

Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability



**Our Year 2015**

# A little about the RHN

The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability has been helping people with complex disabilities for more than 160 years. Based in Putney, south west London, we are a centre of excellence in the assessment, care and rehabilitation of people with complex disabilities as a result of brain injury or neurological condition.

**W**hat make us different from other hospitals? It's the extra services that our fundraising allows us to provide, that enhances people's lives during their time here.

As well as the quality medical care and nursing rehabilitation the hospital provides, there are also fundraised services which help improve the quality of life of our patients. These range from practical services which help a person communicate better using technology or a bespoke wheelchair built to meet specific needs.

There are also services focused more on activities and enjoyment, including aqua therapy, art and music therapies or the range of activities run by Leisure and Families Services including weekly cinema and music sessions, sports and more. Or they may be about helping people get out and about, away from the hospital using our transport (provided by fundraisers) with nursing support.

What makes us unique as a specialist healthcare provider comes from our heart – we believe in improving the life of every person entrusted to our care wherever and whenever we



can, helping them continue to enjoy those things they did before, or to try new things. We believe in providing those additional therapies and tools which can maximise a person's opportunities for the best recovery possible for them.

These life-enhancing extras are only available through the kind and generous donations of those who support us.

“We believe in improving the life of every person entrusted to our care”



# A word from our Chief Executive and Chairman

We are both privileged to have joined the RHN in the last year as Chairman and Chief Executive. The privilege comes in many forms – to be part of a care journey for people and their families, to see people progress and to work with a dedicated and committed team who want nothing but the best for those entrusted to our care.

**T**hat privilege and challenge motivates us to do our best for our patients every day, ensuring we remain at the forefront of good medical and therapeutic practice and now, we are beginning a new phase of investment in our people and infrastructure to achieve these goals.

This past year has seen a number of successes and achievements for the RHN.

We have welcomed new people to help us meet our goals and said farewell to a number who have helped us achieve all we have to date. We have also secured the necessary fee increases for our specialist nursing home that we needed to cover the costs of providing their highly specialist care, helping to support the long-term future of the hospital.

Our research teams continue to work on groundbreaking projects aimed at helping people affected by neuro-disability in the long-term both within and outside of the RHN, while our educational programme has benefitted many working across the UK in this specialist field.

Our fundraising team met their challenging target and a number of new programmes and services have been introduced to directly benefit patients and improve their experience at the RHN.

There will always be work to do and we will enjoy sharing the challenge that lies ahead of us, knowing that we will continue to dedicate ourselves to the purpose of serving people and their families. It is the most important thing we can achieve.



Des Benjamin, Chairman



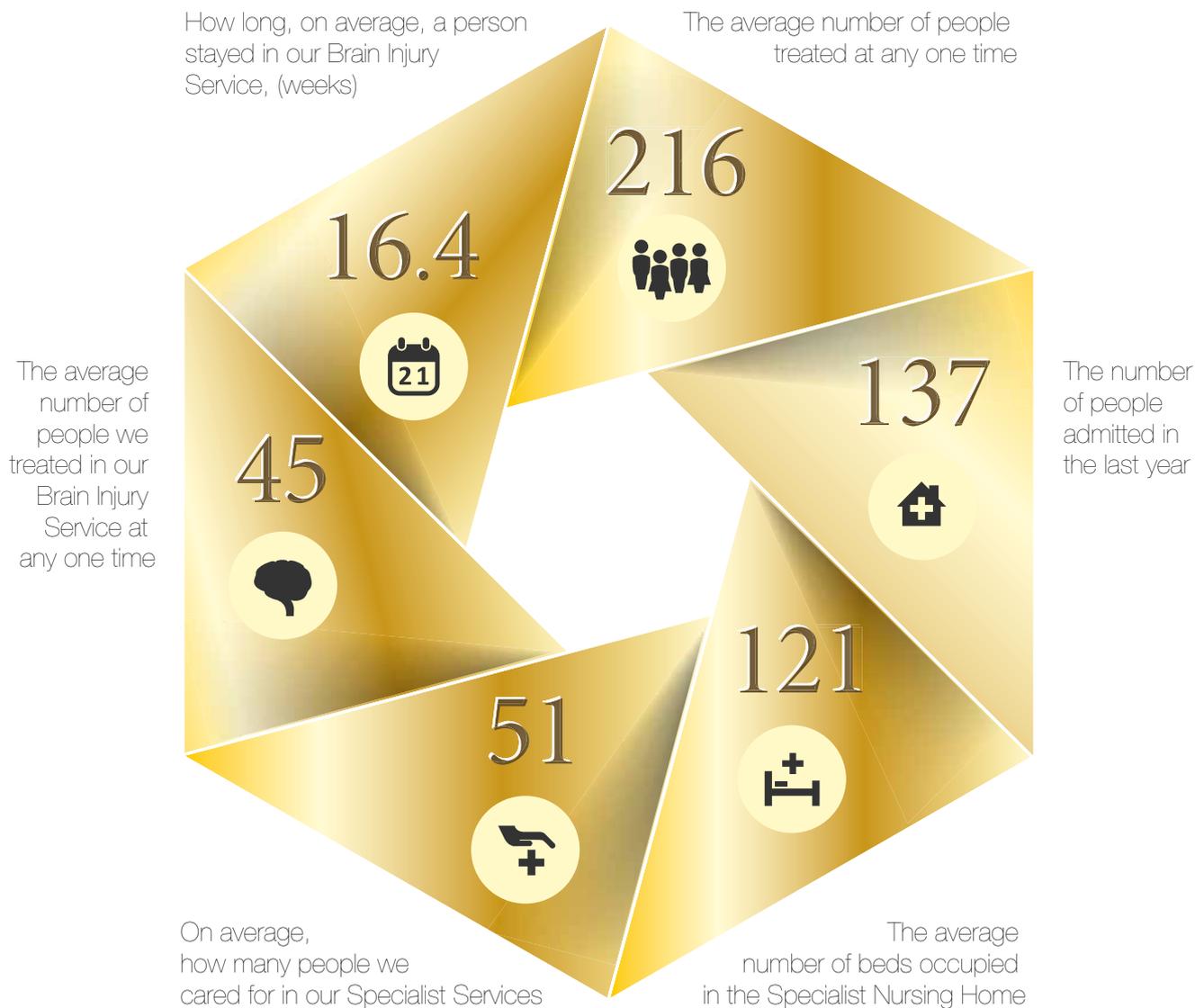
Paul Allen, Chief Executive

“We believe in providing those additional therapies and tools which can maximise a person's opportunities for the best recovery possible for them”



# Our year in numbers

Here at the RHN we measure our achievements in many different ways. Here are some examples:



What all of these numbers means is that the RHN is England's largest provider of specialist neuro-rehabilitation services for people with highly complex needs. We treated people from all over the UK.

# A thank you

The RHN is able to offer a range of extra therapies, activities and facilities thanks entirely to the generosity of our supporters.

To say a huge thank you, we invited more than 50 regular donors to the Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability where they were treated to an elegant afternoon tea in the De Lancey Lowe room. Not only to thank them for their ongoing support, but to showcase the intricacies of the work of the speech and language therapists and the catering team.

Speech and language therapist, Alice Howard, talked to our guests about how complex swallowing can be for people with a brain injury, and what strategies and techniques are used at the RHN to help them. She illustrated this work with the story of how the speech and language therapists helped a woman who was admitted to the RHN completely

unable to eat and drink, but after therapy is now able to dine with her family.

Our catering manager Mark Baker then explained to our guests how food is designed and prepared for people who have difficulty swallowing, and the challenges involved in making food for this group of people still look and taste appealing.

There was an opportunity to taste some of the special diets that the catering team produce every day, and guests were asked to be food detectives by identifying what the food was without the usual visual clues of texture and shape.

Senior Fundraising Manager, Isabel Barrett said, "This was our chance to



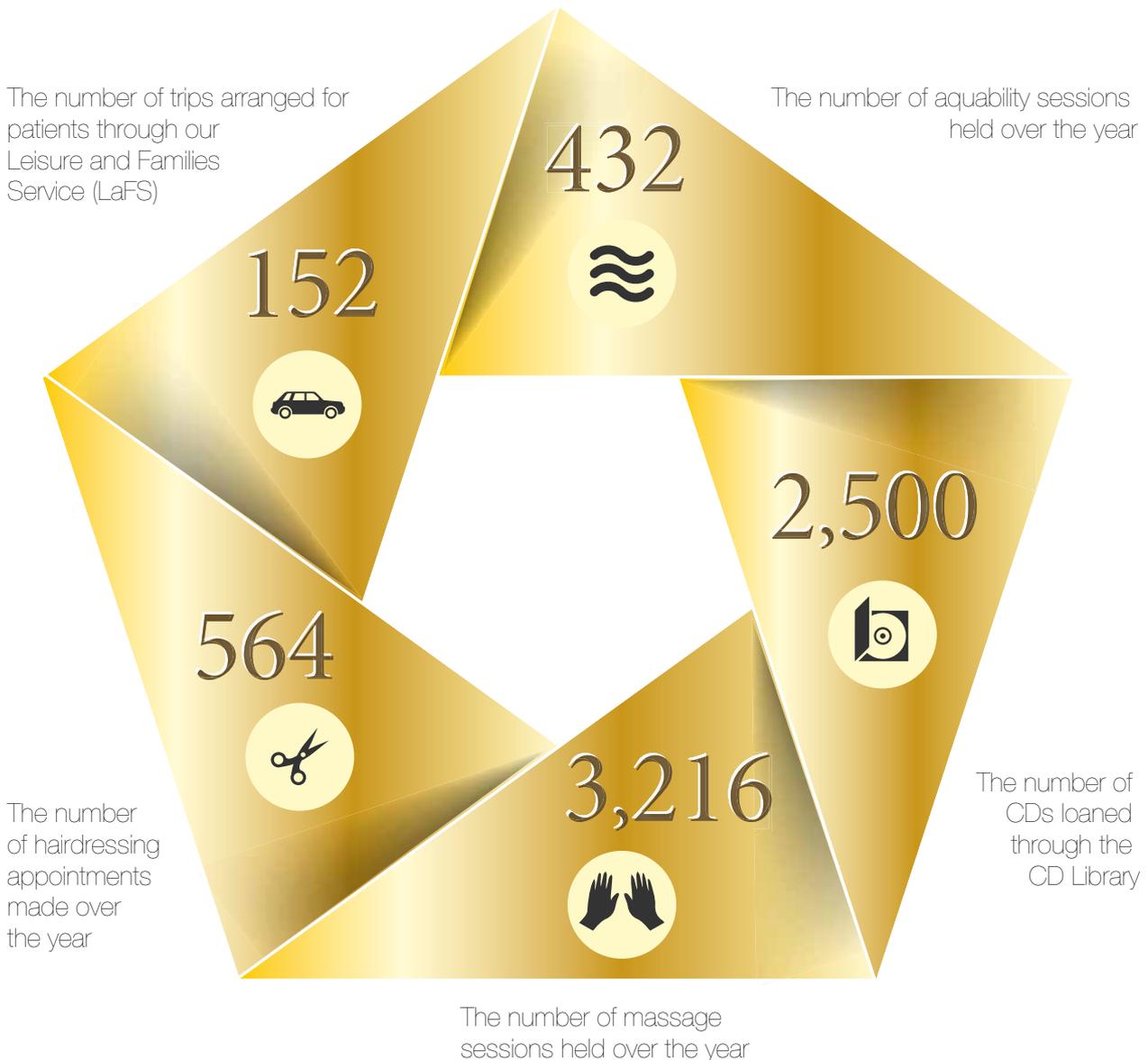
say a huge thank you to some of our most dedicated supporters – we couldn't do our work without them. We hope they found the day interesting and informative and that they saw just how much their ongoing support positively impacts so many people's lives."

“This was our chance to say a huge thank you to some of our most dedicated supporters”



# Supporting people – our year in numbers

People devote their time so generously to the RHN and their support makes a huge difference to those at the hospital.



Every day there are activities, sessions and interest groups for people to choose from, either individually or as part of a group.

# Stephen's story

Stephen Keable spent seven and a half months at the Royal Hospital for neuro-disability. He became a regular user of the art room – both as part of his one-to-one occupational therapy art sessions as well as art leisure groups as part of his wider rehabilitation programme.

The RHN has a purpose built, bright and spacious art room used by patients for group and individual sessions, for both rehabilitation and leisure. It provides facilities to support people's sometimes complex needs including height adjustable tables, adapted equipment, and a minimal distraction room.

Stephen had come to the hospital for rehabilitation following the onset of severe Guillain-Barre Syndrome some months earlier. He had gone to bed with a virus and woke up three months later to the news that he was paralysed from the neck down.

He was unable to blink. He needed to re-learn everything. At first he said he did not wish to participate in the art sessions. But he came back to the table, and he started to draw and create.

This wasn't just about enjoying an activity however, there were

occupational therapy goals from the art work – increasing upper limb coordination, trunk support and self-confidence.

From pencil sketches, Stephen quickly moved on to watercolour painting and mixed media work. He produced an elaborate landscape scene combining elements extracted from a number of source images, each recalling memories of his various travels and activities, revealing Stephen's adventurous nature and curiosity in the world.

Stephen enjoyed talking through his ideas, as well as producing visual products that people could see. 'Art inspires you and inspires other people,' he said. 'It's mood enhancing. I let my mind free during art. It pushes me to do things I wouldn't normally do. There's no judgement either, no right or wrong.'

At the same time, his dexterity was improving as he progressively used



smaller brushes and produced more detailed work with much straighter lines. He was also starting to walk to his art sessions with a mobility aid.

Stephen became increasingly interested in the work of others and in contributing to the hospital community. He had begun attending art leisure groups and instigated a project that would involve all the patients, staff and volunteers working together and having fun in a 'team effort'. The outcome of this project – a hanging mobile of an imaginary papier mache solar system, complete with night sky backdrop – was launched in the art room alongside an exhibition of Stephen's artworks produced during his rehabilitation. Stephen, who had initially been self-critical and reluctant to engage in art, hosted the exhibition, confidently showing off his and the other patients' work.

Stephen envisaged setting up an art studio when he returned back home. Before he left to go home he said: 'It's been emotional, like proper therapy. You brought a quiet, not-wanting-to-do-much Stephen out of his shell.'



# The charity – how your generosity helped us

This year we had an ambitious target to reach – £2.6m. And we're delighted to say that through the generosity of a range of supporters, we've been able to reach it. This amazing figure was raised through trusts and foundations, major donors, events, donor development and legacies.

**O**ur charitable status lets us provide those extra therapies and services for people ensuring they receive enhanced quality of life.

The donations helped us fund:

- Specially adapted computer therapy
- Specialist technology and communication aids
- Music Therapy
- Aquability pool sessions
- Our programme of research
- Art sessions
- Specially-adapted wheelchairs and mobility equipment
- Nurse escorts and transport for patient outings
- An extensive programme of on and off-site leisure activities
- Volunteer training
- In-house, multi-faith chapel services
- Gardening therapy
- Equipment including new beds and hoists
- Capital works including the refurbishment of Wolfson ward



# Sally's story

Sally is a keen gardener and always has been – it's in her blood. Her grandparents were market gardeners who used to supply fruit and veg to Buckingham Palace, and her daughter Elaine is now a professional gardener.

Sally fondly recalls her garden in Shepperton which she took great pride in tidying up and adapting in order to grow her own vegetables.

Sadly, as Sally's Huntington's disease progressed she began to fall over a lot and became less and less able to go out into her garden. She had to spend more time indoors and became increasingly depressed, losing much of her motivation.

However, since coming to the RHN, Sally is a part of the weekly Wolfson gardening group and loves to show off the garden which recently reopened after a refurbishment, that was possible due to fundraising. She proudly takes visitors on tours and details the wide variety of flowers that she has played a big part in growing.

Her daughter, Elaine, has also taken great pleasure from her enjoyment in the garden. "Ever since mum arrived at the RHN, she's changed from not really wanting to do anything,



to wanting to do something all the time, she's not able to stop! She now wants to push herself mentally and physically, she whisks you out to the garden, showing you around, remembering the things that she used to know. You can see that pushing herself in this way helps her confidence.

"The reality is that Huntington's is a cruel disease and can be difficult to come to terms with. Having the gardening takes our minds off that and allows us both to think about something else. We are able to just escape into the garden."

After a temporary closure, Wolfson's garden reopened this year. It now has raised trug beds to help people who use wheelchairs easily take part in planting and tending to their flowers, vegetables and fruit. It is truly a therapeutic space.



“Ever since mum arrived at the RHN, she's changed from not really wanting to do anything to wanting to do something all the time, she's not able to stop”

# The charity – some big achievements

Our fundraising team create a range of events throughout the year to help raise these vital and much-appreciated funds – some of our events have become annual and increasingly popular. We thank everyone for their ongoing support! Through the year we've enjoyed:

## **NIGHT OF THE STARS, FEBRUARY 2015**

This event was hosted at the RHN for the second year and welcomed some of the biggest stars from the bridge world to raise £18,000 for the hospital.

## **LONDON MARATHON, APRIL 2015**

With a team of 17 RHN runners, including our veteran VIP staff member, Lolo, running his 31st marathon, our incredible team raised £45,000.



## **DRAPERS GALA DINNER, THURSDAY 7 MAY 2015**

The RHN was extremely fortunate in being chosen by Mr Nick Bence-Trower, Master of the Worshipful Company of Drapers, as his charity of the year from July 2014 to July 2015. The Master's appeal alone raised a record-breaking £36,348, followed by a further £85,542 from a hugely successful Gala Dinner held in the stunning Drapers Livery Hall.

## **ROW HARD, JUNE 2015**

This is one of the RHN's flagship fundraising events. Held once again at London's City Hall, without charge, thanks to the generosity of London Assembly Member Mr Richard Tracey, Row Hard 2015 was another great success. Sponsored by Minster Law, we saw 26 teams go head-to-head on rowing machines to raise £23,000.



## **RHN FUN RUN, JULY 2015**

200 runners took to Wimbledon Common to support the RHN in our second Fun Run, sponsored by Robert Holmes, raising £7,000.

## **PRUDENTIAL RIDE 100, AUGUST 2015**

Arguably the most popular and challenging UK cycling event, the Prudential Ride100 race saw tens of thousands of participants taking to the roads of London and Surrey raising funds for great causes. The RHN had a fantastic team of ten riders, including several members of hospital staff, who together raised over £10,000.



## **CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT, DECEMBER 2015**

Featuring special guest Michael Ball, along with performances from The London Chorus, soprano Jocelyn Somerville and Putney High School. This event was generously sponsored by Nelsons and raised more than £10,000.

# Looking forward – the coming year

In 2016 we look forward to an exciting time. We've set a number of strategic objectives to help us meet our goals and provide the best possible services for people living with a complex neuro-disability.

**I**t is a year which will see the introduction of a new programme of capital investment. This includes helping us offer better facilities at the hospital including improved conference and teaching facilities for use both by staff, and those who come to the RHN as a centre of teaching on neuro-disability.

We'll be investing in a rolling programme of ward upgrades and reconfiguration, improving our kitchens and catering facilities and also hope to also start work on a social hub for patients, relatives and staff – all aimed at improving the experience of everyone at the RHN.

2016 is also a time when we'll be working with colleagues, people who use the RHN, their families and others to create a clear plan for the future of the RHN. This plan will look at the next five years and provide a solid foundation for the RHN to continue to grow from.

During the year we'll seek to further cement and improve clinical leadership, while investing in the quality and excellence of those who work here. We'll continue to strive to provide the best possible services for people with the most complex disabilities and neurological rehabilitation needs.

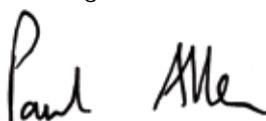
Research and education are also one of our strategic objectives for 2016 – this vital element of what the RHN offers allows us to share experience and expertise with others with the aim of improving the lives of those living with a neuro-disability.

We'll also have another ambitious fundraising target to help us carry out our capital projects, to continue to develop research and educational projects and to make sure we can offer all those things which others can't.

In 2016, we stick to our purpose, we improve our skills, we work hard for each other and our patients and we become a team of people even more

capable of high quality care. The RHN will be a beacon for all that is good in neuro-disability rehabilitation.

Here's to a successful and exciting 2016.



**Paul Allen**  
Chief Executive



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Registered Charity Number: 205907



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