



KNIT FOR A BIT WITH THE RHN



With autumn well and truly upon us it's time to get cosy and hunker down for the cooler months. As the dark nights draw in, what better way to count down the days to Christmas than to **Knit For A Bit!**

Those keen needle-craft enthusiasts amongst us will know that knitting is 2021 high fashion. Thousands of you took up knitting as a hobby during lockdown and the RHN counts several expert knitters amongst its staff and patients. Back in 2018 a group of staff from across the hospital even had their own knitwear stall at our Christmas Fair.



So, if knitting is your thing, then why not cast on in support of the RHN, and take on our three month **Knit For A Bit** challenge. We are inviting participants to knit hats for patients to keep them warm through the winter months, or get creative, knitting items of your choice to sell to friends and family in aid of the RHN. Or donate

them to us and we will sell at one of our future community events to raise funds for the hospital.

We'll also be running a virtual yarn bomb on social media. You can tweet photos of your creations to us **@RHNUK** with the hashtag **#RHNKnitForABit**



If you are ready to become a hat hero and cast on in support of the RHN, take a look at the simple pattern for an adult hat on page seven.

Completed hats and donations towards the challenge can be sent to:

Knit For A Bit Challenge
Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability
West Hill
London
SW15 3SW

FUNDRAISING UPDATE: A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

As an independent charity hospital caring for adults with brain injury the RHN believes in providing services that support the patient as a whole. In many instances, these services are not funded by the NHS or central government. Instead, we fundraise over £3 million every year to make sure our patients can access the best possible range of equipment, activities and therapies.

This year, individual givers just like you have donated over £600,000 towards that target, a remarkable achievement, given that so many people have had a challenging 12 months. Below is a recap of just some of the services you have funded in 2021.



Wheelchair Services

Our spring 2021 newsletter appeal was in support of our Wheelchair and Postural Management service. The RHN strives to provide a customised loan wheelchair to every patient who arrives at the hospital. Often, these patients have spent several months in an acute or intensive care hospital bed, and it is vital to their rehabilitation and recovery that their therapists and carers can get them up and in a wheelchair as soon as possible. A team of wheelchair specialists builds every chair in our onsite workshop and we keep a range of parts, including frames, wheels and head rests in stock. However these parts do wear out and require replacing regularly. This year you helped us raise £24,000 to keep our stock of loan wheelchairs up to date, enough to fully fund 16 brand new wheelchairs.

Let's Get Moving!

Back in the summer, we asked for your help to purchase some new equipment for our therapy gym. When the COVID-19 pandemic began the gym had only been open 12 months, having been completely re-furbished in 2019. However, as the pandemic progressed, and we started to see more patients being admitted with the long term consequences of COVID-19 infection, it became obvious we needed to invest in a greater range of equipment, to suit their rehabilitation requirements. Our Let's Get Moving! appeal was launched in June and thanks to your generosity we were able to raise the £20,000 required in just over two months.



Music Therapy

In our autumn newsletter, Senior Music Therapist, Michael Jenkins interviewed former patient Trudi Kemp, on her experiences of music therapy, part of our rehabilitation programme which receives no NHS funding. Music therapy not only assisted Trudi in her recovery from brain injury, but also re-ignited her passion for playing the clarinet. Our Music Therapists use a wide variety of instruments, from simple tambourines to pianos and guitars, to support our patients through their physical and emotional recovery. These instruments often get damaged and need to be repaired or replaced. Thanks to your support we were able to raise enough funds to cover the costs of replacement instruments for another year.

And Finally...Congratulations To Our Fundraising Star, Dan

Many of you will be familiar with Dan, who has been the face of our national fundraising campaign throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to his enthusiasm to get involved in fundraising we have been able to raise an amazing £132,000 to provide support to all our patients, but in particular those patients who arrive at the RHN with no belongings and no family to bring them the basics, like toiletries and clothing. Here's Dan, with his mum and his sister, being presented with a fundraising certificate to commemorate his contribution to one of our most successful appeals.



Everyone at the RHN would like to say a big Thank You to everyone who has supported one of our appeals this year. You've been amazing!



Nurse Associates: The RHN Is Investing In Frontline Healthcare Staff With A New Training Scheme.

In April this year, the RHN launched a new Nurse Associate Apprenticeship, in partnership with Kingston University. We asked RHN Matron, Laura Chapman about the benefits of the scheme and also spoke to two of the first students to enrol on the course to find out more.

**Laura Chapman,
Matron,
RHN Senior Nursing Team**

The Nurse Associate Training Scheme at the RHN was set up to support career progression for the Healthcare Support Workers already working at the hospital. It's a stand-alone role that also provides a progression route into graduate level nursing and is completed over a 2 year period where staff split their normal role with studying and university placements to achieve the qualification.

Nurse associates are Band 4 staff so they bridge the gap between the Healthcare Support Workers and Registered Nurses. Nursing associates are members of the nursing team, who have gained a Nursing Associate Foundation Degree awarded by a Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) approved provider, typically involving two years of higher-level study enabling them to perform more complex and significant tasks than a healthcare assistant but not the same scope as a registered nurse. With additional training the role also provides a progression route into the registered nursing profession.

The role has been introduced to help build the capacity of the nursing workforce and the delivery of high-quality care while supporting nurses and wider multidisciplinary teams to focus on more complex clinical duties due to the complexities of our patients and residents. The scheme was set up to provide career progression for our committed staff whilst enhancing patient safety and quality, and we're very excited to have six successful applicants on the first year of the course.



**Shevon McIntosh,
Health Care Assistant,
Jack Emerson Centre**

I started working at the RHN in December 2017.

My ward is a specially designed environment that cares for and treats 16 people, who require ventilator support

and tracheostomy care. The staff on the ward is a multi-disciplinary team of specialist consultants plus a range of therapists and nursing staff. Together we care for people with complex needs on a short-term or long-term basis. In addition to the team we are supported by a specialist consultant and outreach specialist nurse from the Lane Fox Unit, which is the largest complex home ventilation, weaning and tracheostomies care centre in England.

For me the most rewarding aspect of working at the RHN is the appreciation from the patients, even if it is just a glowing smile. We are a one big family here at the RHN, and that's why I've chosen to go further and train as a nurse associate, so that I can give more to the RHN community, with the skills, knowledge and experience I will gain.



**Dilip de Filippis,
Rehabilitation Assistant,
Drapers Ward**

I have been working at RHN for the last 3 years and am currently based on Drapers ward which has a capacity of 19 patients.

Drapers is a rehabilitation ward. My patients are coming from acute care settings, but are emerging from PDOC (Prolonged Disorder Of Consciousness) and are showing positive signs of physical and cognitive improvement and becoming clinically stable.

They need physical and emotional support with their daily activities, and with preserving their privacy and dignity, in order to strengthen their abilities and enhance their wellbeing and independence.

At the end of their rehabilitation path, they will be discharged to other rehab settings, care homes, supported living accommodation or to their own home.

The most rewarding thing about working at the RHN is that I can actively support my patients, communicate with them and see them progress day by day through their rehabilitation process, in order to achieve more confidence and independence and get their life back to a new normal.

I decided to train as a nurse associate because I love working at RHN as a Rehabilitation Assistant, but I also want to develop my skills, experience, knowledge and career, in order to support and care for my patients from a medical and nursing point of view.

Art Room Appeal with Briar

The art room is one of the architectural gems of the RHN. Situated in the corner of the main building its high ceilings and full length windows on two sides create a peaceful, sunlit space perfect for a wide variety of artistic pursuits. It's here that our team of art technicians, occupational therapists and trained volunteers help patients recover and maintain some of the physical and cognitive abilities they've lost through brain injury.

Sadly, during the lockdown, the art room had to close in order to minimise the chances of COVID-19 spreading between patient and staff groups. Now it's open once again, and we caught up with Art Technician, Briar Grootveldt, to find out what our patients and residents are currently working on.

Were patients able to work on art projects on their wards during lockdown?

During the first lockdown the art room was completely closed. Lauren – who was the art technician at the time - had to change roles and help out on the wards with washes, and patient care. There was a real halt on art but Lauren did manage to get one project going on the wards, which was a fantastic clay modelling project. She took clay to each ward and instructed patients, residents and staff, to model themselves out of clay. These are displayed in a cabinet at the RHN and are a great testament to the role of art in boosting morale during difficult times.

I started at the RHN during the second lockdown, when the art room was once again closed and the staff re-deployed. We did however make sure that whatever ward we were working on, art activities were happening. We started a tile making project that was intended to be reflections on what people were looking forward to after COVID-19, what they missed and representations of COVID-19 in general. We had one patient who made quite a profound tile; one that depicted a cage and a baby trapped inside it. We also had a tile that pictured two people hugging as this was what they missed most.



Now that the art room is open again what are the patients working on, either in groups or individually?

Thankfully, now the art room is open we have several projects going on. One ongoing project that I have started is cane toppers for the sensory garden. Clay flowers that will sit on the top of sticks and be planted into the ground. This project will hopefully get everyone from each ward involved and bring some joy and colour to the sensory garden.

Aside from that big project, lots of patients have their own personal work. These vary from gifts to family members, personal explorations with woodwork, clay, painting, embroidery and printing.

In our groups we do a new project each week. Last week was tie-dyeing tea towels and the week before that was pinch pots!

We are also in the process of creating a 2022 calendar of patient artwork, which should be available for sale in November.



What are the benefits of occupational therapy art for rehab patients and for long term residents?

We believe that the RHN Art room provides so many benefits for patients. It is great for general wellbeing, having the opportunity to be creative and express yourself- the messier the better! We try to make the art room a bit of a safe haven- a less clinical space where patients and residents can express themselves. The artwork created in here can also create a great sense of achievement- there are so many fantastic works of art that come out of this place.

Occupational therapy art provides many functional benefits that work on regaining function that may have been lost since the brain injury, or to incorporate a weaker limb in a task, or grip a paint brush again. We might also be working on cognition goals during the sessions; which would be something like following all the necessary steps to complete a task, choice making or initiating ideas. Patients come up with brilliant ideas and we really want to champion and embrace neuro-diversity in the art room.



Whether it is a chance to learn a new skill, or perhaps continue with a past hobby there may be many reasons why someone is referred to us. We have lots of different activities to offer from clay, to mosaic, to papier maché, to print, to paint, hopefully there is something for everyone. It also means we can find projects that have a personal value to the individual, whether that's a present for a family member, or something to take home.

Adaptive equipment we use helps to make activities accessible for different levels of abilities, and hopefully makes the art room accessible to as many patients as possible.

How will the art room be celebrating Christmas this year?

As Christmas was so difficult last year due to the pandemic, we really hope we can make it a special one this year. There's always plenty of homemade gift making, homemade decoration making and wrapping paper designing. We will hopefully be doing all of that and more! Perhaps we could even get a Christmas market/stall going.



What are your plans for the art room in 2022?

As I've only just stepped into the new art technician role, I am feeling the pressure to continue Lauren's legacy, as she's now moved on to a new role. I have quite a lot of ideas hidden up my sleeve, as so many things have been restricted in the last year I feel like it really is time to embrace any opportunities we have.

I'd love to curate an exhibition showcasing the work that is created in the art room. It would also be wonderful to be visiting

galleries and exhibitions again with patients and residents, and perhaps run some collaborative workshops with charities working with similar patient groups to ours.

The art room service provides one-to-one and group sessions for over 300 patients a year, helping them to improve their co-ordination, upper limb strength, cognition and fine motor skills. We raise over £50,000 a year to run the art room, keeping it stocked with a wide range of art materials and maintaining the equipment, including the hospital's own pottery kiln. If you would like to support the art room with a donation, please turn to the back page to find out more.



Lavender Remembrance Fund

Below are the names of past patients, volunteers and staff at the RHN, whose loved ones have chosen to set up a tribute fund and plant a lavender bush in their memory. The tribute lavender beds can be found in the RHN gardens. Please feel free to visit the hospital and take a look.

<p><i>Adeh Murray Sellar</i> <i>Anne Prosser</i> <i>Antony Olley</i> <i>Avis June Smith</i> <i>Barbara Garnham</i> <i>Barbara Kelly</i> <i>Catherine Ann Fitzgerald</i> <i>Christopher Bedford</i> <i>David Driver</i> <i>David John Fincham</i> <i>David John Gillett</i> <i>David Richard Perry</i> <i>Diana Merrick</i> <i>Edith Kitty Roper</i> <i>Eileen Dorothy Barrett</i> <i>Eileen McKay</i> <i>France-Raoul Chateau</i> <i>Gabrielle Orchard</i> <i>Ghulam Sarwar</i> <i>Graham Boiling</i></p>	<p><i>Graham Phillips</i> <i>Henry John Old</i> <i>Hugh Munro</i> <i>James Pirie</i> <i>Jean Ann Stowe</i> <i>Johnathan Panaguiton</i> <i>Kamaljit Toor</i> <i>Lesley Jean Hyams</i> <i>Lucy Jane Denniston</i> <i>Margaret Deller</i> <i>Mark Goodfellow</i> <i>Marvin Couson</i> <i>Maud Riley</i> <i>Maureen Lesley O'Brien</i> <i>Megan Paton</i> <i>Megan Walters</i> <i>Michael Brocklehurst</i> <i>Michael Lindsay</i> <i>Neale Gordon-Wilson</i> <i>Omar Hayat Shaikh</i></p>	<p><i>Patricia Burston</i> <i>Paul Loft</i> <i>Peggy Stannard</i> <i>Peter Gow</i> <i>Peter John Davies</i> <i>Peter Newton</i> <i>Roger Smith</i> <i>Rosemary Ann Shurrock</i> <i>Sean Hamilton</i> <i>Shirley Gill</i> <i>Sirima Suansiri</i> <i>Stephen John Mitchell</i> <i>Stuart-Copping</i> <i>Taranjit Kaur Chadha</i> <i>Ted & Gladys Black</i> <i>Tom McClure</i> <i>Trevor George Kingham</i> <i>Ved & Helena Aggarwal</i> <i>Winifred Warwick-Mayo</i></p>
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Lavender Funds are a way of celebrating the life of a loved one while helping others in need of our specialist care and support. After setting up a fund you will also have the opportunity to plant a special memorial lavender in our peaceful garden.

For more information please contact Isabel Barrett in Fundraising on 020 8780 4557 or ibarrett@rhn.org.uk

Chaplain's Corner



RHN Chaplain, Geoff Coyne

By the time you read this it will be autumn, and autumn is a season of paradoxes – it is a time of loss as the leaves fall, the flowers die and so much green disappears, and yet it is a time of harvest, of bounty, of plenty. It is also a time of cooler days and a chill in the air but it is also a time of warm colours – the reds, oranges, yellows of the leaves.

Autumn is only a reflection of the paradox of our lives. For the moment we are born, though we start to grow and develop, we are on a journey that will one day end with our dying. We do not live forever, though generally we have many years, many decades to live out our lives.

And the paradox is a reminder that we live on this earth surrounded by loss and impermanence. So let us be appreciative of all that we have in the here and now. Whether that be, to name but a few, a loving family, caring friends, supportive colleagues, a measure of health, strength and mobility, food on the table, music, sports and hobbies, a source of income and so much more.

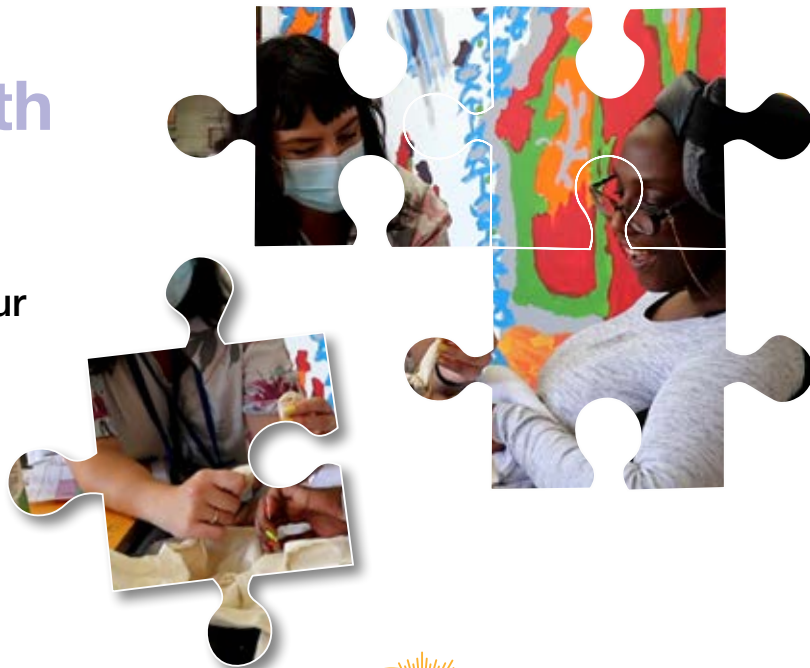
Yes, Autumn is a paradox but it calls us to appreciate every moment of each day.

Be a part of the bigger picture with a gift in your will

Once you have looked after your loved ones, please consider a little something for the RHN.

You can make or update your will for FREE via our Free Wills Service.

There's no obligation to make a gift to the RHN... but that would be very welcome!



Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability

To register for the free will service contact Isabel Barrett, Legacy Manager
020 8780 4557 – ibarrett@rhn.org.uk

Be a hat hero! Knit for a bit for the RHN.



Materials & Notes:

Yarn: 100g aran weight yarn (approx 166m/182 yds)

Needles: 5mm circular needle, 60cm length

Gauge: 18sts to 10cm (4") in stocking stitch

Size: fits head circumference 22-23" (56-60cm)

Abbreviations:

k = knit

pm = place marker

rnd = round

st/s = stitch/es

p = purl

rep = repeat

yo = yarn over

sl wyib = slip st as if to purl, with yarn in back

Directions - cast on

Cast on 88sts & join to work in rnd.

Place marker to denote start of rnd and work in k1, p1 rib, until hat measures 3" from cast on edge.

Switch to mistake rib: Rnd 1: k1, p1 to end. Rnd 2, k. Work until hat measures 9" from cast on edge.

Decreases: Rnd 3: k2tog to end of rnd.

Rnd 4: k

Rep rnds 3 & 4 until 12sts remain.

Break yarn, and use tapestry needle to thread through live stitches, then fasten off.

Add pom pom or tassels if preferred.

LOUISE TILBROOK
DESIGNS

Fuss Free Beanie Pattern by Louise Tilbrook. Printed with permission of the designer. Copyright 2020 Louise Tilbrook, all rights reserved. No part of the pattern may be distributed without written permission of Louise Tilbrook.
www.louisetilbrookdesigns.net

Dates for your diary

Halloween Night Trail

28 October, 6pm

Join us for our brand new 5 mile evening walk through London's dark streets, spooky parks and cemetery. Why not get in to the haunting spirit and dress to impress for the chance to win a prize. Sign up soon, if you dare!

Christmas Carol Concert

9 December

'Tis the season to be jolly! Join us for an evening of musical performances, cheerful carols and indulge in mince pies and mulled wine. It'll be sure to put you in the festive spirit with all proceeds going towards the music therapy service at the RHN. Taking place next door at the Holy Trinity Church in Putney at 6:30pm



The Big Winter Read

January

Get read-y for January with your New Year's resolution. Take on our reading challenge and ask friends, family and colleagues to sponsor you for each book you read in support of the RHN.

RHN Winter Walk

5 February

Take a Winter Walk with us as we trek 5 miles through the leafy woods of Wimbledon Common with snacks and drinks included. There is a registration fee of £5 per person and a fundraising target of £100 per person. This is a great event for all the family.



Please note that the above events will only go ahead should they adhere to the Government's guidelines.

If you would like further information on any of these events then please visit www.rhn.org.uk or contact the events team by email events@rhn.org.uk or call us on **020 8780 4560**.

Follow us: twitter.com/rhnuk facebook.com/rhnuk instagram.com/rhnuk

Please click [here](#) if you'd like to support

The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability's Art Room Appeal.

- £15 will provide a box of assorted art paper for painting and drawing.
- £20 will provide 12 bottles of water-based paint.
- £25 will pay for a patient to enjoy a one hour leisure session in the Art Room.
- £ _____ my preferred amount today.



Thank you for your support!

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Don't forget to let us know whether or not you're a UK tax payer. We can reclaim the tax on your donation and any future donations, to make your donation **25% more, at no cost to you!**

Donate online: www.rhn.org.uk/online-donation / Or call: 020 8780 4568

You can also donate by post, sending your gift to: **Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, FREEPOST, London SW15 3SW**. Using a stamp will save RHN money. When sending a donation by post, we would appreciate it if you could include your address and email details so that we can continue to keep you updated on our work.

You can change the way we contact you or stop our communication to you by calling **020 8780 4568** or emailing fundraising@rhn.org.uk

If this project is fully funded by the time we receive your donation, your gift will be used for the general benefit of patients at the RHN.