

24th September 2013

Press Release

RNHRD CLINICIAN AWARDED FUNDING FOR CFS/ME RESEARCH

A clinician at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS Foundation Trust (RNHRD) has been awarded research funding from the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) for a project that aims to advance treatment for children with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) or Myalgic Encephalopathy (ME).

Dr Esther Crawley is clinical lead for the CFS/ME service for children and young people at the Bath based RNHRD, and Reader in Child Health at The University of Bristol's School of Social and Community Medicine.

Dr Crawley will conduct a programme of work which includes: a project exploring recovery in children with CFS/ME, a multicentre trial investigating the effectiveness of exercise therapy compared with activity management for mild and moderately affected children and a project that starts to develop appropriate interventions for children who are severely affected with CFS/ME.

CFS/ME affects an estimated 600,000 adults and children in the UK. The outlook for children with CFS/ME who receive appropriate help is excellent, with most making a good or complete recovery.

Dr Crawley, who has been awarded an NIHR Senior Research Fellowship, said: "Paediatric CFS/ME is common and disabling, yet little is known about recovery, or whether national guidance on treatment using exercise is helpful. Results from this study will help us determine how many children recover, how long it will take and which treatments are effective."

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The University of Bristol-led five-year study entitled 'Investigating the treatment of paediatric Chronic Fatigue Syndrome or Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME)' has been awarded NIHR funding of over £864,000.

The RNHRD, known locally as the Min, provides a local and national service for children and young people with CFS/ME and has particular expertise in helping and supporting children who are severely affected or those with more than one problem.

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Notes to 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
 - Chronic pain management
 - Fatigue Management (CFS/ME and cancer survivorship fatigue)
 - www.rnhrd.nhs.uk

Further information:

About CFS/ME)

Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is relatively common and disabling condition, characterised by post-exertional fatigue and malaise, accompanied by other symptoms, such as muscle pain, insomnia, and poor concentration. Children need to have fatigue for more than 4 months and adults more than 6 months before the diagnoses can be made. Approximately one per cent of secondary school children miss a day a week or more of school because of CFS/ME and many are undiagnosed for years. Approximately 50 per cent of adults with CFS/ME are unable to work.

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is funded by the Department of Health to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research. Since its establishment in April 2006, the NIHR has transformed research in the NHS. It has increased the volume of applied health research for the benefit of patients and the public, driven faster translation of basic science discoveries into tangible benefits for patients and the economy, and developed and supported the people who conduct and contribute to applied health research. The NIHR plays a key role in the Government's strategy for economic growth, attracting investment by the life-sciences industries through its world-class infrastructure for health research. Together, the NIHR people, programmes, centres of excellence and systems represent the most integrated health research system in the world. For further information, visit the NIHR website (www.nihr.ac.uk).