



## Welcome from Paul, our CEO



Welcome to the latest RHN Community newsletter, with stories for everyone at the RHN, whether you're visiting, work here, or live here. We are extraordinarily busy at the moment preparing for the CQC inspection, but as part of this we've unearthed so many stories of the great work that is going on. The mock

inspection was really impressive, and staff took it very seriously. We were impressed by the warm welcome given on each ward, and we have improved our signing in procedures as a result. Since then, I have been going around the building regularly, visiting our exceptional wards and chatting to exceptional people. Special mention must go to Coombs ward who won our ward noticeboard competition – they clearly take huge pride in their ward. I was also impressed with the 'seeing the whole person' wall in the Jack Emerson Centre – these personal touches are what makes the RHN special. Congratulations to all staff for all your hard work in the lead up to the CQC inspection – let's show everyone how proud we are to be part of the RHN.

We've also heard about many other things going on at the RHN. Inside you'll read about patient Tarquin, who has been undergoing rehabilitation in our Brain Injury Service. We also meet and hear

from Michael, our new Medical Director, Shelly, our new Head of Patient Safety and Quality and Asi, our new Pastoral Support Worker. We also hear from Lauren, our new recruit in the art room, and find out what our patients and residents have been creating there recently.

There's lots going on at the RHN over the summer, including many fundraising events that we'd love you to take part in or support. We've got running, rowing and more. If that's not for you, how about a friend or family member? Or even just come along and cheer us on!

There are many plans in the pipeline for the upcoming months, including improvements to catering facilities and Drapers ward as well as a new therapy hub to improve facilities for staff, patients, residents and families at the hospital. I hope you enjoy reading about everything that's going on.

## New RHN film about patients

We are still looking for patients or residents for a film about their lives before their brain injury, and their lives now.

If you have any moving footage of your family member that they, and you, would be happy to be included in our film please contact Susan Patterson

**[spatterson@rhn.org.uk](mailto:spatterson@rhn.org.uk)** in the Communications team.

This can be from mobile phones, Super8, camcorders, absolutely any format. Your family member, or you on their behalf, would also have to be happy to be filmed now.

We are trying to make a film that honours our patients, and also shows how much life changes after a brain injury. We would use the film to raise awareness and for fundraising.



# The RHN free will service

This new free service is available to supporters of the RHN who would like to update a simple will or make a new one. This includes joint wills.

## How it works

- Register for the service by sending your name and address to Legacy Manager, Isabel Barrett. Email [ibarrett@rhn.org.uk](mailto:ibarrett@rhn.org.uk) or call **020 8780 4557**. Alternatively pick up a free legacy booklet from outside our new fundraising office and fill in the registration form on the back page. The booklet is shown below.



- Within a week you will receive a list of solicitors from your local area participating in the free wills service.
- You choose a solicitor and make an appointment directly with them. You then make or amend your will for free.

And it's as simple as that. The cost of this service is paid for by the RHN but at a significantly reduced fee. How you write your will is up to you, the solicitor will tell you what information they need and there is no obligation to include the RHN, although of course that would be lovely!

# New fundraising office opens

Our new fundraising office has now opened. You can't miss it, it's located on the ground floor at the end of the main corridor.

Charitable income is so important to the RHN, as it funds many of our services including Leisure and Family Services (LAFS), music therapy, nurse escorts as well as paying for many hoists, wheelchairs and beds. At the moment the fundraising team sit alongside the communications team, in offices above the Morris room, so we don't get many passing visitors! The new office will help the team engage more with families, volunteers and staff who would like to be more involved with our charitable work, or who would just like to find out more about what we do.



The office will be opened from 9-2pm Mondays to Thursdays. The team are currently looking for volunteers to help keep the office open on Mondays and Tuesdays – please let us know if you'd like to help out.

In the meantime do pop by to say hello. We look forward to seeing you!

# Michael Marrinan – our new Medical Director

Michael joined the RHN in September 2016 as interim Medical Director, a post that we're pleased to say he took on permanently in February 2017. He studied medicine at University College Dublin and qualified as a cardiothoracic surgeon at the Mayo Graduate School in Massachusetts. From 2009 to 2015 Michael was the Executive Medical Director at King's College Hospital, and just before coming to the RHN he was interim Medical Director at North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust.

Michael's hobbies are walking his dog, travel and reading history books. He enjoys watching House of Cards and listening to the music of James Taylor.

Michael says, "It is an absolute delight to be joining the RHN and it's great team. I was made welcome from the start back in September last year. There is a great desire to keep making our services better and better and I want to be part of that. It is clear that our patients and residents and their families are the focus of everything we do and that our values drive us to provide excellent care. It is also a privilege to work with people who in addition to all that, care for each other. Do stop me for a chat or visit me!"



# Patient Tarquin's designs on the RHN

**A patient on Drapers ward since October 2016, Tarquin has been undergoing rehabilitation in our Brain Injury Service and is heading home at the end of March. We caught up with Tarquin to find out more about him and see how he found his time at the RHN.**

"I live in Tunbridge Wells with my wife Martine and our two children. We're both teachers, and I used to teach Design and Technology myself. We make a good team – I always say that I build the house, but it's Martine that builds the home.

I've been at the RHN for around five months, recovering after experiencing a pulmonary embolism. I was having an operation to remove my bowel, but an unforeseen problem – in the form of a hole in my heart – meant that some blood got into my brain. The hospital has been fantastic – the way that sessions are tailored to specific levels of ability is the real strength of the RHN. I've particularly enjoyed hydrotherapy treatments, and when I return home I'm hoping to continue these at a local centre.

Given my profession, I've tried to help out at the hospital while I've been here. Lesley Mill has asked if I could help with a redesign of some patient spaces, and I've made a couple of recommendations already. For example, TVs in patient bedrooms could be mounted to the wall – wires are really easy to trip over for someone who's just learning to walk again!

What Martine said to me when the injury originally happened is that trying to get back on my feet was my new full-time occupation, and I've taken that literally. I've got through the hardest part but I suspect this is just beginning. There have been a few significant milestones – eating, going to the toilet, and eventually walking – but the final triumph will be actually going home!

Whenever I don't have a session on I'm always looking for things to do, be it art classes, walking around the hospital, or grabbing the occasional coffee in the Morris Room. The future's looking positive. I'm looking forward to going



home, and one day when my children are finished with their education, I'd like to move to Devon."

## Hospital improvement works



At January's Board meeting, improvement plans for Drapers ward were approved. This follows the earlier approval of improvements to the Brain Injury Service's therapy hub at the October Board meeting. The estimated cost of the combined works is £3 million.

These exciting plans will see the therapy hub and Drapers ward transformed into a state of the art facility. The new ward layout will provide more space per bed, relocate communal areas to the ward entrance and enable easy access to wash rooms for all patients on the ward. Crucially the new design will increase patient privacy and dignity and provide better facilities for practising therapeutic goals on the ward. The new therapy hub will increase capacity and provide areas that better meet the individual needs of patients.

These works are scheduled to take place between July and December 2017

and will be the first in a series of ward configurations and upgrades planned over the next five years.

### **Catering project – delivering excellence in catering**

We also recently invited family members of patients, as well as staff, to give their feedback on the upcoming catering project. The catering project will see our restaurant and café facilities merged to create a single social hub on the ground floor of the hospital where the whole of the hospital community can come together.

We're making it a priority to improve patients' and residents' food and experience of eating, so that every patient, whether they can feed themselves or not, gets a variety of freshly cooked meals every day. We hope these plans will boost the morale, wellbeing and quality of life for patients.

# A chat with Lauren – our new Art Technician

**Lauren has recently started working in the art room at the RHN, helping to provide our Occupational Therapy art service. RHN Community caught up with Lauren to find out how she's getting on...**

## What do you do at the RHN?

As part of the art team, we work alongside Occupational Therapy to run art sessions for our patients that work towards their rehabilitation goals. We aim to find meaningful activities for patient or residents to work towards, using different materials such as clay, paint, textiles or photography. Patient goals might be cognitive or physical; painting with a brush or rolling out clay can really help with upper limb strength and coordination, whereas sensory trays can be used to explore responses to different stimuli. We run one-to-one sessions, as well as groups that help patients and residents to socialise and work collaboratively. Most of these happen in the art room, though we also visit different wards and have just started a ward rotation for long-term care.

## Where did you work before?

Before I came here, I was working with Southampton Art Gallery, assisting with art workshops in hospital schools. I was also working in a community arts centre in Islington, running art workshops with isolated older people.

## What do you enjoy most about working here?

I'm enjoying working creatively with patients every day, I find it really exciting to work out creative ways of getting around the unique challenges posed by different levels of ability and finding meaningful projects for patients. The art room is such a light and inspiring place to work in too.



## How would you describe the RHN in one word?

I think I'd have to go with 'collaborative'. I've come into contact with so many different teams, and everyone's always happy to get involved and help with projects. Especially the Wheelchair and Postural Management Service – we love them!



## Here's some of the activities that the patients who visit the art room have been involved in lately...

### Photography

These photographs were taken on an outing to Richmond Park with a patient and Occupational Therapist Brendan. The patient is a filmmaker so it was a great opportunity for him to participate in an activity he was interested in. As the patient was interested in reflections, we experimented with mirrors which created some interesting results. As part of his rehab goal, the patient also showed a selection of his films to other patients in the Assembly room.



### Sanding

A patient from Drapers saw an old stool on the ward that he wanted to fix, so we brought it down to the art room and for the last couple of months he has been doing a great job at sanding it. The activity has been very useful in practicing his attention to a task, his ability to sequence a task and exercising movement while doing an activity he really enjoys.



### Wellesley group

We began February with Valentine's Day hearts to decorate the ward. With lots of different options, from painting, sticking and printing, the activity was good for choice making and working together on a collaborative project.

We also had a go at mark making in clay to create a selection of tiles. It was nice to try out different materials with the group, and for patients to glaze their tiles in the following session.

### Painting

These butterflies were made by a patient from Clifden and his daughter. The art sessions in the art room provide an opportunity for the patient and his daughter to spend time together in a meaningful way in a different environment.

### Long term care functional and sensory group

Our long term care functional block started this week and we were following on from our 'in the woods' theme. The group used plaster moulds of flowers, leaves and birds to roll and push clay into. The activity worked well for upper limb strength, choice making and social interaction within the group.



# The Putney Nurse programme

Nine registered nurses from across the RHN began the first 'Putney Nurse' in-house training programme on 28 February. The course will run one day a month over 12 months. The themes studied will equip the nurses with the skills, knowledge and competence to provide high quality evidence-based care to our patients and residents with complex neurological disabilities. These themes were chosen with nurses, allied health professionals, families and patients from the RHN, as well as six other specialist rehab units around the UK.

The themes include:

- assessment skills and management of patients with disorders of consciousness
- end of life/palliative care
- optimising function in people with acquired brain injury
- rehabilitation and goal setting
- medico-legal and ethical issues
- managing behaviours which challenge
- working with families

This programme is currently undergoing accreditation by the Royal College of Nursing.

The long term goal of this programme is to contribute to improving patient outcomes nationally by further developing the Putney Nurse programme. This will include making it available (with academic credit via a university) to nurses outside the RHN who work in this specialist sector. Nurses completing the programme will be known as 'Putney Nurses' after the RHN's location in Putney, south-west London.



## Our new Head of Patient Safety and Quality – Shelly Allen

### How long have you worked at the RHN?

I started working at the RHN on 27 February.

### Where were you working previously?

I trained as a physiotherapist and worked for several years with respiratory patients, but my most recent job was as an inspector for the Care Quality Commission. I was responsible for the day to day management of healthcare organisations in north west London and inspected various hospitals and clinics throughout London.

### What attracted you to the RHN?

The RHN has a fantastic clinical reputation as well as a reputation for being a friendly and supportive place to work. When I saw my new role advertised, I was excited by the opportunity to work in such a renowned organisation.

### What do you hope to achieve in the next three months?

In the next three months, I hope to develop a full understanding of my responsibilities and how they contribute to the work the RHN does. I also hope to support the RHN and its staff through a successful CQC inspection.

### What do you enjoy about working here so far?

I have been made to feel extremely welcome and it's great to be working in a hospital environment again.

### What do you like to do outside work?

I'm quite active and enjoy running, horse riding, skiing and playing netball. I love going to the theatre and try to see something at least once a month. I'm also a keen cook and have just finished a French cookery course.



### What's your favourite TV show?

Come Dine With Me is my guilty pleasure!

### What is something interesting people might not know about you?

I'm getting married in May this year, so much of my free time at the moment is spent planning and organising the day.

### Sum up the RHN in one word.

Inspiring.

# Meet Asi... RHN Pastoral Support Worker

Many of you will know Geoff, the RHN's much-loved Pastor, but in February Geoff was joined by a new member of our Chaplaincy team, Asi. A lay minister, Asi's previous role involved working with children and families at St Mary's church in Battersea.

Now she's taken on the role of Pastoral Support Worker at the RHN, offering advice and support to the families and loved ones of our patients. We caught up with her in the hospital chapel, during a break in her ward rounds.



## **Asi, how are you finding your new role at the RHN?**

I love it! I feel like I've been here forever. There is a real community spirit here, a feeling of being at home. It's also an enormous privilege to work at the RHN. I've only been here a month and I've already met so many lovely people. Right now I'm shadowing Geoff on his ward rounds and the people I've met have been so open and welcoming.

## **What does being a Pastoral Support Worker involve?**

Currently I work three days a week at the RHN. I am here to offer advice to patient families and loved ones, and to be a friend to them at a point in their lives when they may feel that no one can understand what they're going through. Having a loved one who is desperately ill can often be a very lonely experience, and it's my job to offer our families a chance to unburden themselves of all their concerns and worries.

## **Why did you decide to take on this role?**

When I saw the job description I felt that I ticked all the boxes and that this was a role I was being called to fulfil. I was so excited, particularly as I got to meet some family members as part of my interview process. Getting this job was literally the answer to a prayer.

## **What are you looking forward to most about your new role?**

I don't think of myself as an overtly religious person. I'm here to be a friend to everyone who needs me, regardless of their beliefs. So I'm most looking forward to the opportunity to get to know people and build new relationships with patients and their families.

## Chaplain's Corner

There is a kitchen poster which reads "Housework is something you do that nobody notices unless you don't do it". While the statement may cause us to smile, there is a truth behind it that applies to more than just housework. Because people notice our failures – our anger, impatience or critical spirit – but they never seem to notice when we get it right. And we can sometimes feel that nobody sees or appreciates all the hard work that we put in.

I recently came across a quote which challenged me: "One word of encouragement can be enough to spark

someone's motivation to continue with a difficult challenge." And it is so true that for all of us in the tasks and challenges we face within our community here, we achieve much more when we are encouraged and appreciated.

So there is a little habit that we can get into that will make a big difference to others. Let us intentionally send a word of encouragement or appreciation every day to one person within the RHN community. Whether that be valuing their hard work or acknowledging when someone has got it right or being ready with a word of thanks.





## Good news from the wards

We know so many positive things happen on our wards, so we asked the ward administrators to give us examples of positive feedback from families, or them really coming together to benefit our patients, residents and families.

### This lovely compliment was received from a family of a patient who was discharged from Devonshire.

“We were so happy and grateful for everything the team did for our loved one in providing him the best possible chance to improve his condition. We are nothing but full of appreciation for the excellent role played and the care provided. We were never in any doubt or worry about his state during his stay. The whole team had been very caring and supportive in every way, which gave us so much comfort knowing that he was in the best of hands.”

### From Sophia – Andrew Reed ward

“When lift nine was out of action recently, I assisted a relative’s partner off the ward using the small lift 10 as she wasn’t confident using it herself. The relative wanted to spend some time off ward and thanked me for my help. I have also had two comments about my great hospitality and service and two comments from relatives thanking me for making a lovely cup of tea!”

### From Megan – Hunter ward

“We’ve had a new patient come on to our ward recently, which doesn’t happen very often on Hunter. It was so lovely seeing all the staff being so welcoming and each of them individually sitting down and getting to know the patient and doing everything to help her get settled. Well done team!”

### Andrew Reed ward

Relatives commented on our ward ‘Humanisation Tree’ on Andrew Reed ward and liked the nice comments from staff. We encourage relatives and friends to add comments themselves.



## Recognising acts of kindness

Don’t forget, you can now recognise small acts of kindness, by collecting a form from the noticeboard outside the Morris Room, filling it in, and posting it in the box. It might be something small, but if it had a big impact on you, we want to hear about it.

Each month we will display all of the nominations, and share the great things that are happening here. Anyone can nominate – staff, relatives, patients or visitors, so please do spread the word. If you’re a staff member, forms are also available on Jostle.



# Fundraising events

## Virgin London Marathon 23 April

Please come along and join our cheer squad to see one of the world's greatest races in action while supporting our incredible RHN team of superhero runners! They have been tirelessly training towards the 26 mile challenge as well as working incredibly hard fundraising. We will be located on the north side of Tower Bridge which is the route's halfway point. You won't be able to miss our RHN banners and huge blue and yellow balloon arch. We hope to see you there!



## Annual Gala Dinner 11 May

Join us for a very special occasion held at the spectacular Goldsmiths' Company. Guests will be welcomed with a champagne reception, followed by a delicious three course meal and wine in the stunning Livery Hall. Tickets are available from £125.



## British 10k London Run 9 July

This fantastic 10k challenge is a fundraising and sightseeing event rolled into one! The scenic course takes you by Trafalgar Square, the Embankment, Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament, all while being cheered on by the huge London crowds. Sign up with us for just £25. The suggested fundraising target is £250.

## Row Hard 12 July

Join the most competitive event in our calendar for an indoor relay-rowing race. Sign up as a team of four and take on the 2,000 metre challenge against 120 others atop City Hall, central London. Food and drink will be provided and there will be prizes to be won. Bring along your noisiest cheering supporters and don't forget your fancy dress (if you feel like it!).



## Ride100 30 July

Grab one of our guaranteed places and join 26,000 cyclists to take on 100 miles on the Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100! Starting at the Queen Elizabeth II Olympic Park, you'll cycle through central London on closed roads and take in the sights of the capital before heading out to the beautiful Surrey countryside. Join team RHN for a £50 registration fee with a fundraising target of £500.



## Feel good shopping

Fundraise while shopping with your favourite retailers – 100% free! In a few simple steps we can all raise extra money for the RHN while online shopping, whether for car insurance, food shopping, on eBay, John Lewis or Amazon. The list is endless with over 3,000 shops and sites to choose from.

**Simply visit the RHN page here and follow these five easy steps below:**

1. Sign yourself up to create an account.
2. At the last stage of signing up, when asked to click to receive a donation reminder, please click on 'no thanks' or you will be taken to a blocked page (only if you're using an RHN computer).
3. Any time you want to buy something online go to [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk) first.
4. Search for the shop or site and you will be directed there to shop as normal.
5. When you check out you'll make a free donation, it doesn't cost an extra penny!



## Contribute to the next RHN Community newsletter

Do you want to be in the next newsletter?

Contact Lynsey Rose, Internal Communications Manager, at [lrose@rhn.org.uk](mailto:lrose@rhn.org.uk) to get your story included.

We can highlight an inspiring patient or family story or the great work of our clinical staff. We can profile a team, share successes or inform our community about upcoming events and activities.

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