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Press Release

HOSPITAL UNVEILS NEW LABORATORY AND ASSESSMENT ROOM FOR PATIENTS WITH COMPLEX REGIONAL PAIN SYNDROME

Bath's Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) NHS Foundation Trust, locally known as 'the Min' has unveiled a new pain laboratory and assessment room for patients with complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS).

CRPS affects one in every 4000 people in the UK. It is a term used to describe a collection of symptoms where pain in a limb (usually a single limb) is the major problem. Commonly affected areas are the hands and feet which may extend to affect the whole limb. Pain may start for no apparent reason or following injury to the limb (such as a fracture). Whereas pain would normally settle as the injury heals, in CRPS the pain continues and spreads beyond the original site of the injury. There is no known cure therefore research into understanding more about this condition is important.

The CRPS service at 'the Min' is a national service and one of the few in the UK dedicated to the treatment of this condition, providing outpatient and inpatient care. Each year the hospital treats around one hundred new patients. In addition to these clinical services, the unit has a national and international reputation for its research and education programmes.

The new rooms, developed in collaboration with UWE Bristol (University of the West of England) and enabled by contributions from a number of donors, are designed to improve services to patients who suffer from CRPS and assist in research projects into the condition.

The assessment room provides a dedicated space where patients can meet together to share their experiences of living with CRPS. As it is a relatively rare condition, patients value the opportunity to meet other sufferers. Two psychologists lead and facilitate these groups. The pain laboratory will be used to treat patients and facilitate research projects.

Professor Candy McCabe, who leads the CRPS service, commented: "Our research programme and the service we provide for patients are constantly evolving and it's important that the physical space and facilities we use also develop to support our work. The new rooms are a fabulous resource and we are tremendously grateful to the donors who have contributed so generously to the refurbishing and furnishing."

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Notes for Editors:

- A reception to mark the opening of the rooms will be held on October 28th. The new rooms will be launched by Professor Helen Langton, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences at UWE Bristol and Mrs Kirsty Matthews, Chief Executive of RNHRD. The event will include a presentation from Professor Candy McCabe who leads the CRPS service at the hospital and co-founded and chairs the CRPS-UK Network. The event will be attended by partners in the research programmes including the UWE Bristol, and by representatives of organisations and companies who donated to enable the refurbishing and furnishing of the new rooms.

- Current studies at the Pain Management Research Centre include:
 - A pilot study exploring the relationship between social isolation and body perception in CRPS
 - Understanding sensorimotor integration and its role in pain.
 - Feasibility study to evaluate the potential of multi-modal imaging systems in CRPS
 - Sensorimotor dysfunction after fracture – an exploratory study
 - Treatment and referral of those with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome
 - Development of an Electrical Sensory Discrimination Therapies device (ESDT) for the relief of chronic pain in Complex Regional Pain Syndrome
 - Development and evaluation of a tool for assessing body images in CRPS
 - A multi-centre pan-European study exploring the patients' definition of recovery from CRPS.
 - Sensory-motor conflict and its relationship to behavioural and neurophysiological variables in CRPS, FMS, arthritis and healthy volunteers
 - Investigating the impact of different forms of advice and therapy on distal arm pain
- CRPS-UK National Register
- 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