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Media Release

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RUH specialist clinic keeps dancers on their feet

From 12 September, the RUH Sports Injury Clinic will be extending its service to offer specialist dance injury appointments, thanks to funding from the Dance Again Foundation.

Whilst the RUH Sports Injury Clinic has always dealt with dance injuries, many dancers from across the South West in need of specialist treatment for an injury would previously have been referred to London. By offering specialist treatment here at the RUH, local dancers will no longer have to travel to the capital to get the same level of expert care.

The new service at the RUH will help create a 'South West Hub' for dance treatment and rehabilitation. It builds upon a successful model established by the National Institute of Dance Medicine and Science (NIDMS) and Dance UK two years ago. The first NHS dance injury clinic was set up at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, London and a second clinic was launched last year at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham, to help meet the high demand for the specialist service.

Helen Laws, NIDMS Manager, said: "The support from the Dance Again Foundation to establish this new clinic at the Royal United Hospital in Bath is invaluable. The clinic will be warmly welcomed by dancers in the region and will help ensure dancers have access to the timely specialist healthcare they need in order to keep working."

Funding from the Dance Again Foundation – founded by Bath couple Celia and Dr Julian Widdowson – will cover the services of a specialist dance injury physiotherapist and will enable a six-month pilot of the dance injury service, with a view of the service continuing thereafter.

Dr Julian Widdowson, who has a specialist interest in dance injuries and is part of the dance injury clinic team, explains: "Dancers' careerspans can be notoriously short. So it is important that they receive prompt specialist treatment when they suffer an injury if they are to continue making the most of their potential.

"By becoming the South West hub of a network of regional dance injury services, the Royal United Hospital hopes to provide local dancers with the same excellent quality treatment on their doorstep – and the Dance Again Foundation is proud to be able to support the service."

If you would like to support the work of the Dance Again Foundation, tickets are still on sale for their Charity Gala, which is to be held at Sadler's Wells in London on Sunday 28 September. A stellar line up of guest performers includes The Royal Ballet Company, English National Ballet, performers from the popular musical STOMP, plus a special performance by local dancer Jack Widdowson. A number of coaches are going directly to the event from Bath. To book tickets and to find out more about the work of the charity, visit www.danceagain.org

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Notes to the Editor:

- The Dance Again Foundation was founded in 2011 by Bath couple Celia and Dr Julian Widdowson. The charity works towards the goal of giving dancers in the UK better access to dance injury treatment and rehabilitation. Julian and his wife Celia have both seen first-hand the difference a dedicated team of specialists can make in supporting a dancer back to fitness. Their son, Jack Widdowson was told he would never dance again following an attack that left him with multiple serious injuries. But with determination and skilled professional intervention, Jack is now enjoying a successful professional career.
- The National Institute of Dance Medicine and Science (NIDMS) and Dance UK are working to establish a network of regional dance injury clinics with the kind financial support of the Jerwood Charitable Foundation and Harlequin Floors.