

Date: 6 November 2012

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Media Release

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Successful walking aids amnesty

Staff at the Royal United Hospital are thanking the public for supporting their recent plea for the return of any walking aids which are no longer required.

Nearly 250 crutches, walking frames and sticks have been recovered over the last few months, recouping nearly £4,000 in costs for the hospital.

Maggie Depledge, Therapies Manager at the RUH, said: "Last year we spent £29,000 on walking aids to support patient care in both the Emergency Department and Orthopaedic Outpatients, and many of them are not returned.

"However, thanks to a successful public appeal, and the enthusiasm and commitment of staff in the hospital and in the community, many of our walking aids have been returned, helping us to save money and reduce waste."

The Trust has been asking patients who attend the Emergency Department to sign for the loan of walking aids needed for short term use. The form asks them to return the walking aids within a 12 week period, unless they are required for long-term use, in which case this requirement is recorded. If the walking aids are not returned within that time, an invoice will be issued for £35, which will cover the costs incurred in replacing them as well as administration costs.

Maggie adds: "Encouragingly it looks like the public are responding to our pleas and returning their aids before we need to invoice them.

"We are very grateful to local press and radio for helping us publicise this initiative, which has clearly contributed to its success.

"Some of the walking aids have been returned directly to the hospital and others have been recovered by our community equipment providers in Bath and North East Somerset and Wiltshire.

"The Friends of the RUH have also been integral to this success. The volunteers are helping to free up therapy staff time, by volunteering to clean and refurbish all the walking aids that have been returned.

"We are really delighted with the support we've received so far and we hope that the public will continue to behave responsibly and return any hospital property they have on temporary loan, which is no longer required."

Ends

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Healthcare you can Trust

Caption:

l to r: Volunteer Roger Thorne, Receptionist Helen Dowler, Physiotherapy Assistant Helen Davies, Administrator Liz Townsend, and volunteers Gerald Matthews and Roy Chaplin who have all been involved in recovering and refurbishing walking aids

Caption

The wrong kind of recycling