

Date: 02.02.17

Communications Department
Tel: 01225 826282 / 826230

Ruh-tr.communicationteam@nhs.net
www.ruh.nhs.uk

Media Release

The RUH helps to raise awareness of 'Act FAST' stroke campaign

In support of Public Health England's relaunch of the Act FAST stroke campaign which starts today, The Royal United Hospitals, Bath NHS Foundation Trust is reminding people of the key symptoms of stroke and the importance of calling 999 immediately if they notice any single one of the symptoms themselves or in others.

The 'Act F.A.S.T.' (Face, Arms, Speech, Time) acronym is easy to remember and helps people recognise if someone else is having a stroke:

- Face – has their face fallen on one side? Can they smile?
- Arms – can they raise both arms and keep them there?
- Speech – is their speech slurred?
- Time to call 999

Backing the campaign, Dr Louise Shaw, Consultant Stroke Physician at the RUH said:

"The signs of a stroke are not always immediately recognised by people, which is why knowing the Act F.A.S.T signs could make a tremendous difference to someone who unfortunately suffers one.

"The sooner specialist emergency intervention can be provided the better, because the road to recovery after a stroke can be a long and difficult one, but emergency treatment can significantly change the long term outcome."

Phil Walker, 40, from Winsley was treated at the RUH after suffering from a stroke in 2010, he said:

"I began to lose use of my arms, legs, speech, and without the speed of care I'm sure I would not be here. It's important that everyone recognises and react at the signs of stroke. Every second really does count."

For information about what a stroke is and how to recognise the signs visit: www.nhs.uk/actfast or to find out what support is available in your local area visit: www.stroke.org.uk/finding-support.

Ends

Act FAST leaflet

Act FAST easy-to-read leaflet

Notes to editor:

- A stroke is a brain attack that happens when the blood supply to the brain is cut off, caused by a clot or bleeding in the brain. There are around 100,000 strokes in the UK every year and it is the leading cause of severe adult disability. There are over 1.2 million people in the UK living with the effects of stroke. A mini stroke is also known as a transient ischemic attack (TIA). It is caused by a temporary disruption in the blood supply to part of the brain.
- 1 in 4 people would fail to call 999 when witnessing first signs of a stroke
- While the majority of people (93%) would call 999 if they saw a stroke, a quarter (24%) of people incorrectly think that they need to see two or more signs of a stroke before making the call
- New Act FAST campaign films feature stroke survivor radio DJ Mark Goodier and TV presenter Anna Richardson, encouraging local residents to call 999 as soon as they notice any one of the three key signs: Face, Arms, Speech.
- The Act FAST campaign will run nationally from 2 February to 31 March 2017. The campaign includes advertising on TV, radio, bus interior posters and digital, supporting PR and a social media drive. Website: www.nhs.uk/actfast Twitter: @ActFAST999, Facebook: www.facebook.com/ActFAST999
- Additional symptoms of stroke and mini stroke can include:
 - Sudden loss of vision or blurred vision in one or both eyes
 - Sudden weakness or numbness on one side of the body
 - Sudden memory loss or confusion
 - Sudden dizziness, unsteadiness or a sudden fall, especially with any of the other symptoms
- About Phil Walker: after being discharged from the RUH, Phil set up the first Wildfit course in Trowbridge Park in Wiltshire as he found the most effective treatment in his recovery was simply being active outdoors. The course is open and free to the public to use.
- The charity, Stroke Association, has been working with Public Health England and endorses the message that people need to make the call when they recognise any of the symptoms of a stroke. More information can be found at www.stroke.org.uk