

## History of Dermatology in Hull and East Yorkshire- 2011-2020

The year, 2011 saw many changes in the Dermatology service in Hull. The department moved from Princess Royal Hospital in East Hull to a purpose-built department at the acute hospital site within the grounds of Hull Royal Infirmary in the centre of Hull. It was located on the first floor of a new building with clinical skills on the top floor and Ophthalmology on the ground floor of an impressively modern 2 storey building (Figs.1 and 2).



Fig.1



Fig.2

The department was equipped with a spacious reception room, a phototherapy unit-with TLO1, Bath PUVA/ Hand and Foot PUVA machine, a Photodynamic therapy room, 2 operating theatres, a patch testing room, a laboratory attached to a research room, 6 consulting rooms, a library and offices for secretaries, medical records staff and 6 clinical nurse specialists. Special paediatric dermatology services were provided with separate waiting areas and treatment rooms. Specialized clinics were provided by clinical nurse specialists supervised by consultants and which included leg ulcer, phototherapy, biologics, systemics, skin cancer and nurse led minor surgery clinics (Figs.3 and 4).



Fig.3

Phototherapy Suite



Fig.4

Nurse-led minor surgery

The Dermatology User Group, consisting of patient representatives, nurses and a consultant was instrumental in designing the new service at Hull Royal infirmary.

Medical Staff included 3 consultants, Dr.J.Mohungoo (2010-2015), Dr. S. Sinclair (2008- 2011) and Dr. S Walton (1997- 2018). In 2019, Dr. Walton dropped her clinical sessions but continued with research and PhD supervision both in the department and at the University. Dr. Mohungoo left to join Virgin care as a national clinical lead providing services to North East Lincolnshire.

Dr. Sinclair, paediatric dermatologist moved to Scotland for family reasons. This left Dr. Walton, singlehanded but she managed to run the service with a series of locum

consultants and 3 specialty doctors- Dr. S Hakimian (2009-2014), Dr. D. Graham (2009-2017) and Dr. R Zaman (2009-2017) prior to Dr Zaman becoming a substantive consultant

Dr. Hakimian left to join York District Hospital, Dr. Graham took early retirement on health grounds and Dr. Zaman moved up to a locum consultant grade whilst she persevered with her CESR application. She was awarded her specialist registration in 2017 and was then appointed to a substantive consultant post. Dr.F. Imran who is also applying for specialist registration on the CESR route and Dr. A. Gowda are currently employed as locum consultants on a long term contract.

Despite these staffing challenges Hull maintained a Hub and Spoke service with clinics at Freedom centre in East Hull(2010-2016) and care closer to home clinics in GP surgeries in East Hull(2000- 2016). Dr. Walton however continued her clinics at the Old Fire Station Practice in Beverley, East Yorkshire and which are still continuing along with a GPwSI, Dr. S Carruthers.

SpR training was withdrawn by the Yorkshire deanery in 2016 as there was only 1 full time consultant, Dr. S Walton in post.

In 2019, Dr. J Britton and Dr. J. Mohungoo (both previous NHS consultants in Hull) formed a limited company, called 'clinical partnership' and were awarded the tele-dermatology contract for Hull and North East Lincolnshire. Another private provider, DMC was awarded a contract for outpatient work in the East Riding of Yorkshire in the same year, leading to further fragmentation of services. However more complex patients continued to be referred to Castle Hill Hospital and the outreach clinic in Beverley.

Two part time GPwSI's joined the team at Hull Royal Infirmary providing sessions, Dr. S.Sudhakaran (2 / week) and Dr. H Razzaq (1 / week).

Dr. S Walton was appointed as a Service Director for Dermatology and Plastic surgery in 2008. She held this post until 2011 when due to restructuring the post was abolished. She seized the opportunity to develop the skin cancer service and developed close links with the plastic surgeons with provision of joint clinics and side by side working in dermatology with them. She was instrumental in creating a specialist nurse post in skin cancer. She also served as the MDT lead from 2000-2011 and led 3 peer reviews during this time.

The department was moved from the Hull Royal infirmary site to a semi acute hospital site, Castle Hill Hospital (CHH) in East Riding of Yorkshire in December 2015. This accommodation was more spacious than Hull Royal Infirmary and also included a seminar room, a large library, a clinical trials room and a day treatment room together with specific clinical areas. A separate dermatology surgery suite was also provided to enhance the skin cancer work. The improvement in capacity enabled day case treatment to be carried out for patients attended after work (Fig. 5).



Fig.5  
Day case treatment

The department at CHH was on ground level which made access easy for disabled patients and staff were very happy to work in this new environment (Figs.6 and 7).



Fig.6. Dept. at CHH



Fig.7. The Team

From 2018 the dermatology department introduced tele-triage to prioritize referrals or give appropriate advice to GPs prior to referral.

The department hosted 2 NEDS meetings in 2011 and 2015, one of these during Dr. Walton's year as President of NEDS (2014-2015).

Research and teaching, undergraduates from Hull York Medical School (HYMS), GP trainees, foundation doctors and Physician Associates were also priorities in the department. Dr. Walton continued the tradition of the GP/Nurse/Physician Associates' skin club, originally started by Dr. EH Wyatt. In 2021, she still organizes and chairs the club. There are 4 meetings per year, where interactive discussions take place with GPs and other health practitioners, after an evening lecture by invited speakers on topics suggested by the members of the skin club (approximately 50).

Despite being single handed in a busy clinical job, Dr. Walton developed a research portfolio for Hull. She became a member of the UK Dermatology Clinical Trials Network (UKDCTN) and received enormous support to develop as a researcher and progress in her field, by Professor Hywel Williams, Professor of Dermato-Epidemiology and Co-Director, Centre of Evidence-Based Dermatology and his team at Nottingham University. Professor Hywel Williams, who has contributed greatly to evidence based dermatology, was an inspiration to all the department.

Dr. S Sudhakaran, a GPwSI who also provided 2 sessions as a specialty doctor in the department, was awarded the UKDCTN training fellowship in 2019 for 3 years. This helped her progress and in 2021 she is applying to become a dermatologist on the CESR route. She is a co-author on a book, 'Treatment of Skin Diseases. A Practical Guide' for GPs and allied health professionals. Its illustrations cover skin problems in people with white skin and those with skin of colour.

Dr. Walton served on several research committees, UKDCTN, UKTREND, the BADBIR Data Analysis Working Group, UKDCTN prioritization panel and chair of the Safety Monitoring Committee of the 'Spironolactone in Female Acne Trial'.

The department was funded for a full time NIHR research nurse until the current COVID pandemic led to early retirement.

The department received the following recognition for research activity:

2013: Dr. Walton was invited to join the publication boards of BADBIR (Biologics Intervention Register) Study, STOPGAP (Pyoderma Gangrenosum) Study and Acne Genetics study due to high recruitment figures

2013: Dr. Walton was awarded the Acne Genetic Study top recruiter's award  
2012: STOPGAP Principal Investigator and Recruitment team awards

2011: British Association of Dermatologists Biologics Intervention Register (BADBIR) Investigator Award (awarded by the British Association of Dermatologists Scientific committee to Dr. Walton).

Dr. Walton held regular meetings with the research nurse and the research patients which helped with recruitment figures (Fig.8).



Fig.8. Research meeting with staff and patients

She shared her recruitment success with the BAD membership by publishing 'top 6 tips in recruiting' in the BAD newsletter (S Walton. Recruitment into Clinical Trials: Top 6 Tips. The British Association of Dermatologists Newsletter.15 (3), 2012).

In 2012 she published Spot the difference. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed [www.hey.nhs.uk/herpc/guidelines/dermatologyAGuideToDermatology](http://www.hey.nhs.uk/herpc/guidelines/dermatologyAGuideToDermatology) in Primary Care. Available in the public domain on my website, primary care formulary and the Dermatology Dept. intranet site. This has greatly improved the quality of referrals and reduced unnecessary referrals into secondary care.

Her book, 'A Manual of Dermatology' covers skin problems in Asians as well as those with white skin and is very popular amongst nurses, trainees and GPs.

In 2016 Dr. Walton was awarded Honorary Professorship of HYMS and University of Hull in recognition for her service development, teaching and research. Since 2017, she has developed and has been facilitating 'the Dermatology Update course' run by the University for health professionals.

2020 ushered in a new way of working using digital technology during the COVID-19 pandemic. All clinics were run either using the telephone or video and surgery was reserved for the 2 week wait cancer clinics which continued offering face to face consultations. All dermatology research activity was suspended to allow for staff to be deployed to COVID wards and continue with COVID related research.

As much as Dr. Walton would like to end on a note of optimism she worries about the future of the Dermatology Department in Hull.

Professor Shernaz Walton  
Sept. 2020.