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Media Release

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Capturing Child Voice at the RUH

Children's therapists at the Royal United Hospital celebrated receiving a Bronze Award from the Children's Society, for listening to children and young people and capturing their voice.

The Children's Society Award is about enabling children and young people to have a say about how they feel they were listened to by therapists in the delivery of their care. It is about celebrating good practice, and ensuring that children and young people are able to contribute to decision-making that affects them in a way that is appropriate to their age and understanding.

Head of Children's Therapies Hester Rogers said: "We often ask parents how we perform in looking after their child but seldom ask the child. As a team we decided we needed to know what children and young people feel about our care and understanding of them as a person.

"With the help of the Patient Experience team at the hospital, we added a Care Measure questionnaire onto an Ipad and made it age appropriate for three age ranges; under seven, 8-11 and 12-18 years.

"We sought consent for the children to take part in an audit and all the comments were anonymous. This was uploaded directly onto the hospital's feedback system; Meridian. 60 children and young people took part over a period of eight weeks and the results were very positive; ranging from good to excellent."

Sonia Mainstone-Cotton from the Children's Society said: "It has been a real pleasure to see this very simple idea put into place and work. The therapists are committed to hearing from children how they feel about the service they receive. Historically it has been a challenge within the health service to hear children's views; the therapist team has proved this does not need to be difficult, and introduced and adapted ways to make sure they are doing. I am thrilled to award them with the Bronze Children's Rights Charter."

Hester adds: "A key requirement of the charter is making sure that children and young people are listened to, are given the opportunity to make choices where possible and that their ideas and views are respected. We are honoured to think that, in our everyday work, we have been putting into practice The Children's Society Charter Award."

Ends

Photo: Right to left: Physiotherapist Grace O'Sullivan, Director of Nursing Helen Blanchard, Sonia Mainstone-Cotton, Head of Children's Therapies Hester Rogers and Specialist Paediatric Orthopaedic Therapist Emily Graham

