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Press Release

RNHRD SECURES FUNDING FROM MACMILLAN CANCER CHARITY TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP AND HELP CANCER SURVIVORS FIGHT FATIGUE

The Adult Fatigue Management team, based at The Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS Foundation Trust (RNHRD FT), locally known as the 'Min' has secured £334,000 from Macmillan Cancer Support to provide a new fatigue management service for cancer survivors.

The Macmillan Step Up Service for Cancer Survivors, based at the 'Min' will be the first of its kind in the country. The service will be delivered by the Bath based hospital's inter-professional team who will provide a specialised fatigue management service to help cancer survivors who are struggling to cope with everyday life due to fatigue.

An ageing population, more effective treatments and earlier detection rates have led to an increase in the number of cancer survivors. It is estimated that there are two million people who are living with and beyond cancer in the United Kingdom today.

Some cancer survivors will experience fatigue that has a significant impact on their ability to perform everyday tasks or return to work, even a long time after active treatment.

Anne Johnson, joint speciality lead for the new service says: "We are delighted to receive this significant funding from Macmillan, it will allow us to use our expertise in fatigue management to meet this growing need and help cancer survivors learn how to best manage their condition and improve their quality of life.

"The service is designed to give a really positive boost to this group of people to enable them to 'step up' to the challenge of life beyond cancer."

The specialist team at the 'Min' are working with Macmillan, Avon, Somerset and Wiltshire Cancer Services Network (ASWCS Network), local practitioners and patient representatives, to develop, design and deliver this new service to help cancer survivors who feel that fatigue is preventing them from leading a full life.

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John Stuart, patient representative on the Step Up service steering group, says “The new service is great news. Fatigue was a big factor during my return to work and in trying to get a healthy balance ever since. I think the service will be a key part in helping the increasing number of cancer survivors move forward after their treatment.”

Macmillan has provided initial funding for three years to address the needs of this patient group. The team are planning to run a research and service evaluation strand alongside the new service to better understand the needs of cancer survivors. Dr Fiona Cramp, Associate Professor and Director of Post-graduate Research for Health & Life Sciences at the University of the West of England (UWE) is providing support to develop the research.

Maggie Crowe, Macmillan Development Manager, said “We are really delighted to be working with this specialist team who have exactly the right set of skills to support survivors of cancer.

“A diagnosis of cancer and the treatments for cancer can have a devastating effect on many aspect of a patient’s life. This service will help to address many of these issues and to support patients and their families to return to the life as they want it to be following their cancer experience”.

Patients can be referred to the Macmillan Step Up Service for Cancer Survivors by their GP or specialist cancer team.

Nikie Catchpool, joint specialty lead for the new service said: “The service is now accepting referrals and will include specialist assessment clinics and work and vocational rehabilitation to help cancer survivors improve their health and quality of life.”

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Notes for Editors:

- 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
- www.macmillan.org.uk