

28 June 2011

Press Release

'MIN' RECRUITS NEW VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are being sought by Bath's Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS Foundation Trust, locally known as 'The Min', for a new 'meet and greet' role, welcoming patients and visitors to the hospital, and directing them as appropriate.

The hospital currently has approximately 30 volunteers in roles ranging from driving to assisting on the rheumatology ward which includes serving teas and coffees, helping in the dining room and doing shopping for patients. There is also a team of expert patients who provide advice and support to patients and a patient literature group which reviews literature and information written by staff for patients, their families and carers.

Chief executive, Kirsty Matthews said: "We have a very strong team of volunteers, some of whom have been with the hospital for over 20 years. Volunteers make an important contribution to enhancing the quality of the care we provide. We always welcome new volunteers and at the moment we are especially keen to hear from people who might be interested in our new 'meet and greet' role. It's so important that patients and visitors feel welcome from the moment they arrive at the hospital. We're confident that volunteers taking on this role, after training, will find it a rewarding one."

One of the hospital's volunteers, Lesley Smith, has recently been announced a winner in the Bath Volunteer Awards 2011 due to be presented on July 10th. Lesley was nominated for the award by the hospital where she has been doing voluntary work since 1988 mostly on the rheumatology ward. Her role includes chatting to patients, serving drinks and assisting staff serving meals to patients. She consistently goes above and beyond these duties and plays an important role enhancing the quality of care provided to patients.

She commented: "I was very pleased and very surprised to win the award. I just feel as if I'm doing what I always do. I enjoy working with people. I have been helping here in various ways for the last 24 years and it has benefitted me in many ways so I hope I can encourage others to do the same. It has been such an enjoyable experience in such a wonderfully friendly hospital".

Volunteer activities are in addition to that of paid staff and not a substitute. They complement the services that are delivered; can help free up paid staff to concentrate on the tasks they have been trained for and enable the community to be involved in the hospital.

Anyone interested in finding out more can do so by contacting Laura Davies at the hospital on 01225 473424.

ENDS

Press contact: Emma Mooney, Marketing & Communications Manager RNHRD
01225 465941 ext 439 emma.mooney@rnhrd.nhs.uk

Notes for Editors:

- An information pack is provided and potential volunteers are asked to fill in an application form before attending an informal meeting to discuss their interests and the roles that are available. There is a

recruitment process which includes CRB, references and health checks. Volunteers also receive appropriate induction and training opportunities.

- The Bath Volunteer Awards are organised by Springboard Bath.
- The RNHRD NHS FT is a national specialist rehabilitation and rheumatology hospital based in Bath. Offering services to adults, children and young people the Trust has expertise in general and complex:
 - Rheumatological and musculoskeletal conditions
 - Neurological rehabilitation
 - Chronic pain management
 - Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME
 - www.rnhrd.nhs.uk