

## MY LAB

# HAEMATOLOGY AND BLOOD TRANSFUSION

Principal Biomedical Scientist **Nicki Lawrence** gives a guided tour of her laboratory at Royal Stoke University Hospital.

**R**oyal Stoke University Hospital (RSUH) is part of the University Hospitals of North Midlands (UHNM) NHS Trust, which covers two sites – Royal Stoke in Stoke-on-Trent and County Hospital in Stafford, and employs around 11,000 members of staff. As a university teaching hospital, we work very closely with our partners at Keele and Staffordshire universities, and we have a patient-centred clinical research facility providing state-of-the-art facilities.

From these hospitals we provide a full range of general acute hospital services for approximately 900,000 people living in and around Staffordshire and beyond. The trust also provides specialised services, cancer services, neonatal and paediatric intensive care and spinal surgery for three million people in a wider area, including neighbouring counties and North Wales. We have one of the busiest emergency departments in the country, with patients being brought to us from a wide geographical area, due to our status as a major trauma centre.

Due to our large population reach and the wide range of routine and specialist services offered by our trust, we run a 365 day, 24/7, ISO 15189-accredited haematology and blood transfusion



service. We process in excess of 850,000 FBCs, around 225,000 coagulation samples, and approximately 35,000 blood films per annum. We also have dedicated sections for specialist coagulation investigations, haemoglobinopathy screening, and immunophenotyping for immune monitoring and our peripheral blood autologous stem cell transplant programme. Our blood transfusion department cross-matches over 35,000 units per annum and is kept extremely busy by the trauma centre, cancer centre, maternity unit and our specialist surgical teams, such as cardiothoracic surgery.

We have an excellent team of approximately 70 highly competent, motivated individuals who rotate through both departments, comprising medical laboratory assistants, associate practitioners, trainees and biomedical scientists. Haematology and blood transfusion UHNM is an IBMS-accredited

training laboratory and we have a passion for training and education. We have a number of individuals who are currently completing undergraduate and postgraduate studies in biomedical science via a variety of methods, such as day release for apprenticeships, or distance learning for Masters.

As an IBMS-accredited training laboratory we also have members of the team who have completed IBMS

qualifications, including the registration portfolio, specialist portfolio, certificates of expert practice in training and quality, higher specialist diploma, and the diploma of expert practice in routine haematology. Offering development opportunities to our team ensures we have a highly knowledgeable workforce who are dedicated to providing a first-class, high-quality service to all of our service users, both within the trust and externally. Our department also has close links to our partner universities, with both clinical and laboratory staff delivering expert lectures on a range of haematology, blood transfusion, and thrombosis and haemostasis topics. 

**Nicki Lawrence** is a Principal Biomedical Scientist and Advanced Practitioner in Morphology working in haematology and blood transfusion at Royal Stoke University Hospital.