



RHN Supporter



Royal Hospital for
Neuro-disability

Registered Charity No. 205907

NEWS



NEWS FOR SUPPORTERS OF THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR NEURO-DISABILITY

2024 ISSUE 1



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Navigating the Journey of Grief - Bereavement Support at the RHN

The journey of grieving begins, for most RHN families and friends, long before the death of their loved one. The acquired brain injury or neurological diseases that affect most of our patients mean that, whilst they are still physically present in their loved ones lives, much of whom they were before their illness has been lost. This loss leads to an experience of grief for their loved ones, and this grieving goes on for the many years that the patient is living with us.

When a patient does die after a long term brain injury or illness the process of grieving is complex and challenging. There are many reasons for this, including the working through of all of the feelings from years of ambiguous loss, the grieving for the loss of the “new” person that family and friends have got to know since the injury or illness, the sudden absence of a familiar routine, and anxious thoughts about the future. All of this can create a profound sense of emptiness and despair.

In these difficult times, the role of a Bereavement Support Officer becomes invaluable, providing compassionate guidance and practical assistance to navigate the journey of grief.

Bereavement Support at the RHN

The Bereavement Support Officer at the RHN offers personalised support to families dealing with loss. They provide a safe space to express emotions and validate experiences, they support families through all of the challenging dynamics and offer practical guidance on navigating the immediate and long-term challenges of grief.

The RHN’s current Bereavement Support Officer is Suzy Thomas, a member of our Leisure and Family Services Team, and she works in conjunction with our Chaplaincy team to support the families and friends of the patient who is dying, or has died.

“Because many of our patients are with us for many months or even years before they die, we get to know them and their families very well and that means we are in a position to offer family members very practical and tailored support, understanding and guidance.” – Suzy, RHN Bereavement Support Officer.

Benefits of Practical Bereavement Support

- **Emotional Support:** Bereavement Support Officers provide a listening ear and empathic understanding, helping families navigate the overwhelming emotions of grief.
- **Coping Strategies:** They equip families with coping mechanisms to manage the emotional and practical aspects of grief, including stress management, communication skills, and self-care techniques.
- **Information and Guidance:** They provide comprehensive information about grief, bereavement processes, and available resources, helping families make informed decisions during a vulnerable time.
- **Connection and Community:** They connect families with support groups and networks, fostering a sense of belonging and shared experiences.
- **Long-Term Support:** They offer long-term support, recognising that grief is a non-linear journey, and families may need assistance at various stages.

Investing in Bereavement Support: You can help today.

The work of the Bereavement Support Officer at the RHN is entirely funded by donations from our supporters. This year we'd like to raise £40,000 for our Bereavement Support Appeal, offering guidance and understanding to families navigating grief.

By donating to our Bereavement Support Appeal, you'll be making a positive impact on the well-being of families facing the most difficult time of their lives. You'll help them to navigate the complexities of grief, fostering resilience, emotional healing, and a path towards a meaningful life after loss.

Any contribution you can make to our Bereavement Support Appeal today will make a profound difference in the lives of those who have lost loved ones after long-term illness. It will provide them with the support they need to heal, grow, and find strength in the face of adversity. For more information on donating to our Bereavement Support Appeal please see the reply slip that came with this newsletter.

Many of our bereaved families choose to remember their loved one by planting a lavender bush in the hospital grounds.





Building our wildlife friendly credentials

At the RHN we try to provide external memorials that are not only befitting to our supporters and their loved ones but also environmentally friendly. Our lavender memorials support a myriad of bees and butterflies and our memorial trees provide a welcome perch for local birds, squirrels and more.

However, it's now widely recognised that many bird species are in decline due to loss of habitats, pesticide use and climate change. There are simply not enough nesting sites and we certainly noticed a reduction in bird activity last year. In an effort to help our feathered friends; and maintain that all important therapeutic connection to nature for our patients, we have introduced bird boxes to our memorial options.



With the help of volunteers from our corporate supporters, Merkle and Nelsons, we have built a collection of multi species bird boxes. Personalised memorial plaques will be available to purchase and these will be affixed to the bird boxes before they are installed. What a wonderful, nurturing way to pay tribute to a loved one. A camera will be placed in one of the boxes to stream onto the hospital e-screens for patients, families and staff to enjoy.

Memorial Bird boxes with plaques cost £30 each and can be ordered now by contacting ibarrett@rhn.org.uk or 020 8780 4557.

Future plans for corporate and other volunteer groups are already in place to build bat boxes and insect hotels, so do contact us on the details above if you would like to bring your colleagues along to an alternative team building experience, whilst doing something really good for a worthy cause.

WIN £25,000 WITH THE RHN WEEKLY LOTTERY!

How would you like to support the RHN, and be in with a chance to win £25,000? The RHN is launching its first weekly charity lottery this month, giving you the chance to support our work and win some great cash prizes.

You can sign up by direct debit, for as little as £1 a week, to be in with a chance of winning the first prize of £25,000. Second prize is £1,000, with runner-up prizes ranging from £5 to £20. All the prize money is provided by our lottery partner, Woods Valdata, who run lotteries for charities throughout the UK, from small hospices, to high profile, national charities.

If you'd like to sign up for the chance to win £25,000 in our weekly draw, please visit <https://rhnuk.affinitylottery.org.uk/>

If you have any questions about the RHN weekly lottery please check out our FAQ at <https://rhnuk.affinitylottery.org.uk/faqs/>



Christmas Festivities at the RHN

Carol Concert

Our Carol Concert took place on the eve of 07 December, where 150 guests enjoyed performances from the Royal Harmonics and our very own RHN Choir, as well as festive readings from our special guests, Aled Jones, Ron Cook and Ronnie Wood, whose Dad is a resident here at RHN. A highlight of the evening was everyone's amazing performance as well as the incredible jokes by our RHN Chaplain and host for the evening, Geoff!



The event raised £6,641.40 which will go towards the refurbishment of one of our specialist wards, Hunter Ward, which will provide an updated, dignified living area for the residents in our care and contribute to their sense of individuality.

We are incredibly grateful to Floyd Slaski Architects who very kindly sponsored the event. Thank you to everyone who came!



Christmas Fair

For the first time, we held our Christmas Fair on a Saturday. With over 20 local stalls, this was a perfect opportunity for guests to enjoy some Christmas shopping, mulled wine, mince pies and some fun activities on our fundraising stalls. The event raised £1,642.90, which will go towards continuing to provide the services that enhance the quality of life for our patients and their families.

The art room also held an exhibition filled with patient artwork for people to see all the incredible work they do.

These events not only generate income for the Hospital but allow us to show the public what we do here at RHN and how their support makes a difference. We thank everyone who came to these events!

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.

*Adeh Murray Sellar
Anne Prosser
Antony Olley
Avis June Smith
Barbara Garnham
Barbara Kelly
Catherine Ann Fitzgerald
Christopher Bedford
David Driver
David John Fincham
David John Gillett
David Richard Perry
Diana Merrick
Edith Kitty Roper
Eileen Dorothy Barrett
Eileen McKay
France-Raoul Chateau
Gabrielle Orchard
Ghulam Sarwar
Graham Boiling*

*Graham Phillips
Henry John Old
Hugh Munro
James Pirie
Jean Ann Stowe
Jonathan Panaguiton
Kamaljit Toor
Lesley Jean Hyams
Lucy Jane Denniston
Margaret Deller
Mark Goodfellow
Marvin Couson
Maud Riley
Maureen Lesley O'Brien
Megan Paton
Megan Walters
Michael Brocklehurst
Michael Lindsay
Neale Gordon-Wilson
Omar Hayat Shaikh*

*Patricia Burston
Paul Loft
Peggy Stannard
Peter Gow
Peter John Davies
Peter Newton
Roger Smith
Rosemary Ann Shurrock
Sean Hamilton
Shirley Gill
Sirima Suansiri
Stephen John Mitchell
Stuart - Copping
Taranjit Kaur Chadha
Ted & Gladys Black
Tom McClure
Trevor George Kingham
Ved & Helena Aggarwal
Winifred Warwick-Mayo*

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 at ibarrett@rhn.org.uk

- Dates for your Diary -

RHN Winter Walk

Enjoy a group walk through the local commons and green spaces near the RHN. You may even celebrate your achievement with a warm treat at our site after! Dates are being finalised for February/March so keep your eyes peeled for more information.

Easter Egg Hunt - Saturday 30 March 2024

Join us at the RHN for a family fun day out during Easter Weekend! Kids of all ages can enjoy searching through our gardens for Easter treats and surprises.

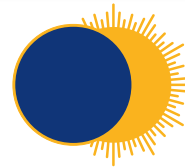
Ford Ride London-Essex - Sunday 26 May 2024

The 2024 Ride London-Essex is a unique opportunity to ride 100 or 60 miles on traffic-free roads through the heart of London and neighbouring Essex. It will start and finish in the centre of the capital, with 100 miles of rolling roads through some of Essex's most beautiful countryside and villages in between.

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**.



Yes! I want to donate to the Bereavement Support appeal at The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability.



Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability

Please click [here](#) if you'd like to support The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability's Bereavement Support Appeal.

I'm sending my gift of:

£20 £50 £100

£ _____ my preferred amount today.

giftaid it 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!



Thank you for your support!

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.



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