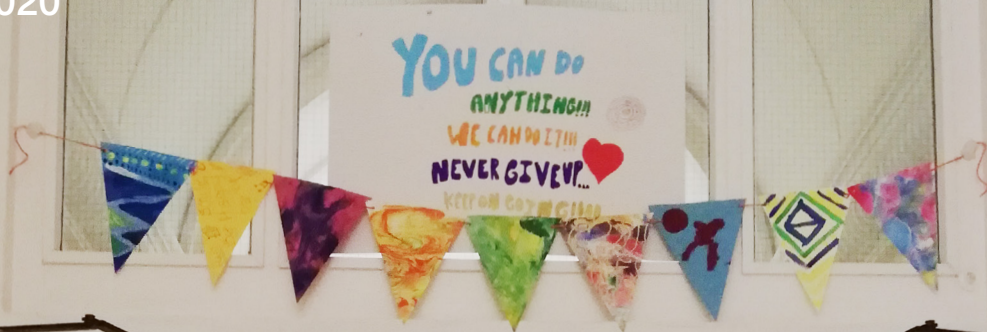
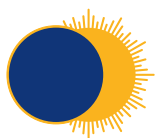


# RHN NEWS

SUMMER 2020



A thank you  
to our RHN  
heroes



Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability



# Welcome to RHN News

from Paul Allen, Chief Executive



The global pandemic has led to one of the most challenging times in the history of the RHN, but the hard work and dedication of our staff and support of the wider community have been incredibly inspiring to witness.

I would firstly like to mention how proud I am of our staff for going above and beyond in recent months. Whether that has meant caring for suspected coronavirus or positive patients, staying later than usual, working different roles or supporting one another through the more difficult times.

COVID-19 has had an immense impact worldwide, and that is no different at the RHN. We have all had to learn how to adapt to a new way of working, keeping distance from colleagues while staying in touch through new technology. We have captured the experiences in audio recordings and photographs, which we hope to share with you at some point in the future, and will keep in our archives to inspire future generations of the RHN community.

We acted quickly and put stringent measures into place to protect our patients and residents. We made the difficult decision to suspend all visiting before government advice in March, and saw the RHN divided into 'zones', with staff remaining in their allotted areas to reduce the risk of transmitting infection around the hospital. All staff who could capably work from home have been doing so, and many wards went into 'lockdown' during the crisis whenever a COVID-19 infection was discovered.

These measures have worked very well over the past few months and we are delighted to now be in the position where some have been relaxed. **We are continually reviewing our measures following the latest official guidance and are prepared in the event of a second wave.**

Sadly and despite our best efforts, 14 patients and one member of staff passed away as a result of coronavirus infection, and our thoughts are with their families. In total, we have had 119 infections at the RHN, 59 of which were patients. **A total of 45 patients survived infection and we are over 150 days free of infection.**

We give our thanks to our staff who have gone above and beyond to manage the crisis, including staff who took on duties outside of their day-to-day role at the hospital.

We give special acknowledgement to **Dr Emily McWhirter**, who has now left the RHN after three and a half years as our Director of Nursing. We are very sad to see Emily go but grateful for all that she's done during her time at the RHN. We wish her all the very best for the future.

From September, we welcomed **Della Warren** to the position of Director of Nursing, on an interim basis.

Special acknowledgement also goes to **Monet Marinas**, CNS Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) lead, and our domestics team, who have been brilliant in managing the hospital's response to infection control. This extends to all of our frontline workers as well as porters, maintenance and catering teams, who have been fantastic.

As you will read, we have more than risen to all sorts of challenges faced over the past few months, but you will also discover the many kind gestures of support we have had from the RHN and local community, with everything from donated food and PPE to organising new digital fundraising events.

We have dedicated this newsletter to sharing some of the incredible stories during the RHN's time in lockdown. While we've made every effort to include as many stories as possible, there were simply so many we couldn't feature them all. Despite this, we send our wholehearted thanks to everyone who has supported us during the pandemic – you are truly incredible.

**We hope you enjoy reading and we look forward to welcoming you back to the RHN in the days to come.**

**Paul Allen**  
Chief Executive

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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 for 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)

Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, West Hill, Putney, London SW15 3SW  
020 8780 4500 [www.rhn.org.uk](http://www.rhn.org.uk)



## Official opening ceremony for Drapers ward and Therapy Hub

In March, the RHN officially reopened Drapers ward (part of the Brain Injury Service) and state-of-the-art Therapy Hub following extensive renovations after a successful fundraising appeal.

The opening ceremony was attended by **Leonora, Countess of Lichfield**, who cut the ribbon. Other attendees included members of the local community, business representatives and other hospital stakeholders.

After the ceremony, guests toured the newly refurbished ward and brand new Therapy Hub, before enjoying light refreshments and networking in the hospital's De Lancey Lowe room.

Drapers was the first to undergo major renovations as part of wider plans to refresh every ward at the hospital. The new design provides more space and improved equipment for a bright, modern and more comfortable area for patients. It also makes moving and handling patients much easier for staff.

Rooms have been decorated to create a more homely environment and allow for medical equipment such as hoists to be hidden within cupboards. The new spaces also remove the need

for obvious oxygen tanks, with piped oxygen fitted in the walls. Other improvements include new larger showering facilities and accessible televisions fitted to walls – removing the trip hazard of wires on the floor.

The state-of-the-art Therapy Hub now provides top of the range equipment and a sensory room to further support the rehabilitation of patients.

**Paul Allen, Chief Executive of the RHN**, said, "The Drapers ward and Therapy Hub refurbishment has been seen as a flagship project, which would set the bar high in terms of the standard of facility that we aspire to throughout the RHN."

The new Therapy Hub and quiet gym are spacious and provide a modern environment that meets the wide-ranging needs of our patients. Our new Drapers ward is contemporary, bright and designed with the needs of patients in mind, providing patients with the space needed to practice vital gains made through rehabilitation in their daily routines. Together these new facilities will allow patients to gain maximum benefit from the excellent rehabilitation offered by our specialist multi-disciplinary therapy and care teams."



Check out our full range of courses and open lectures online

[www.rhn.org.uk/events/](http://www.rhn.org.uk/events/)

## Brand new training webinars

Looking to adapt to circumstance, our research teams made the decision to make our lectures available digitally as webinars.

Our first open lecture, 'an assessment of emergence from PDOC', was run by **Amy Pundole**, Clinical Lead Speech and Language Therapist at the RHN. The lecture was a free event and explored updates on Amy's ongoing PhD project.

The webinar was hugely successful, seeing over 400 people register for the event and over 230 people tune in from across the globe, including as far as Australia, the USA and Qatar.

"I'm glad we are able to share their knowledge and skills with others during this time. Based on the success of this lecture, we are planning on making online lectures a routine fixture of our educational offering," said **Dr Sophie Dupont, Associate Director of Research**.

## New and improved Andrew Reed ward

Our ward refurbishment programme is progressing very well, and as planned, work has now finished on Cathcart and Evitt (two wards in the original part of our building).

The completion of these wards was only delivered on time thanks to the builders, who worked in isolation throughout lockdown in order to complete the project.

This £4.1million project has combined these wards into one state-of-the-art care facility, with the newly merged ward now being renamed Andrew Reed, in honour of our founder.



## Coming soon – Leonora Ward

On the other side of the building, the ward that was previously named Andrew Reed has now been renamed Leonora, after our president – **Leonora, Countess of Lichfield**. Work has recently started on this ward, which will be fitted with additional facilities such as piped medical gases. This will allow us to expand our ventilator service with an additional six vent beds. This project is expected to be completed shortly.

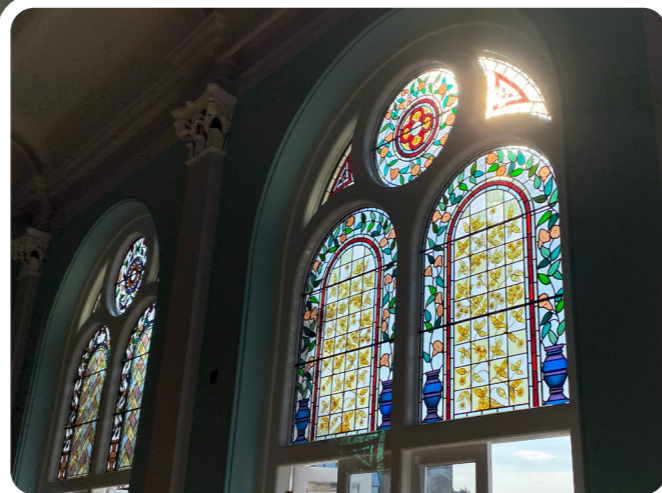


## Working with the Heritage of London Trust to restore stained glass windows

The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, supported by the Heritage of London Trust (HOLT), announced a fundraising campaign in 2018 to replace the Victorian stained glass windows onsite. Having successfully raised over £100k, the stained glass windows project was completed this August.

HOLT, London's independent heritage charity, pledged £10,000 to the fundraiser and has worked closely with the RHN. Through Heritage of London Trust, the RHN was linked with Chapel Studio, one of the leading stained glass studios in Europe, who produced the window designs based on the single surviving photograph. The photograph, dating from around 1900, suggests that the original stained glass reflected the four seasons.

The original windows were destroyed in World War Two air raids and for the past few years, have been boarded up. Now fixed, they restore the Assembly Room which is used today by patients for socialising, concerts, and chaplaincy services, just as it was when it was first built.



The Heritage of London Trust also included the RHN's stained glass project in a digital virtual-reality film for the BBC's Civilisations Festival, a partnership between museums, galleries, libraries and archives and the BBC which coincided with the broadcast of BBC Arts' Civilisations series in spring 2018.

The RHN's chaplain, Geoff Coyne, said, "Restoring the windows, and letting the light shine back in, has made a beautiful space for patients to use and provide a focal point for visitors who come to the hospital to learn more about our history."

Heritage of London Trust Director Dr Nicola Stacey said, "We are thrilled that the original beauty of these windows has returned to the Assembly Room. This is such a special space – surviving virtually untouched from one of the finest Victorian missions in London – and still serving the same purpose 150 years later".



## Assessing emergence from a prolonged disorder of consciousness

Current opinion and practice in the UK

Amy Pundole, Clinical Lead Speech and Language Therapist at the RHN, had the first article from her PhD titled 'Assessing emergence from a prolonged disorder of consciousness: Current opinion and practice in the UK' published in May.

Amy has worked with prolonged disorder of consciousness (PDOC) patients at the RHN for many years. Her experience has helped to identify clinical areas that require further research.

"As a speech and language therapist (SLT), I focus on assessing communication and trying to optimise each patient's communication abilities. Assessments to determine if a patient has emerged from PDOC are currently based on narrow criteria and require a patient with a significant brain injury to respond with 100% accuracy," explained Amy.

"The aim of my PhD is to look at how we can improve assessments for patients emerging from PDOC. This will provide information on their communication function and prognosis to help clinicians and family members to make complex decisions about ongoing treatment and therapy input."

Determining whether a patient has emerged from PDOC can be difficult. As part of the first stage of her PhD, Amy sent out an online survey to similar multi-disciplinary teams across the UK to find out what their experiences and practices were.

"It was really exciting to find that other teams have had similar experiences. The findings have also helped me plan the next stages of research."

Amy recently presented her studies on the RHN's first online webinar, which was widely attended by professionals across the globe.

"Presenting the webinar was really positive although using Zoom is strange. The only person I could see when talking was myself and not the audience! But it generated a range of questions and discussion and was able to reach a lot of people, so I look forward to repeating the experience to report on the findings from the next stages of my research."

**Missed the webinar? You can watch 'Assessing emergence from a prolonged disorder of consciousness' on the RHN's YouTube channel.**

## Grant awarded for research into assessing mood and wellbeing

Congratulations to Alexandra Rose, Principal Clinical Psychologist at the RHN, who has been awarded a research grant from the Frances and Augustus Newman Foundation.

The grant will fund part-time cover for Alex's clinical time so that she can continue her PhD on Assessing Mood and Psychological Wellbeing in People with Severe Brain Injury.

"Receiving this grant has been a huge relief, especially during these uncertain times. I am very grateful to the fundraising department for securing this. I am very excited, as this grant will allow me to continue with my studies and ensure that my PhD gets completed. It will also allow the research department to fund other research whilst I complete my studies. The completion of this work will hopefully be very beneficial to our RHN patients and residents and promote their health and wellbeing," said Alex.



# Food heroes keep staff well-fed during the pandemic

**When staff needed a morale boost, the local community banded together to provide FREE meals to frontline workers.**

The RHN implemented many restrictions prior to the national lockdown in March. One of these restrictions saw the RHN split into different zones, with staff committed to a particular zone for the duration of their shift.

While this was necessary to maintain strict infection control, it meant that ward staff were unable to leave to take breaks or grab something to eat. The hospital's cafeteria, Reed's, had also closed to focus on providing meals to our patients. At the same time, many wards found themselves with fewer staff (a result of following self-isolation regulations) meaning others had to work longer than usual hours.

Remembering to prepare your meals before and after working long shifts during the middle of a pandemic would be difficult for even the most organised healthcare worker.

Recognising that our workers needed support, **Katie Richards (Head of Service, RHN)** began reaching out to local support groups providing free meals to NHS and other frontline workers, which had been set up across the nation in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Before long, free meals were being delivered and distributed across wards at the RHN.

## Meals for the NHS

Meals for the NHS were a huge provider of these meals during the lockdown period. Meals for the NHS provided the RHN with over 2000 free meals from restaurants and caterers in the London area.

Katie said, "we met some really lovely companies during the daily deliveries, but one really sticks with me – the **Home Community Café**. They are based in Earlsfield and I made contact with them to say thanks at the time. They delivered food to us a couple of times and even threw in some extra brownies and a lovely handwritten note."

Staff receiving the meals found it hugely uplifting, and looked forward to the tasty meals being brought to them thanks to the support of local restaurants.

**You can find out more about the incredible work of Meals for NHS during the pandemic on their website [www.mealsforthenhs.com](http://www.mealsforthenhs.com)**

## Family Meal

As with all good things, the end of food deliveries from Meals for the NHS eventually arrived. It was at that point the Family Meal stepped in to help the RHN's staff.

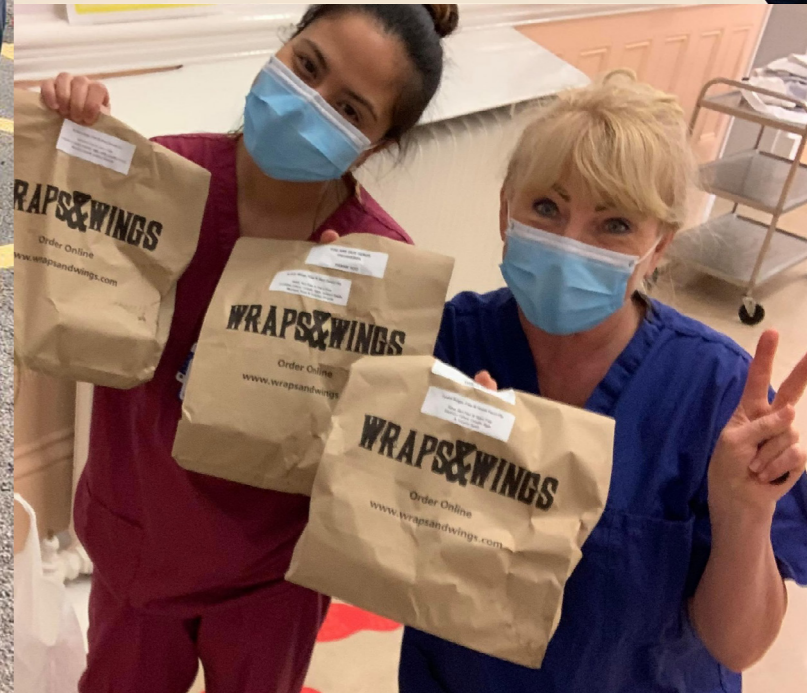
**Christopher Evans-Gordon** opened the doors of his restaurant in Fulham (the **Little Blue Door Company**) to a group of volunteers and formed the charity **Family Meal**, who started making meals for NHS workers and vulnerable local residents.

Chris provided us with 100 meals a day for the final month before our cafeteria was re-opened.

"It was fantastic that we were able to continue providing meals to our staff after the donations from Meals for the NHS came to an end. It really did lift spirits, especially when they also sent us brownies and even made a birthday cake for one of the nurses on Glyn ward," added Katie.

**You can find out more about Family Meal on their website at [familymeal.org.uk](http://familymeal.org.uk)**

**We would like to send a huge thank you to everyone at Meals for NHS and Family Meal, and to every other local restaurant who provided us with free meals during the pandemic.**



**THANK YOU** FOR YOUR SUPPORT

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Cakeology donated lots of cupcakes



DLAG collected outside supermarkets

## Local action group keeps spirits high at the RHN

The RHN was lucky enough to be one of the charities to receive an abundance of generous donations from Dons Local Action Group (DLAG).

The action group is a local network of volunteers formed in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Initially set up by fans of **AFC Wimbledon football club**, it quickly expanded in Merton, Wandsworth and Kingston.

DLAG set up stalls outside supermarkets and collected food from generous shoppers. They quickly created food packages and distributed these in bulk to charities and food banks in the local area.

As well as food and drink, DLAG donated over 800 refurbished laptops and tablets to children through local schools.

“DLAG was formed as a COVID response group. We are now transitioning into a permanent entity to fight food and digital poverty as the need in our local communities is ongoing. The work of the RHN is inspiring and we are glad we could support you and the people you care for,” said **Craig Wellstead**, Head of Operations for DLAG.

Staff at the RHN were delighted to receive a large amount of Easter eggs as well as cupcakes, gifted to DLAG by Wimbledon-based cake shop, **Cakeology**.

Find out more about DLAG and how they are continuing to support the local community during the pandemic on their website [www.donslocalaction.org](http://www.donslocalaction.org)



Chocolate eggs went down a treat!



## Local floristry's gifts brighten up wards

We received a generous donation of plants from **Lucy Vail Floristry**, an award-winning London based floral design company.

“We are so glad the plants were appreciated. A very dear friend of mine is a patient on Wolfson ward,” said **Laura Duncombe**, director at Lucy Vail Floristry.

Lucy Vail Floristry specialises in installations and weddings as well as private and corporate events.

You can find out more about Lucy Vail Floristry on their website [www.lucyvailfloristry.com/](http://www.lucyvailfloristry.com/)

## Patients keep in touch with loved ones thanks to staying connected appeal

To help keep our patients, families and staff safe, the RHN stopped visits to the hospital just before the national lockdown.

We launched the ‘Staying Connected’ appeal, asking for people to donate old technology that could help facilitate video calls between patients and their families during this difficult time.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the RHN received six brand new Amazon Fire tablets, 35 iPads and eight smartphones, enabling patients to call their family members regularly.

A family member who used the initiative said, “Who would have thought when I kissed my mum goodbye that I would not see her again for many, many months due to a pandemic. Thankfully, Michael (Charge Nurse, Chatsworth ward) offered to keep us connected with mum on Zoom.



“Being able to see mum regularly and chatting with her as a family really helped ease our worries. We as a family are immensely thankful to be able to continue with our regular Zoom chats and we are thankful to everyone who donated their unwanted technology to enable this to happen. It made a huge difference in our lives.”

Though visits are now cautiously allowed, restrictions are still in place and constantly being reviewed.

The appeal has been extended so if you would like to donate any technology, please email [stayconnected@rhn.org.uk](mailto:stayconnected@rhn.org.uk)

## Hospital ‘red runners’ keep things moving during lockdown

Staff who were inside the RHN building during lockdown got used to the sight of familiar colleagues doing unfamiliar things, zipping up and down the main corridor delivering supplies, collecting samples, and delivering donated meals.

These were the Red Runners, introduced so that we could keep traffic in the hospital at a minimum, to service wards that were locked down and keep everything moving.

One of the most distinctive Red Runners was physio assistant **Marzena Rossi** in her bright pink trainers. She loved being a Red Runner because she likes to be busy and it felt like a useful thing to do. She was asked to join the team because her previous experience was helpful organising the duties and maximising efficiency.



Marzena said, “It was challenging at times because we had to do anything and everything to help but we were very well supported by the COVID and clinical response teams. I became closer to the guys in the team, whom I only knew from a distance, which was so nice too.”

“I felt so lucky to be able to look in at all the zones and felt so proud of how we all worked so hard to protect our residents and support each other as a multi-disciplinary team. At the end of each day no matter how many kilometres on my pedometer I left work with a smile on my face.”



Left to right: Bernadette, David, Graham and Nicole

## Patients' 100m corridor challenge

**On Wednesday 17 June, four patients (Bernadette, David, Graham and Nicole) at the RHN took on the challenge of walking down the hospital's 100m long corridor in the hope of raising vital funds for the charity.**

The RHN cares for adults with severe brain injuries and provides services and therapies to ensure the best possible quality of life for people with neuro-disability. All four patients taking on this corridor challenge arrived at the RHN unable to walk, and initially required two assistants as well as hoists to be able to move. Thanks to their determination and the work of the RHN staff, all four participants can now walk short distances.

**Bernadette**, RHN patient and creator of the corridor challenge, said,

"Thanks to the ongoing care and support that I am receiving, I've made huge progress and can now walk a few steps with an aid. I'm so grateful to everyone at RHN for improving my quality of life and helping me to gain back more independence. I wanted to do this challenge to give something back and help to raise some money for this fantastic hospital."



David was determined to take on the 100m corridor

The four corridor challengers took on the walk one after another, with the support of the RHN's physiotherapy team, who followed closely behind walkers with a wheelchair as a safety precaution. **They have so far raised over £8,200 for the charity.**

**Luke Rendell**, Senior Physiotherapist at the RHN added, "Congratulations to Bernadette, David, Graham and Nicole who all successfully completed the corridor challenge. It is a huge testament to the hard work and determination they have all shown throughout their rehabilitation, considering none of them could walk less than three months ago."

"The corridor challenge brought everyone together; something really needed in these difficult times, and I know all the patients were taken aback by the support they have received. I'm proud to work as part of such an amazing multi-disciplinary team, whose dedication, care and hard work allows people to achieve their full potential and get back to their lives."

If you've been inspired by our patients' incredible fundraising efforts, please donate to their JustGiving page below  
[www.justgiving.com/fundraising/corridor-challenge](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/corridor-challenge)



## Rehabilitation at the RHN Bernadette's story

**As a charity hospital, we rely on funds to give our patients and residents the best well-rounded care and expertise to ensure the highest possible quality of life.**

The rehabilitation therapies, bespoke wheelchair provision and expert teams enable patients to receive vital care and relearn skills, such as being able to walk again.

Bernadette, has been discharged from Drapers ward shortly after having successfully completed her corridor challenge. Having arrived at the RHN unable to walk, Bernadette initially required two assistants as well as hoists to be able to move. Thanks to her determination and the work of the RHN staff, Bernadette can now walk short distances.

Bernadette said, "When I came to the RHN, I saw patients walking in the corridors and I thought, I want to be able to do that too, so I set myself the goal to be able to walk out of the hospital."



"I was astonished at the amount we had raised from the walk before we had even stepped in the corridor, it was very motivating for us all. For the final part, I even abandoned my aid to walk completely by myself and it was such a prize to see fellow patients cheering us on."

Bernadette was discharged on her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, leaving a legacy with the corridor challenge and raising the funds for us to continue the care for others.

Reflecting on leaving, Bernadette said, "I want this hospital to be recognised as a place of excellence, for all the good things that it does for the patients. Even if you are not able to be rehabilitated to the level that I was, there is still a lot of rehab going on in this place, wonderful things to support patients."

To find out more about the different ways you can support the RHN, please visit  
[www.rhn.org.uk/support-us/donate/](http://www.rhn.org.uk/support-us/donate/)

# ‘Local heroes’ sew to support the RHN during COVID-19

**When the RHN was in need during the pandemic, the local community stepped in to help in a big way. Bright, colourful sets of scrubs were donated from volunteers across London to help our non-uniformed staff protect themselves at work.**

Scrubs are loose fitting cotton or polycotton garments, traditionally worn in operating theatres that can be washed at 60°C after every shift, and so are good for infection control.

We reached out to **Putney Rotary Club**, the **Women’s Institute** and **Richmond Council for Voluntary Service** for help, and they started to spread the word. At the same time, an A&E nurse from Boston Hospital in Lincolnshire, started a Facebook page calling for people to make scrubs during lockdown.

The RHN reopened its laundry service, managed by donor development manager **Trudi Brown**, and catering assistant, **Christine Crane**, who was redeployed after we had to close our staff restaurant to concentrate on providing food for patients. Trudi applied for us to be an approved hospital in the **South London for The Love of Scrubs** group, and only two days after approval our first batch of hand sewn donated scrubs arrived. We began handing out to staff every day and taking them back at the end of the day to be laundered.

The Love of Scrubs group was managed by theatrical and film costume maker **Sarah Dearing** after her paid work disappeared overnight at the beginning of lockdown. Sarah had not heard of the RHN before, but she said,

*‘The RHN has been one of my favourites because we could make such jazzy scrubs for you. We joked amongst the costume contingent of our group that we’d love to add some sparkles, but the fabulous patterns we’ve made scrubs from have been the next best thing.’*

More donations came from two members of staff who brought in 15 sets made by families and friends, mostly from recycled materials like duvet covers. We also received a surprise donation from Holy Trinity Church Wandsworth, who are our next-door neighbours, and had been sewing for us after being contacted by RHN admissions co-ordinator, **Susie Wilford**.

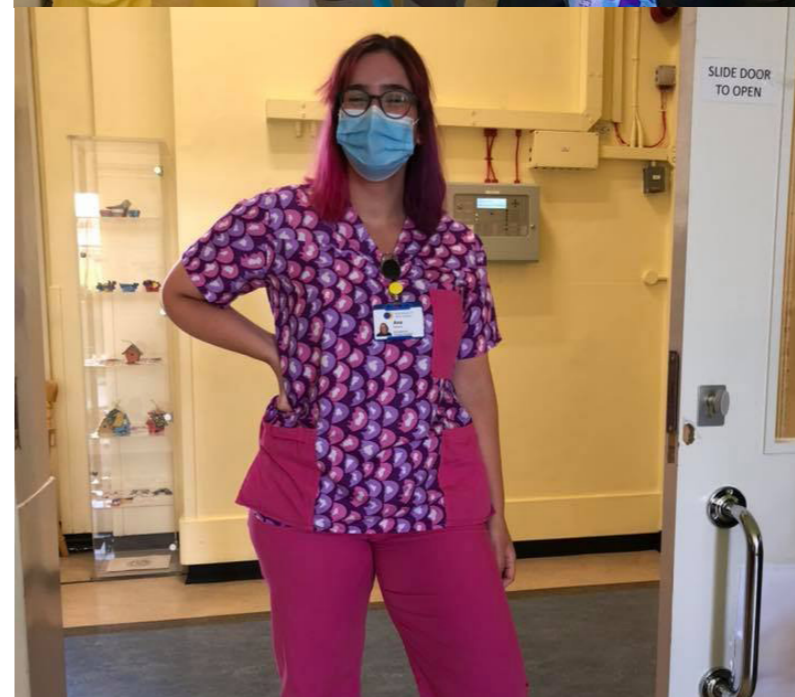
We then received some donations from Richmond CVS, four embroidered sets from a woman whose mother had worked at the RHN. Two further substantial donations arrived from the South London for the Love of Scrubs.

Meanwhile at **St Mary’s church in Putney**, **Rosie Taylor** started her own production line after she found out how desperately hospitals needed extra supplies of scrubs because of the experiences of her daughter, a doctor on a respiratory ward. Rosie said,

*“It isn’t just about making the scrubs, it’s that people were sat at home and feeling hopeless because they don’t know how to help. So it’s also about the journey and people having something really positive to do.”*

By June this incredible network of people had made 200 sets of scrubs for us, from fabric they had bought, recycled or had had donated to them. Staff were working in African prints, an upcycled Marvel Comics duvet cover, and huge green polka dots, which not only helped with infection control but also raised morale. Some of the scrubs donated even ended up on the **Victoria and Albert museum’s** blog about the pandemic.

Former RHN **Director of Nursing**, **Dr Emily McWhirter**, said, ‘the scrubs have brought us immense joy during a really difficult time. Some of the scrubs had messages of support sewn into them which has meant so much. We are so grateful to everyone who has contributed.’



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# RHN supporters organise 24-hour 'Pianothon'

## Bethy and Jo's story

**As lockdown began across the country, regular RHN supporter Jo Reeves was busy organising the RHN's first online fundraising event, the Pianothon, with daughter Bethy.**

Jo first got involved with the RHN about 15 years ago, when she started playing piano on Sundays for the regular service which she took over from Mary Johnston, who had a long-standing association with the hospital.

"I got to know the patients, many of whom were noticeably enjoying the Sunday music sessions, especially hearing some tunes they could hum along to. I have also been bringing choirs, mostly from the school I used to work at (Putney High School) to sing at the RHN in the Annual Christmas Concert and various one-off events through the year," said Jo.

Those familiar with events at the RHN may also recognise Jo from her work with a cappella group Pitch Purple, and Manresa Youth Orchestra, who regularly rehearse in front of patients at the RHN.

About two years ago, trustees at the RHN bought a new piano for the assembly room and Jo started thinking about ways she could use it to fundraise and entertain patients.

"I came up with the idea of a 24-hour pianothon and got in touch with the fundraising team in February. We had chosen spring half-term with the idea that school kids could join in and cover some slots... but then COVID-19 came along and all plans went into hibernation!"

Just as all plans seemed lost, the fundraising team suggested taking the event online. A determined Jo enlisted the help of her daughter, Bethy, who was able to support putting the event online.



**Bethy (R)** helped long time RHN supporter and mum, **Jo (L)**, to organise the Pianothon event



Over 40 volunteers performed during the RHN's first digital event, with ages ranging from six to 66

Bethy said, "Mum came to me with her idea and after years of seeing all the volunteering she does at the RHN, I was really keen to help her make the Pianothon happen!"

The mother-daughter duo went on to explain that the RHN has always been welcoming to music-making initiatives.

"We really wanted to celebrate and support the amazing work the RHN does, while providing entertainment to the patients and staff, through our pianothon."

The start of lockdown saw a huge surge in online performances, both live and pre-recorded, as musicians all over the world sought to temporarily replace the now empty concert halls and stages.

Bethy and Jo decided to split their 24-hour pianothon over two days in April. The event was hosted on a dedicated Facebook page, with the idea that performers could be made admins and live-stream their sessions. People could then watch live and the performances would remain on the page for people to enjoy afterwards.

"We put a call out for performers on social media which was shared by friends and around their musical circles too. The response was amazing and we very quickly had a full programme of supporters from across the UK and even in other countries, some of whom we'd never even met before," said Bethy.

Bethy began teaching over 40 volunteers how to live-stream from Facebook. A running order was drawn up and 30-minute to 1-hour slots were allocated to performers. Under Bethy and Jo's watchful eyes, the two-day event started flawlessly.

Bethy said, "It was so heart-warming to have so many people watching along and commenting on each other's videos, supporting one another on a small scale while supporting such an important cause on a bigger scale."

**The event was hugely successful, exceeding an initial target of £500, and raising £7,651 (including GiftAid) for the RHN.**

"I still can't quite believe it. We hope this money helped and can continue to help maintain the RHN's uninterrupted care to their patients and residents at this incredibly challenging time. We can't wait to perform in real life hopefully not too far away in the future."

"This was an experience we know we'll never forget, and I'd like to say a huge thank you to anyone who tuned in to the pianothon performances, to all the 44 pianists who played so wonderfully, to anyone who kindly donated, and to Aimee from the RHN and my amazingly inspiring mum whose idea it was in the first place to run this pianothon," said Bethy.

Videos from the Pianothon are all still up on the page for anyone who missed the performances:

[www.facebook.com/rhnpianothon](http://www.facebook.com/rhnpianothon)

Bethy has also created a short 'best bits' video of the event on her YouTube channel:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryZztxpQd-s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryZztxpQd-s)

## Day at the movies - the musical

**Inspired by the success of the Pianothon, another digital fundraising event was held in June.**

Over 20 supporters of the RHN came together to live stream musical performances of songs from their favourite movies or musicals. The event **raised an incredible £2,224.**

Thank you so much to everybody who participated and joined our volunteers on the **Day at the Movies** page on Facebook.

**You can still catch all of the performances online at [www.facebook.com/RHNdayatmovies](http://www.facebook.com/RHNdayatmovies)**



Supporters performed from home to the RHN community via Facebook



Cameron Design House took a break from chandeliers to make PPE

## Statement chandelier company makes huge PPE donation to RHN

**Cameron Design House (CDH) design and manufacture handmade statement chandeliers at their St John's Wood workshop, but started creating face shields once the pandemic struck.**

Tipped off about the nation's urgent need for PPE by a team member's partner who works in healthcare, their keen team of craftsmen at CDH realised they could use their machinery to make protective shields.

Ian Cameron, creative director at CDH, immediately came up with designs for face shields and within six weeks (and the help of a small army of volunteers) hand made and delivered over 30,000 face shields to more than 300 hospitals, care homes, hospices, GPs and pharmacies around London, free of charge.

**CDH generously donated over 1,000 face masks after they were contacted by Paul Heather, purchasing manager at the RHN.**

"We were really pleased to be able to help protect the fantastic team at the RHN, but it was definitely a small drop in the ocean compared to the amazing work you guys do!" said Ian.

You can find out more about **Cameron Design House** on their website [camerondesignhouse.com/](http://camerondesignhouse.com/)



## 3D-printed PPE helped RHN staff stay safe

**We were delighted to receive donations of homemade PPE from the local community too.**

Michael Cawley helped to keep key workers safe by using his 3D printer to create the face shields stylishly modelled above by ward manager Caleb and nurse Mary.

Staff also loved the rainbow face shields donated to us by Nick Clark.

**Thank you to everybody who took the time to make PPE and donate it to us.**

## Chocolatiers make surprise Easter deliveries during lockdown

Staff were surprised when two lorries full of chocolate treats for staff and patients to enjoy turned up. **Lindt UK** sent the special delivery to the RHN in the hopes of lifting spirits over the Easter period.

We also received some chocolate goodies from **Fahri chocolates**.

**Thank you Lindt and Fahri Chocolates for the tasty treats!**



## Beauty Banks donate a truck load of goodies to the RHN

Staff and patients were delighted to receive half a truck's load worth of toiletries from Beauty Banks, a people-powered, grassroots movement fighting hygiene poverty in the UK.

Visiting restrictions meant that toiletries were more difficult for patients to obtain. Staff also appreciated the hand creams and lip balms, especially after long hours kitted out in PPE!

**You can find out more about Beauty Banks on their website [www.beautybanks.org.uk](http://www.beautybanks.org.uk)**



## GAIL's drops off bags full of baked good for frontline workers

In the early days of lockdown, GAIL's bakery made a surprise delivery of baked goods to night staff working at the RHN.

Staff were delighted to receive these tasty goodies which helped boost morale.

**Thanks to GAIL's bakery for making this thoughtful delivery!**

**GAIL'S  
BAKERY**

**THANK YOU** FOR YOUR SUPPORT

**THANK YOU** FOR YOUR SUPPORT



## Art supplies donated for therapy sessions

Our wonderful art therapists were still giving 1:1 sessions with patients (at a social distance) but unfortunately ran out of materials and art supplies due to the crisis meaning suppliers were unable to restock us. After an appeal on social media, we received lots of lovely donations of brushes palettes, coloured paper, poster and acrylic paint, glues, colouring pencils and pens, clay and coloured tissue paper.

**A big thanks to everyone who kindly donated to allow the sessions to go ahead unhindered!**



## Running three marathons over 26 days

RHN Head of Service, **Katie Richards**, (quite literally) went the extra mile by running 2.6 miles every day for 26 days – that's almost three marathons!

Katie raised an incredible £928.75 for the RHN, while continuing to work long hours at the hospital as a core member of the COVID-19 team.

Katie took this on as part of the Two Point Six challenge, the replacement event from organisers of the London Marathon.

**Congratulations and thank you, Katie!**

## Wimbledon tennis share strawberries to key workers

Staff and patients were treated to 200 punnets of delicious strawberries, courtesy of the **All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC)**.

The AELTC said thank you with a donation of 200 punnets of Wimbledon strawberries per day to NHS staff and frontline workers in London. More than 26,000 strawberries, which would have been used for The Championships 2020, were hulled and portioned by a group of AELTC staff.

**Thank you to everybody at the AELTC for the sweet treats!**



## A brand new way of working for the RHN

At the start of lockdown, all non-clinical staff were urged to work at home if possible. This meant many staff members had to get used to a brand new way of working.

Keen to keep in touch with the frontline and support staff who were still coming into the hospital during the lockdown period, members of the executive team set up a webcam by main reception to greet everybody as they arrived for their shifts.

**Thank you to everyone who got to grips to a new way of working life at the RHN!**



## Aramark's 'hydration station' a hit with staff

When lockdown was in full swing, **RHN catering supplier, Aramark**, called in connections to secure some tasty freebies for frontline workers at the RHN.

Catering manager, **Maria Gonzales**, set up the 'hydration station' in the hospital's main corridor, where staff could freely help themselves to coffee from a Nescafe Nespresso machine, and goodies from Coca-cola, Füd energy drink, Suntory, Pepsi-Co, Green Cola Company, Windfall Brands and Lindt chocolate.

**Thank you Maria and Aramark for your hard work and donations!**



## Music therapist performs 26 songs in 26 minutes

Also taking on the Two Point Six challenge was senior music therapist, **Bernice Chu**.

Bernice took to her Facebook account to perform 26 songs in 26 minutes. She was cheered on by colleagues at the RHN and friends who tuned in to watch her performance.

Her superb performance raised £582.

**Well done and thank you Bernice!**

# Being an RHN patient Mark's story

I'm a 60 year old accountant and client director and have been at the RHN since May 2020. On the evening of our office Christmas party, I had a fall, injured my head and was admitted to intensive care in Southampton hospital.

I was in a coma for three weeks and my memory is not sufficient to recall the details of that period, however my family have helped me to fill in the gaps. I've been unable to work since my accident and currently receiving specialist support at the RHN to help with my recovery.

After three weeks in intensive care, I was moved to a hospital in Jersey where I was looked after by medical staff and began receiving physiotherapy and occupational therapy. My stay was cut short due to COVID-19 as staff there became unable to support my rehabilitation under increased pressures. I was moved to Overdale Care Home based in St Saviour before being moved back into a general hospital, and then again to Lakeside Care Home.

Occasions out of Lakeside were few and far between due to social distancing and lockdown rules which were strictly upheld and seemed to dictate my stay. The staff were very caring and attentive, and I was able to stay in touch with family (speaking with them through the window from distance or an iPad). There was a lot of effort expended by my wife when transferring my care to the RHN, but we had heard such good things about the expertise of staff there.

*"My life changed as a consequence of my injury"*

My daily routine has changed out of recognition. I ceased work after 30 years, required assistance with daily care tasks and struggled being away from my family, lacking contact with them. Vision in my eyes has been impacted, executive decision making and fact checking led to vivid and concerning dreams and my balance was also affected.



Mark wearing a t-shirt he designed in an art session

At the RHN, I'm encouraged to take on cognitive exercise to improve my memory and organisational skills. I receive regular occupational therapy and physiotherapy as well as interesting ad-hoc activities like music therapy, speech and language therapy and clinical psychology. In my spare time I catch up on my Sudoku puzzle book and other activities other activities sourced from the iPad, but this does not mean that the occasional nap is unwelcome.

*"My ambition is to recover my faculties 100% to enable me to return to a working life and family."*

I have had to make a few changes to my home to accommodate my needs, for example we have installed a wet room shower and put in a railing next to a staircase in the house. I have been away from home for a number of months and am looking forward to returning home to the family in the next few weeks.

I have been impressed with the food at the hospital, they say a way to a man's heart is through his stomach and I am no exception. The food has been hearty, plentiful and tasty. A special mention to the staff in the kitchen. I've done some chopping and peeling in lunch group, cooking may become my speciality when I am home!

The time spent at the RHN has made me rethink my life journey. I appreciate the care and attention available if things turn sour – life's journey is not straightforward – but the care and attention of staff has been exemplary.

To find out more about the different ways you can support the RHN, please visit [www.rhn.org.uk/support-us/donate/](http://www.rhn.org.uk/support-us/donate/)

## Donate to our COVID-19 appeal

Thanks to your support we have so far raised over £150,000, but with increased pressures on charities due to the virus we still need your support...

**Text RHNDGIVE 5 to 70085 to donate £5**

Texts cost the value of your donation plus one standard rate message and you'll be opting to hear more about our work and fundraising via telephone and SMS. If you'd like to give but do not wish to receive any marketing communications, text RHNDGIVENOINFO 5 to 70085.



### What's on?

**Saturday 6 February 2021**

**RHN Winter Walk**

Wimbledon Common

A 5 mile sponsored walk through Wimbledon Common. Registration for an individual is £10 with a fundraising target of £100. A family registration is £25 with a target of £250.

**Sunday 21 March 2021**

**Hampton Court Palace Half Marathon**

Hampton Court Palace

The Palace Half is a flat and picturesque course which starts and finishes inside Hampton Court Palace.

Find our full range of events at [www.rhn.org.uk/events](http://www.rhn.org.uk/events)

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

### Courses and lectures

**Wednesday 3 February 2021**

**One day PDOC Observer and Facilitator SMART course**

**Tuesday 30 March 2021**

**Music Therapy Assessment Tool for Awareness in Disorders of Consciousness (MATADOC) Online Training**

**Tuesday 4 May 2021**

**Nutritional Challenges in the Brain Injured Patient's Journey**

Find our full range of events at [www.rhn.org.uk/events](http://www.rhn.org.uk/events)

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

## Lavender funds

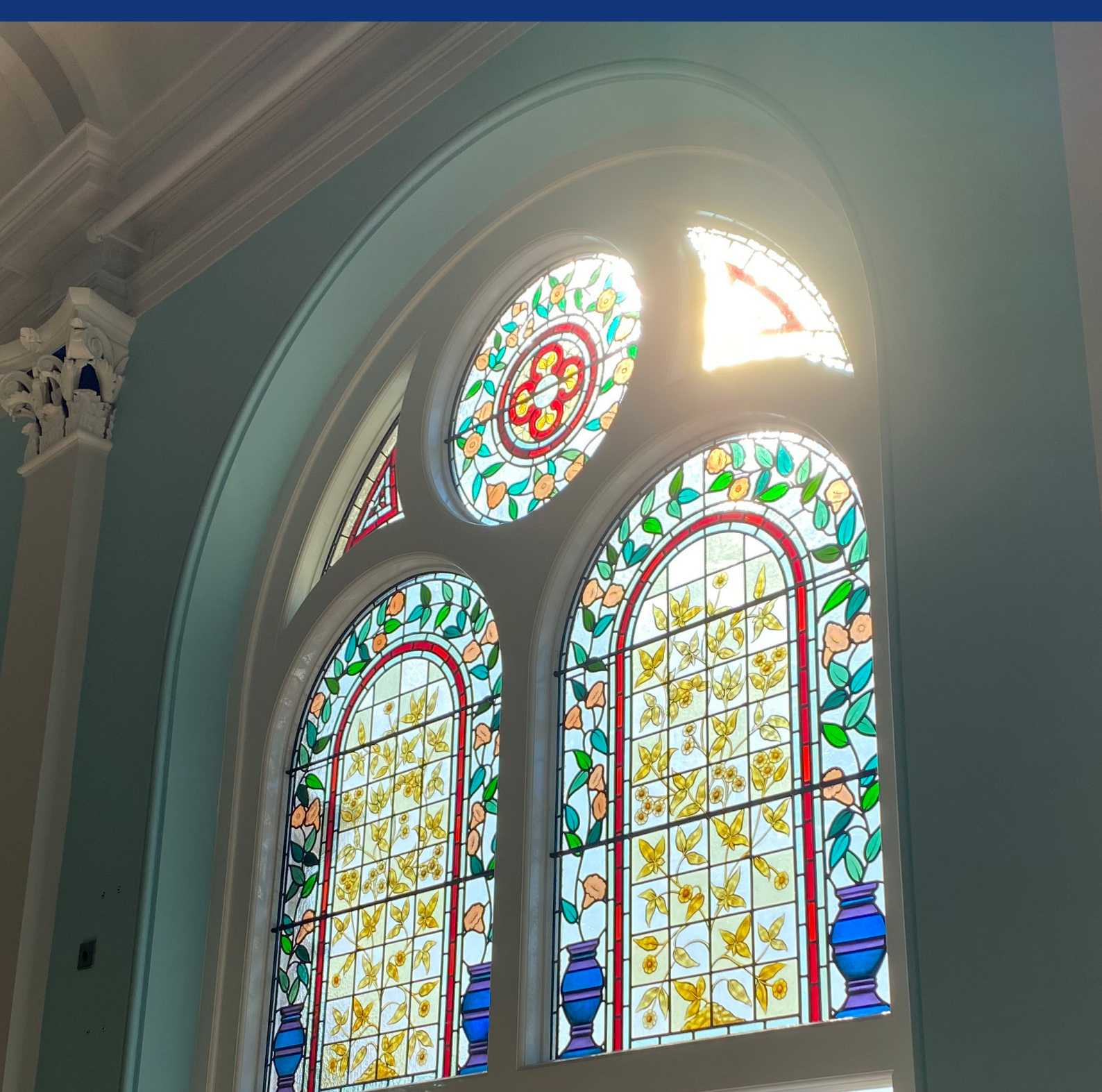
### A lasting tribute to those we love

The people featured in the right image include past patients, volunteers and staff of the RHN and family members, whose loved ones have chosen to continue supporting the RHN by setting up a tribute fund and plant a lavender bush in their memory.

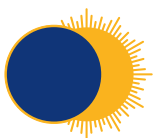
These beautiful living tributes can be found in the RHN gardens and are regularly visited by families, staff and patients.

For more information about Lavender Funds or to donate towards one of those listed on the right please contact Isabel Barrett on 020 8780 4557 or email [ibarrett@rhn.org.uk](mailto:ibarrett@rhn.org.uk).

Adeh Murray Sellar	Eileen McKay	Michael Brocklehurst
Anne Prosser	France-Raoul Chateau	Michael Lindsay
Antony Olley	Ghulam Sarwar	Patricia Burston
Avis June Smith	Graham Boiling	Paul Loft
Barbara Garnham	Graham Phillips	Peggy Stannard
Barbara Kelly	Henry John Old	Peter John Davies
Catherine Ann Fitzgerald	Hugh Munro	Peter Gow
Christopher Bedford	James Pirie	Peter Newton
Neale Gordon-Wilson	Kamaljit Toor	Roger Smith
David Driver	Lesley Jean Hyams	Rosemary Ann Shurrock
David John Fincham	Lucy Jane Denniston	Sean Hamilton
David John Gillett	Margaret Deller	Shirley Gill
Diana Merrick	Maud Riley	Taranjit Kaur Chadha
Eileen Dorothy Barrett	Maureen Lesley O'Brien	Ted & Gladys Black
	Megan Paton	Trevor George Kingham
	Megan Walters	Ved & Helena Aggarwal
		Winifred Warwick-Mayo



Rehabilitation and long term care  
for people with profound disabilities  
caused by brain injury



Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability

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