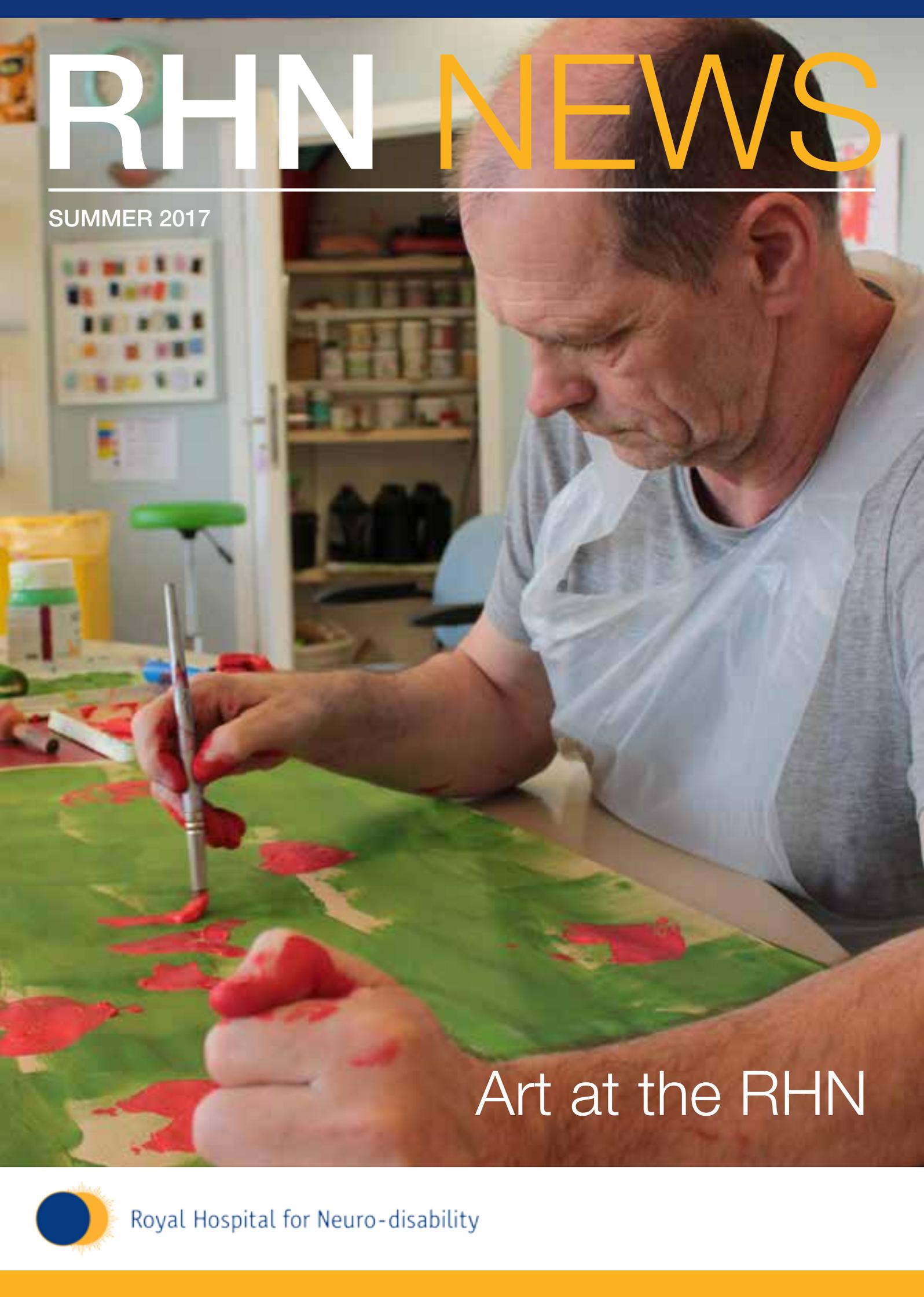


# RHN NEWS

SUMMER 2017



Art at the RHN



Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability

# Welcome

Welcome to the latest issue of RHN News.

We've had a jam-packed few months at the hospital, and that's reflected in this issue – read on to hear about some of the events that have been happening here.

Susie Wilford, a senior occupational therapist, wanted to do something big for the hospital to mark her 50th birthday. On page 4, read about how she travelled 50 miles around London in a wheelchair, raising money for the hospital.

For the first time, we held the 'RHN Festival' – a week-long programme of events for our staff, which our patients and residents enjoyed too. Find out how the festivities went on page 7!

In our Staff Spotlight on page 10, we meet one of our newer members of staff. Read all about the RHN's Head of Patient Safety and Quality, Shelly Allen, who started with us in February.

I hope you enjoy this issue!

Delali Foli  
Editor



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**We're online! Follow us @RHNuk**   

Founded in 1854, the RHN is a well-respected, national charitable hospital and research centre, providing services for adults with brain injuries. Our Putney-based community provides specialist care, therapies and innovative technologies to meet the complex needs of people with profound disabilities. We pride ourselves on caring for our patients as individuals, offering hope, as well as practical and emotional support to them and their families.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please email [comms@rhn.org.uk](mailto:comms@rhn.org.uk)

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## Occupational Therapy Art

"I like coming here because as well as getting some art done, I've really been able to spend some time laughing and joking."  
Derek, resident at the RHN

**Art technicians Lauren and Kristina started at the RHN in November last year, and that time has flown by! RHN News caught up with them about the Occupational Therapy art service.**

### What is Occupational Therapy Art?

We work closely with Occupational Therapists (OTs) to run art sessions. When a patient or resident expresses an interest in art, or if a therapist thinks they could benefit from an art session, the OTs refer patients to us. We work closely with that person and their OT to decide on goals for the sessions, and whether there are any specific activities they would like to try. This means that our sessions with patients can take on very different forms!

### How does it benefit our patients and residents?

We try to find meaningful projects for people. Many choose to work on hobbies that they enjoyed before their injury, some use the opportunity to learn new skills, and others spend time creating gifts for loved ones. We then find ways of adapting these activities to their abilities and goals, such as improving upper limb mobility or being able to plan and follow steps to complete a project. Art also provides chances for self-expression and individuality, which are hugely beneficial to patients.

### Why is this job important to you?

Often it's not a finished piece, or even an activity, that we get most excited about – it's far more individual. A while ago we saw a lady who'd done a lot of embroidery before her brain injury. As she was quite visually impaired, she didn't think she'd be able to sew again – and when we first met, she was very reluctant to try.



Lauren (left) and Kristina, art technicians

We got her started with a large needle and high-contrast thread and fabric, to make it easier for her. It turned out she was very capable, and it wasn't long before she'd completed the embroidery project! Leaving the hospital, she even said that she'd continue sewing, which was amazing to hear. It's moments like that which make our job so worthwhile.

### Have there been any recent art projects here that you're really proud of?

We loved that a previous patient had his work exhibited at an art gallery in Sloane Square! A project that we both really enjoyed was a group activity we tried out. We rolled sheets of wallpaper onto the floor, and patients chose from a selection of rollers, sponges and paint brushes, taped to the ends of long bamboo sticks. They dipped their tools in paint and then created marks on the paper from their wheelchairs. The group worked well because it involved healthy competition – who could use the most colours, who could make the biggest marks, and so on. Two patients were even able to stand up to paint, which was really exciting.



## Our award-winning staff

**Dr Richard Irwin** was awarded the winner's trophy for Organisational Development Project of the Year at the recent Beech Centre Annual Organisational Development Awards for his work on changing the way staff deal with the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).

**Carolyn Blackwell** (pictured) also collected the winner's trophy for Organisational Development Programme Alumnus of the Year. She was recognised for being a great role model, adopting a coaching leadership style and as a good case study for investing in developing your people.

As part of our continued commitment to organisational development, another cohort of RHN managers recently earned their certificates in Leadership. The course, facilitated by the Beech Centre is part of a rolling schedule of programmes for all of our staff.



## 50 before 50

RHN senior occupational therapist, Susie Wilford, decided she wanted to do something big to mark her 50th birthday year, so she came up with '50 before 50' – doing fifty miles in a wheelchair!

On 28 April after months of training, Susie set off from St Mary's church, Putney in a wheelchair to cover 50 miles through London, and finished back at St Mary's on 3 May.

Susie decided on this quest because she wanted to find out what it's like to move around London in a wheelchair, like almost all of her patients have to. In addition to the adventure itself, she also aimed to raise money for the new Therapy Hub, which will provide state-of-the-art rehabilitation facilities for our patients.

Starting her training in a special wheelchair loaned by wheelchair company Gerald Simonds earlier this year, Susie found it more challenging than she thought it would be.



Though training took a physical toll on her, she was expertly supported by her dietitian and physiotherapy colleagues.

At the end of the challenge, Susie said, "I've found out what it's like to get around in public places in a wheelchair, and it isn't easy."

At last count, Susie raised an impressive £1,640 with donations still coming in. Well done Susie! [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Susie-Wilford](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Susie-Wilford)



## International Nurses Day

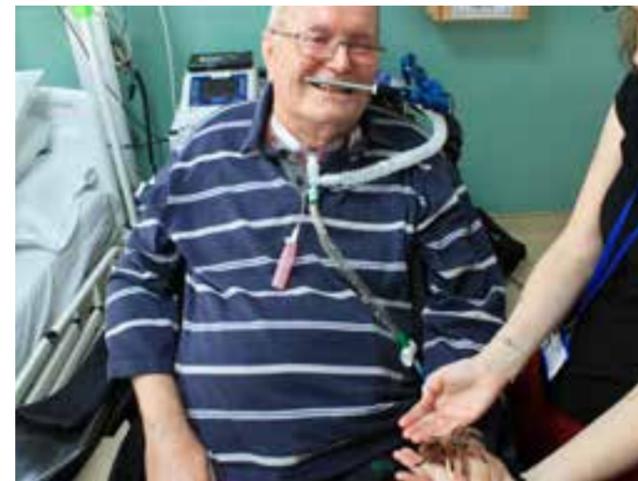
On Friday 12 May – the anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale – we commemorated International Nurses Day.

Observed around the world, the day marks the contributions nurses make to society, and we spent the afternoon celebrating our wonderful nurses with tea and cake in the Maxwell Library.

The RHN is fortunate enough to attract nurses from all over the world and we currently employ nurses of 26 different nationalities.

We also further celebrated our nurses on social media, with them sharing what nursing means to them. Visit our website to see their videos [www.rhn.org.uk/join/meet-our-team](http://www.rhn.org.uk/join/meet-our-team)

If you'd like to work with us at this very special hospital, please take a look at our recruitment pages at [www.rhn.org.uk/join](http://www.rhn.org.uk/join)



## Going wild!

Our Leisure and Family Services team recently held a Saturday live event with a difference. Patients and residents were visited by a mobile menagerie of animals, brought along by a company called Wild Science.

Our patients, most of who aren't able to get out as much as they'd like, were delighted by the special visit and fascinated by the animals. They met a wide range of animals, including guinea pigs, hedgehogs, rabbits and spiders.

Patient Ron, pictured above, was the only one brave enough to handle the tarantula – but everyone liked the smiley frog!





# Founder's Day and the first ever RHN Festival



## Founder's Day

On 20 June we celebrated our Founder's Day. Each year, Founder's Day gives the whole hospital community the chance to come together for an afternoon of fun!

Celebrations were opened by our Chaplain Geoff Coyne and followed by a welcome from our Chair, Des Benjamin. Wandsworth's Mayor, Cllr Jim Maddan, also shared his thoughts about the work we do and his memories of the RHN as a young man living in the area.

There was a great atmosphere across the hospital – with stalls on site, lots of activities and live entertainment.

Even though the weather wasn't the best, it didn't stop any of the enjoyment!



## The RHN Festival

For the first time ever, the hospital held a festival for staff on site.

A different take on the traditional staff conference, the RHN Festival was a packed four days. There were opportunities to meet the trustees, team workshops, information and wellbeing sessions, a quiz, a bake-off, an epic rounders game and a mini sports day!



The point of the festival was to bring staff together in a new way to learn more about different areas of the hospital, spend time with colleagues in other teams, share ideas, socialise and have fun along the way.

The first RHN Festival was declared a success by staff, who appreciated the format and had valuable feedback for the organisers. Next year's event is sure to be bigger and better!



# Updates from the research team

Colleagues from our research department have already had a busy 2017.

**Dr Kudret Yelden**, a consultant in Rehabilitation Medicine had her paper “Understanding the decision-making environment for people in minimally conscious state” published by the *Neuropsychological Rehabilitation Journal* in April\*.

This paper is one of three published by Dr Yelden following a focus group study she conducted in collaboration with Jo Samanta from De Monfort University’s Law School and Sarah Sargent from the University of Buckingham’s School of Law.

One paper on ethics/law was published in *Contemporary Issues in Law- End of life decisions special issue* and the other one focusing on methods, was published in *SAGE Research Methods* earlier on this year.

At the 12th World Congress on Brain Injury (this year held in New Orleans), Dr Yelden was awarded the ‘best young investigator abstract award for acquired brain injury’ for a paper she’d written.

The International Brain Injury Association’s (IBIA), world congress, is the largest gathering of international professionals working in the field of brain injury. The annual event provides an opportunity for neuro-psychologists, therapists, nurses, clinicians and others to connect and establish collegial relationships with peers.

Physiotherapist **Taryn Holman** also recently won the best academic poster at the national conference organised by the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Neurology. Her winning poster was called ‘Breaking Bad News and Truth Telling in Prolonged Disorders of Consciousness: the Experiences of Allied Health Professionals’.

## Recent articles published by RHN staff\*

**H. Gill-Thwaites, K. E. Elliott & R. Munday – 18 April 2017**

SMART – Recognising the value of existing practice and introducing recent developments: leaving no stone unturned in the assessment and treatment of the PDOC patient  
**Neuropsychological Rehabilitation**

**Illman NA, Crawford S – 26 April 2017**

Late-recovery from “permanent” vegetative state in the context of severe traumatic brain injury: A case report exploring objective and subjective aspects of recovery and rehabilitation  
**Neuropsychological Rehabilitation**

**Yelden K, Sargent S, Samanta J – 11 April 2017**

Understanding the decision-making environment for people in minimally conscious state  
**Neuropsychological Rehabilitation**

**Paterson HL – March 2017**

The use of social media by adults with acquired conditions who use AAC: current gaps and considerations in research  
**Augmentative Alternative Communication**

**Tennant A, Gill-Thwaites H – 2017**

A study of the internal construct and predictive validity of the SMART assessment for emergence from vegetative state  
**Brain Injury**

\*If you would like to read any of the papers in full please email [comms@rhn.org.uk](mailto:comms@rhn.org.uk)



## Goldsmith's Gala Dinner raises £80,000

**On Thursday 11 May we were joined by 180 RHN supporters in their finest evening wear at our special annual event, the Gala Dinner – this year held at the splendid Goldsmiths’ Livery Hall.**

The evening has fast become a highlight of our event calendar, and was made possible this year by the support and sponsorship of Healthcare and Locum Recruitment Ltd.

Our guests were greeted by our Chairman, Des Benjamin, and President, Leonora Countess of Lichfield, with a champagne reception in the livery hall’s grand reception rooms.

On Toastmaster Ted Prior’s call, guests took their seats in the magnificent gold hall. The evening started in style, as guests were dazzled by two songs performed by the fantastic west-end star Marianne Benedict.

Following a warm welcome from Des, guests enjoyed a delicious meal, alongside wine that had been generously donated by Cillar de Silos.

After dinner, guests were led through an auction by celebrity auctioneer Jonty Hearnden. An exclusive day with the Red Arrows, a holiday in Provence and an opportunity to cook with MasterChef professional Ash Mair in your own home were just a few of the prizes on offer.

Lesley Mill, head of our Brain Injury Service, gave a heartfelt speech about her pride in the hospital’s rehabilitation work and also talked about our plans for the new state-of-the-art Therapy Hub, which will revolutionise how we provide rehab for our patients.

Over the course of the evening, guests heard about the vital work and research we carry out – and also from RHN Vice President Mrs Ruth Maxwell, who spoke about her son’s tragic brain injury and his time at the RHN.

The evening ended with sealed pledges from guests and the close of the silent auction with over 20 additional auction lots up for grabs. The event raised a staggering £80,000 – all of which will go towards the Therapy Hub build project.

We would like to say a sincere ‘thank you’ to all our guests and to everyone who so generously donated. Further thanks go to our wonderful Gala Dinner Committee, led by Ruth Maxwell, for all of their hard work and support.

Next year’s Gala Dinner will take place on **Thursday 17 May 2018** at the Underglobe, underneath Shakespeare’s Globe on Southbank. To express your interest please email [events@rhn.org.uk](mailto:events@rhn.org.uk)

# Staff Spotlight

## Meet our Head of Patient Safety and Quality, Shelly Allen

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

I started working at the RHN in February 2017.

### 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?

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 enjoy about working here so far?

I've 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!

### Sum up the RHN in one word.

Inspiring.



## Thank you

As ever, we'd like to thank those of you who have given up time, fundraised and volunteered for us. Here are just a few of the many people and organisations who've made a difference recently.

Special thanks go to the members of our therapy team (pictured) who took on the Men's Health Survival of the Fittest. They trained incredibly hard and managed to raise an impressive £2,062 for the RHN.

Event	Name	Amount raised
Edinburgh 10k	Jane Wamwae-Moore	£860
Virgin Money London Marathon	Jonathan Cuthbert	£8,661
Leigh Chase Charity Dinner	The Baxter family	£2,400
Virgin Sport British 10k	Cowan Architects team	£675
Kingston Boat Race	Russell-Cooke Solicitors	£1,140

# What's on

## 16/17 September

### Rough Runner Clapham Common

This 5km or 10km obstacle course takes inspiration from Total Wipeout and Takeshi's Castle. Tickets are around £60 – email [events@rhn.org.uk](mailto:events@rhn.org.uk) to get a 10% discount code for supporting the RHN.

## 23 September

### Evening of Music Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability

We are delighted to be joined by the Willow Orchestra and our very own RHN Choir, for an evening of musical excellence coupled with delicious food and wine. For ticket information please visit [www.rhn.org.uk/events](http://www.rhn.org.uk/events)

## 29 November

### Christmas Fair Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability

Pop in to the RHN to stock up on gifts and stocking fillers at our Christmas Fair. An array of festive treats will be on offer, as well as carol singers – and you'll be sure to find gifts for the whole family.

## 7 December

### Carol Concert Holy Trinity Church, Beaumont Road, London SW19 6SP

Start your festive season with a special evening of traditional carols, heart-warming readings, musical performances – and of course mince pies and mulled wine. Tickets will be on sale from October.

If you would like more details on any of our events, email [events@rhn.org.uk](mailto:events@rhn.org.uk) or call **020 8780 4565**

# Open Lectures

## 14 September

### Music Therapy and Neuroscience: Opportunities and Challenges

Julian O'Kelly PhD Honorary Research Fellow, Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability

## 12 October

### Ethics, Spirituality and Care: exploring a difficult but potentially fruitful relationship

The Rt Revd Dr Christopher Herbert, Trustee and Visiting Professor of Christian Ethics, University of Surrey

# Specialist training courses

## 7 September

### Managing Behaviours that Challenge in Brain Injured Individuals: The Positive Behaviour Support Approach

## 6 October

### Managing Complex Tone: Spasticity and Casting

## 19–20 September

### Managing Complex Tone: Spasticity and Casting

## 12 October

### An Introduction to Music Therapy Techniques in Neuro-disability

All courses and open lectures are held at the RHN unless stated otherwise. For further information visit [www.rhn.org.uk/events](http://www.rhn.org.uk/events)

To book a course or open lecture, call **020 8780 4500 ext 5140** or email [institute@rhn.org.uk](mailto:institute@rhn.org.uk)



Rehabilitation and long term care  
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