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**Issued: 6<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

## **RUH Professor wins Great Briton 2008**

**A surgeon at the Royal United Hospital, Bath, has been voted one of the Great Britons of 2008.**

Last November Professor Martin Birchall worked with doctors in Barcelona to create and transplant the first whole organ to be grown from a patients own stem cells.

For Claudia Castillo, the 30-year-old mother of two whose windpipe was replaced with the laboratory grown tissue, it meant regaining the ability to read stories to her children and enjoying long walks in the park.

Professor Birchall's award is even more impressive considering the candidates in the science and technology category last year, which included the team behind the Large Hadron Collider.

The Daily Telegraph, whose expert panel nominates men and women who have excelled in every field from politics to science and technology for their annual awards, said Professor Birchall "has heralded a new era in medical science."

Medical Director of the RUH, John Waldron, said "We're all extremely proud of Martin's achievements and his contribution to the RUH has been invaluable. To be honoured in this way demonstrates the importance of the work that Martin and other groundbreaking surgeons in the UK are involved with. We really are at the forefront of medical science, developing world class procedures that will improve patient care immeasurably."

Professor Birchall is to take up the position of Professor of Laryngology at Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital in London and is also chair of Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) surgery at the University of Bristol. He leads the largest ENT research group in the UK (the Laryngeal Research Group), which is focusing on understanding the immune system of the throat with the aim of developing newer and better treatments for throat diseases.

**ENDS**

## Notes for editors

- Professor Martin Birchall is currently out of the country but can be contacted from Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January for further comment. Please contact Rachel in the Communications Team at the RUH on 01225 826230
- Runners up in the science and technology category were Dr Lyn Evans, project leader for the Large Hadron Collider at CERN (European Organisation for Nuclear Research) and Dr Tom Pike and Dr David Catling, two British scientists who played key roles in Nasa's Phoenix mission to Mars.
- Martin Birchall is Professor of ENT at the Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Trust and The University of Bristol. He grew up in Lancashire, and qualified in Medical Sciences and Medicine from Jesus College Cambridge, qualifying with Honours. After training in ENT Surgery at St.Mary's Hospital, London and the Royal National Throat Nose and Ear Hospital, London, and a higher degree in Clinical Pharmacology from the Royal Postgraduate Medical School, London, he obtained higher training in Head and Neck Surgery in Brisbane, Australia.
- On returning to the UK, Martin worked as Senior Lecturer to Professor John Farndon at the University of Bristol, before taking a Chair in Head and Neck Surgery at the University of Liverpool. In 2005, he was appointed to the Chair of ENT in Bristol.