**In a war zone against an invisible army: A senior doctor’s insight into life on the NHS frontline**

Dr Govindan Raghuraman, Deputy Medical Director at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King’s Lynn, is part of the incredible team on the NHS frontline fighting coronavirus day and night.

Reflecting on the past few weeks of the COVID-19 outbreak, he said: “Firstly, can I start by offering my sincere condolences to the bereaved families.

“I have been humbled and amazed at the enthusiasm, engagement and willingness from our staff across all areas to go above and beyond. Our patient focus has never been greater.

“The work of many departments across the Trust has become more intense and more crucial than ever – I want to applaud our support services working behind the scenes as well as our clinical and admin teams.”

Other areas of the QEH are seeing the effects of Coronavirus on their workload.

Dr Raghuraman continues: “We have seen a significant decrease in the amount of attendances to our Emergency Department since social distancing guidelines have been put into place. This drop in attendances means we can spend more time giving exceptional care to those who really need it. Furthermore, we have been able to redirect our resources to other areas to fight coronavirus, while still continuing to care for emergency patients and those who are seriously ill.

“Other benefits we have noticed from social distancing include reducing the amount of follow-ups required in our outpatients department and the recent implementation of video consultations.

“Coronavirus is changing the way the hospital is functioning – we are constantly adapting and responding to daily changes.”

Dr Raghuraman explains that it is not just the hospital feeling the force of COVID-19.

“Overall community health care has improved and people are using the appropriate routes before attending hospital, such as pharmacies, NHS online advice or NHS 111. Every single person here at the QEH and across the NHS and wider healthcare community is being affected by this. It’s like going into a war zone against an invisible army.”

The Deputy Medical Director is appealing to the local community to continue to use NHS system as efficiently as possible. He said: “I hope that the public will continue to take this pandemic seriously, and further still, continue to only attend hospitals if absolutely necessary now and beyond coronavirus.”