—and compassion.

What do we mean by “sex” and “gender”?

These words often get used interchangeably—but they are not the same.

- **Sex** refers to biology: chromosomes, anatomy, what is assigned at birth.
- **Gender** is about identity: who we are, how we express ourselves, how we live.

Some people's gender aligns with their assigned sex. For others—like **trans** or **non-binary** people—it doesn't. Some people transition medically, some socially, and some don't at all. **All identities are valid.** Respecting people's gender is not just polite—it's part of **dignity in care**, especially in healthcare settings.

A UK Legal Turning Point in April 2025

In **April 2025**, the **UK Supreme Court** ruled that under the Equality Act 2010, the word “sex” should be interpreted as **biological sex**, not legal gender. This means that:

- Trans women—even those with full legal gender recognition—can now be legally excluded from certain female-only spaces.
- Public bodies like the NHS must now **treat “sex” as assigned at birth** when interpreting certain laws or policies.

This has raised serious concerns around **privacy, dignity, and safety** for trans people across the UK.

Protections for trans people still exist under the Equality Act's characteristic of **“gender reassignment”**, but their interpretation has become narrower and more complicated. The ruling has created uncertainty for NHS staff and patients alike.

At GSTT, we follow the law—but we never forget our values. Our commitment to inclusion remains **strong, visible, and active**.

What GSTT is Doing

- Over **1,250 staff** wear the **Progress Pride badge**, signalling a safe space for LGBTQIA+ colleagues and patients.
- We've launched a **Trans Equality Policy** to guide inclusive care and respectful practice.
- Our **LGBT+ Staff Network** continues to offer education, visibility, and support across our hospitals and community services.

Inclusion isn't passive—it takes **intentional action**.

From Thank You cards from patients

We cannot thank you enough for all the amazing care you gave to Daniel Laird until the end of his life. You also helped the wider family, supporting us through a very stressful + emotional time.

Darren + Victoria Brennan Laird

I just wanted to write a little note to say thank you to everyone who looked after me while I was here. I think it's fair to say thank you doesn't quite get across how grateful I am to you for saving my life!

... I am eternally grateful to everyone for getting me better and giving me my old life back.

Freddie Flintoff

To ICU team, Our family would like to thank each and everyone of you for the wonderful care you provided to my father.

... although my father is no longer with us, I'm sure he would have appreciated that you all tried your best and never gave up on him.

The Puncham family

I wanted to write to your team to express my gratitude for the treatment I received from you all recently at the Royal Brompton Hospital.

... “Hello Peter, I'm Sarah and I will be looking after you for the next 12 hours” really made me feel that I was in the best place – even if it wasn't one I would have chosen to have to be in.

...Thank you so much all of you!

Peter Freeman

To All the Staff on AICU, With grateful, heartfelt thanks for looking after William Prescott (Bill). We are so impressed by your care and professionalism!
From Bill and Becky and all his family

Celebration of research

The AICU held a research exhibition on 8 May 2025.

Among the winners were:

- Best Poster: Princy Pius
- Best Initiative: Laura Mylott
- People's Choice: Dorothea David

Training and Conferences

- 7th and 8th October 2025
British Association of Critical Care Nurses BACCN conference at Winter Gardens, Blackpool.
- 16th October - ECMO 1 Day study day
- 2nd to 3rd week in November - ECMO 6 Day Course

Patients

Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny.

- **C.S. Lewis**

Believe you can and you're halfway there.

- **Theodore Roosevelt**

Keep your face always toward the sunshine – and shadows will fall behind you.

- **Walt Whitman**

I will love the light for it shows me the way, yet I will endure the darkness because it shows me the stars.

- **Og Mandino**

Living in the moment means letting go of the past and not waiting for the future. It means living your life consciously, aware that each moment you breathe is a gift.

- **Oprah Winfrey**

Sustainability

The AICU team has been leading the way in sustainability. Here are some of our achievements so far:

- This year, LED lighting has replaced fluorescent lighting throughout the intensive care unit and the thermostat in patient rooms has been reduced to the guidance-recommended level. As well as saving energy and carbon emissions, these changes should save money. You can read more in *Interventions to reduce energy usage in an adult intensive care unit: A study protocol* by AICU Staff Nurse Stephanie Ireland.
- A major stock reorganisation has been led by Katarina Lucovicova, with support from Lino Lagdamen and Zulfiqar Ali. Efficient stock management will lead to fewer expired items, less wastage and cost savings.
- AICU nurses Rosie Cervera-Jackson and Stephanie Ireland have written an article on 'Human factors and systems approach to environmental sustainability in critical care units across a large multi-site English health care organization' describing how intensive care units can adopt environmentally sustainable practices
- AICU nurse Rosie Cervera-Jackson has led on a national project to create an e-learning package on environmental sustainability in healthcare, which is available from the Intensive Care Society: <https://ics.ac.uk/guidance/sustainability/environmental-sustainability-in-training-course.html>

We are looking for Sustainability Champions in AICU – please contact Anoma Gunawardena if you would like to lead on sustainability initiatives in our unit.

AICU Bake Sale

An AICU Bake Sale was held on 9 May 2025. In the team are Liza Punsalan, Bogdan Ciovina, Rachel Denzy, Oliver Guillermo, Maria Guiao, Krizzia Dela Cuesta, Joyce Dimen, Dorothy David, Myra Villena, Kathy Pura, and Linda Pereira.



Food

Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food. - **Hippocrates**