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Communications Department

Tel: 01225 82 5849/5799/6230

Media Release

RUHcommunications@nhs.net

www.ruh.nhs.uk

New Support Group for Gynae Cancer Patients

A keep-fit instructor and two former patients have set up a support group to help women who are being treated for gynaecological cancer at the Royal United Hospital Bath.

Keep-fit instructor Maureen Conroy raised over £1,000, which has been used to set up the support group, lead by former patients Anne Hollas and Katharine Tylko-Hill. The trio has worked closely with Tracy Langton, a Macmillan Cancer Information Specialist at the hospital and Gynaecology Nurse Specialists, Tracie Miles and Jane Dale.

Tracy says: "The support group came about through a chance conversation at a keep-fit class. Ann Hollas had been talking to Maureen Conroy about her experience of having womb cancer and the two of them approached us to see how best some fundraising might help women who have had gynaecological cancer.

"We knew that a support group would be invaluable, and with additional help from a start-up grant from Macmillan Cancer Support, Ann and Katherine now run a support group that meets locally once a month. The emphasis is on support, but they plan to help with awareness campaigns too."

Maureen, who has been running exercise classes in Bath for over 40 years, is an inveterate fundraiser and, with the help of her wonderful group of keep-fit ladies, she raised funds by organising such things as raffles and bring-and-buy sales.

"Maureen told me that she has met women who have suffered from gynaecological cancer, but that it wasn't something that was openly talked about, so setting up a support group seemed a really helpful thing to do.

"Already our patients are telling us how this group fulfils a previously unmet need for companionship amongst them, especially after their intense treatment and the continuation of their journey in the years of follow-up care.

"We know that Cancer survivorship is an area that needs continued service development and support and so we are delighted that this patient-led service, assisted by Macmillan Cancer Support, is proving to be such a success. Long may it continue."

Ends

Notes to Editors:

The Gynae Cancer Support Group meets on the first Wednesday of every month at The Boathouse, Newbridge, Bath, from 10am until 12noon.