



Press Release
Date: 08.01.18

RUH Patients are face of Therapies Matter campaign

Real life stories from patients are the focus of a new campaign by The Forever Friends Appeal to help reach its £2 million fundraising target for the RNHRD and Therapies Centre being built at the Royal United Hospitals, (RUH) Bath.

The Appeal's '*Therapies Matter*' campaign features people of all ages and backgrounds who have received therapy to aid their recovery, or for some to learn how to manage their long-term condition. Using powerful, emotive words each patient's story is now on display in the hospital to captivate the public's interest in supporting the Appeal.

Tim Hobbs, Head of Fundraising, The Forever Friends Appeal said:

"We've created a campaign to highlight how RUH patients have benefited from therapies and we've got some remarkable stories to share. For many patients, their lives have been completely turned around from having intensive treatment such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, hydrotherapy and others. That's why it's so important the RUH has this new innovative, state-of-the-art RNHRD and Therapies Centre, so they can continue to provide the much-needed therapy services to the some 25,000 people who are treated each year.

"We've had many patients contact us to take part in our campaign, so throughout the year we will share their stories on our website and social media to highlight how therapies have helped them recover, achieve personal goals and get back to 'normal' life.

"I hope this campaign will resonate with the public and encourage those who can, to make a donation towards the RNHRD and Therapies Centre which is costing c£16m to build. Having benefactors Andrew and Christina Brownsword's pledge to match every pound donated up to £1m is fantastic and we would very much welcome help from the public to achieve our target of raising £2m."

Featuring in the '*Therapies Matter*' campaign is the Appeal's Ambassador, former rugby player, Ed Jackson who was told that he may not walk again after suffering a broken neck in a freak accident in April 2017. Ed received intensive physiotherapy as an inpatient at the RUH and visited Orthotics as an outpatient to help him walk again, he is making incredible progress. Ed said:

"As a spinal injury patient, I have learned just how important the environment is to wellbeing and recovery, having spent so much time lying down and staring at the ceiling, and unable to leave the hospital setting. Therapeutic environments, calming surroundings and mental stimulation are hugely beneficial.

"Staff at the RUH do an amazing job, and I believe that they should be supported by working in the right environments to help them to deliver the best level of care too. We need the public's support to help raise the funds needed to build this innovative and therapeutic new centre."

It's not just people from Bath who are taking part in the campaign, Nic Noble, from Warminster, a supporter of the RUH said:

"An MRI scan revealed that six of my vertebrae had collapsed and I was diagnosed with osteoporosis. I was referred to Dr Bhalla at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD, known

locally as 'The Min'). The staff were fantastic; Dr Bhalla, the Physiotherapists gave me the support I needed for my recovery. I believe that this new Centre will help so many more patients like me, it's a wonderful project that will provide a positive and nurturing environment for so many people in our community."

Gina Sargeant, Head of Therapies, the RUH said:

"We run a variety of inpatient and outpatient specialist services for patients, from those who have acute injuries through to teaching those who have a long-term condition how to self-manage. But, our current facilities for these services are out of date; therapies are dispersed across the hospital, on two different sites and do not complement or assist the hospital's aims for achieving the highest quality of clinical care.

"The whole ethos of a new RNHRD & Therapies Centre will bring all these services together and create a nurturing environment with dedicated specialist facilities for all our patients."

The RNHRD and Therapies Centre will house many of the rheumatology, therapies and pain management services that are currently located at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) and in the RUH. It has been designed in conjunction with patients, staff and architects, and will include a large hydrotherapy pool, a specialist gym and rehabilitation equipment, and a biologics treatment space to support treatment, recovery, wellbeing and the management of long-term conditions.

There are many ways people can help The Forever Friends Appeal reach their fundraising target including; texting RUHB10 to 70070 to donate £10, making a donation on the Appeal's website, www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk or by signing up to take part in one of the Appeal's walking, running or challenge events planned in 2018 and raise funds via sponsorship for the RNHRD and Therapies Centre.

For information about the RNHRD and Therapies Centre visit: www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk/rnhrd-therapies-centre.

Ends

For more information contact Rebecca Hedges, Marketing and Communications Officer on 01225 826282 or email: Rebecca.hedges@nhs.net

Notes to Editor:

About The Forever Friends Appeal

- The Forever Friends Appeal is the principal fundraising charity for the Royal United Hospitals, Bath. As well as fundraising for major campaigns, we raise funds for the hospital's wards and departments to pay for state-of-the-art medical equipment and facilities, research and innovations, staff training and the creation of welcoming and highly beneficial healing environments for our patients and their families. Each year we invest in projects that go above and beyond what the NHS can provide
- For more information about the Appeal visit: www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk

RNHRD & Therapies Centre

- The Forever Friends Appeal is raising a minimum of £2 million towards this £16 million project in association with the RNHRD Charitable Fund – with the Brownsword Charitable Foundation challenging the public to back the appeal by generously promising to match every pound donated up to the level of

£1 million. For more information about the RNHRD and Therapies Centre campaign visit:

www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk/rnhrd-therapies-centre

- The RNHRD and Therapies Centre will bring together the RUH's rheumatology, therapies and a number of pain management services which are currently provided at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases' (RNHRD) Mineral Water Hospital site – also known as The Min. The new RNHRD and Therapies Centre will be a purpose-built outpatient facility and will include a new hydrotherapy pool, a gym, a therapeutic garden and clinical areas to improve patient experience, providing the treatment, care and education for patients to recover from episodes of illness or injury, or to manage their long-term condition.
- See attached with this press release the first two patient stories. To read their stories in full visit: www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk

Therapies Matter Campaign

- Every week, a new patient story will be shared to highlight another type of therapy service. The story will be added to The Forever Friends Appeal website and the charity's social media profiles on Facebook and Twitter. Patients taking part in the campaign will also feature on posters which are on display in the RUH and RNHRD as well as the RUH's and charity's newsletters.

About Ed Jackson

- Ed is an English former professional rugby union player who played for a number of sides in England and Wales as a Number 8.
- Having fractured and dislocated some of his vertebrae and shattered the disc between them, his spinal cord was impacted and partially crushed, resulting in damage, swelling and spinal shock.
- Despite the severeness of his injury, Ed is making a positive recovery.