RUH

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NHS Trust

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Media Release

RUH attracting scientists of the future

The work of a design engineer based in the Royal United Hospital features in a new book which celebrates pioneering healthcare scientists within the NHS.

Simon Halsey - a design engineer working for Bath Institute of Medical Engineering (BIME) - based in the Royal United Hospital - appears in *Extraordinary You - Science in Healthcare*, which profiles and showcases the work of 100 other leading healthcare scientists working in the NHS.

Simon was among a select few to be invited to Downing Street to celebrate his contribution to the NHS. He says: “I was delighted to represent the work design engineers are doing within the NHS. Scientists have a huge impact on improving healthcare and we should be encouraging students to think about a scientific career in the health service.

“*Extraordinary You* will be sitting on tables in schools and libraries and careers offices and I hope that some of the projects featured in it will capture the imagination and perhaps motivate someone to think ‘I want to do that’.”

Design engineers help provide solutions to challenging problems and a project that has given Simon great satisfaction - and which was featured in the book - has been designing a paediatric wheelchair called Wizzybug, which children as young as 12 months can control: “There’s growing evidence that independent mobility is key to a child’s development in early years. But in the past, pre-school children have had very limited access to mobility devices because of the problems they had in controlling them. Wizzybug has all the technical features and has been specially designed to look like a toy. The parents and the children see it as a positive step towards independence and not an ugly wheelchair, making Wizzybugs a big hit around the country.”

Simon’s degree was in mechanical engineering, he then completed a research masters and he worked in industrial engineering. This didn’t give him the job satisfaction he craved, so he rethought his career and joined BIME: “This job allows me to see a whole engineering project through to completion and also involves people - I really enjoy what I do.

“It was quite an honour to be invited to Downing Street to meet Professor Sue Hill OBE, Chief Scientific Officer for the Department of Health and to have an opportunity to talk to other colleagues in the field. I hope the book will encourage more scientists to join the health service.”

Ends

Notes to Editors:
The Bath Institute of Medical Engineering is based in the RUH and works in partnership with the RUH research and innovation leads. BIME is the main point of contact for RUH staff who have ideas on new applications of technology, new medical devices or instruments, or new methods or models of service delivery. Visit our website www.bime.org.uk