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Press Release

RNHRD NHS FT Consultant Scoops Two Awards for Innovative Online Patient Assessment Tool

An innovative online assessment tool designed in partnership with Dr Sengupta, a Consultant Rheumatologist at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) NHS Foundation Trust, has won two awards at the prestigious PM Society Digital Media awards.

Dr Sengupta identified a way to improve how AS patients are monitored and treated and worked with the health care company Abbott to create 'Talking AS', an online assessment tool. Talking AS helps make it quicker and easier to assess Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS) patients; patients can record their disease activity remotely, allowing their specialist to decide whether or not they need to review their treatments.

Talking AS is specific tool for Ankylosing Spondylitis but presents a model that could well be used in other long term conditions to enhance the efficiency of self-management and the relationship between patient and clinician.

AS is a chronic, inflammatory spinal condition which affects around one in 200 people in the UK. Spinal inflammation causes pain and stiffness, and if left untreated it can cause a fixed, stooping posture.

As well as allowing the monitoring of patients to be standardised and potentially reducing the number of unnecessary clinic appointments, Talking AS allows patients to become more involved in their care plan and better able to recognise and report significant changes in their condition.

Talking AS received an award for 'Healthcare Professional Website'; judges commented that the "really innovative use of patient data ensured that patient outcomes improved."

Talking AS also received an award for 'Digital Tools for Use in a Practical Setting', the judging panel finding the "Good, simple, effective design really overcame the barriers."

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Dr Sengupta, who leads the highly regarded AS rehabilitation course at the RNHRD (known locally as the 'Min') said: "I'm delighted that Talking AS has been recognised in this way. As a Consultant working with AS patients every day I am very aware that if you have AS, regularly recording symptoms and how they affect everyday life can really help when planning the best way to manage your condition."

Dr Sengupta explained: "Until now this has been a time consuming job, but with Talking AS patients can record symptoms in their own time ready for their next appointment, helping to make the best use of the time spent with healthcare professionals in the clinic. Patients and rheumatologists can track results over time, and get a better understanding of how patients have responded to any new or adjusted treatments."

To find out more visit www.talkingas.com.

Health care practitioners interested in registering for talking AS can email talkingas@abbott.com with their name, title and hospital unit.

OPPORTUNITY FOR INTERVIEWS

- **Consultant Rheumatologist Dr Sengupta available for further comment/interview**
- **Enclosed image of Dr Sengupta, jpeg of Talking AS**

ENDS

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Notes for Editors

The RNHRD NHS FT, known locally as the 'Min' 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
- Fatigue Management
- www.rnhrd.nhs.uk

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Ankylosing Spondylitis

At the RNHRD we aim to help with all aspects of AS, from early diagnosis to treatment with our AS course and the optimisation of drug treatments.

While it is impossible to predict how the condition will progress, the majority of patients with AS can lead full active lives. Appropriate diagnosis and early intervention from a specialist multidisciplinary team is crucial to reduce the long-term effects of this condition. Self-management is a key aspect of care, and it is recognised that active engagement in self-management of AS has a positive influence on its outcome.

PM Society

The not-for-profit PM Society was founded over 30 years ago as the Pharmaceutical Marketing Society. Today it educates, informs and facilitates networking and team-building among its 1400-plus active members from over 230 companies, to promote excellence in pharmaceutical marketing.

The PM Society's volunteer-led activities include the annual Advertising Awards in January, the healthcare industry's only dedicated Digital Marketing Awards each autumn and Interest Groups in Market Access, Patient Engagement, NHS Partnerships, Digital and Personal Development.

Entries in the Digital Media Awards are reviewed over a two stage judging process by a highly skilled and experienced panel of judges, comprising experts from industry and agency, as well as healthcare professionals.

www.pmsociety.org.uk