# Press Release | 26 June 2024

**QEH nurse retires after 56 years of caring for patients**

This Friday (28 June) Betty Ward, staff nurse in QEH Day Surgery Unit, will hang up her uniform after dedicating more than 56 years of her life to nursing.

Betty, age 74, started her career when she was just 18 years old. She held her first nursing role in Newmarket General Hospital and came to The QEH as bank nurse in 1998.

The grandmother of three is now a key member of the Arthur Levin Day Surgery Unit where she has worked as a registered nurse looking after patients both before and after surgery for more than 20 years.

She has also held nursing roles in The Princess of Wales Hospital in Ely, West Suffolk Hospital, GP practices and within a prison.

Betty has many career highlights including meeting The late Queen when she officially opened the Day Surgery Unit in 1999 and working with patients and their families with Huntingdon’s disease (an inherited condition that damages nerve cells in the brain) at the time the gene was officially recognised in 1993.

Betty, who lives near Wisbech, said: “Nursing, especially orthopaedic nursing, has always been my love. I wanted to be a nurse since the age of five. I would regularly tell people that was what I was going to do and here I am nearly 70 years later doing just that.

“I love being with people, patients and staff. Deciding it is time to retire has been really tough. I will really miss being here, I have truly loved working at QEH. The team are really special and make coming to work each day so enjoyable.”

Carrie Willson, junior sister in QEH’s Day Surgery Unit, said: “Betty is an amazing nurse and has been an integral member of our Day Surgery team. She has imparted her knowledge which she has gained over her years’ experience to many of us. She is going to be sorely missed but we all wish her the best for her retirement.”

Alice Webster, CEO at QEH said; “A huge heartfelt thank you to Betty for her unwavering commitment to the thousands of patients she has nursed throughout her career. More than 56 years of nursing is an incredible achievement and not one we see often. Thank you for all you have done for our patients. I hope that you have a restful retirement with your family.”

Betty will be enjoying her retirement spending her time playing golf with her friends, with her husband Geoff, daughter Claire, step-daughter Louise and three grandchildren.

**Ends. Notes to editors;** For media enquires only, please contact Communications Team, [media.enquiries@qehkl.nhs.uk](mailto:media.enquiries@qehkl.nhs.uk) or 01553 613216. For all other enquiries, please contact QEH Switchboard on 01553 613613.