

26<sup>th</sup> November 2013

## Press Release

### **REHABILITATION SERVICE LED BY RNHRD HIGHLY COMMENDED IN 2013 BREAST CANCER CARE NURSING NETWORK AWARDS**

A unique national service led by the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS Foundation Trust (RNHRD), in partnership with Barts Health NHS Trust, London and The Christie NHS Foundation Trust, Manchester, has been highly commended at the 2013 Breast Cancer Care Nursing Network Awards. The awards champion best practice in specialist breast care nursing and recognise those who have demonstrated innovative and pioneering ideas that make a positive difference to patient care.

The Breast Radiation Injury Rehabilitation Service (BRIRS) was awarded second place in the Best Multidisciplinary Project category. Team members were on hand to receive the award during the Breast Cancer Care Annual Conference in London on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

Professor Candy McCabe, Consultant Nurse at the RNHRD and BRIRS service lead says “We are delighted to receive this recognition a little over a year since we launched this much needed service. I’m very proud of the team and their achievement. The BRIRS provides a tailored programme of rehabilitation to those who may have experienced disjointed care in the past, or who may not have realised that their condition could be improved by appropriate and specialised therapy.”

The BRIRS is a highly specialised service for those experiencing pain from injury following radiotherapy for breast cancer. The condition is rare and cannot be reversed but when left untreated can lead to secondary complications that can result in significant deterioration in health. The risk factors that led to these injuries are well understood today and are now carefully avoided.

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Professor McCabe continues “The benefits we have seen to date in people attending our service have been excellent and really strengthened our view that it is never too late to consider rehabilitation for persistent pain and functional disabilities.”

The BRIRS team brings together a multi-specialty, multi-disciplinary team including specialist clinicians in the fields of oncology, rheumatology, psychology, lymphoedema and pain as well as specialist nurses, occupational therapists, respiratory physicians and physiotherapists. Together the teams can provide long-term rehabilitation support for the complex healthcare needs of each individual patient.

The Bath based RNHRD, known locally as the ‘Min’, leads the service, working in partnership with the Royal United Hospital NHS Trust, Bath, Barts Health NHS Trust, London and The Christie NHS Foundation Trust, Manchester.

Professor McCabe explains “This is a great example of Trusts working together to best meet the needs of patients. Our partnership ensures patients can access a clinic closest to where they live and we can deliver the same high standards of care across the country.”

Jan Millington has been a BRIRS inpatient at the RNHRD and says “This dedicated rehabilitation service has been invaluable for me and others suffering similarly.”

The Breast Radiation Injury Rehabilitation Service is available to anyone registered with a GP in England; patients can self-refer or be referred to the service by a health care professional. If you feel you would benefit from the service please contact Denise Moorhouse [Denise.Moorhouse@rnhrd.nhs.uk](mailto:Denise.Moorhouse@rnhrd.nhs.uk) at the RNHRD or visit our website <http://www.rnhrd.nhs.uk/175>

**ENDS**

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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](http://www.rnhrd.nhs.uk)
- <http://www.christie.nhs.uk>
- <http://www.bartshealth.nhs.uk>
- <http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk>
- Further details about the BRIRS are available here <http://www.rnhrd.nhs.uk/175>
- The service is endorsed by the National Cancer Action Team and Macmillan Cancer Support, who have worked with the patient support group Radiotherapy Action Group Exposure (R.A.G.E.) to conduct a lengthy campaign for the provision of appropriate healthcare for this client group.
- <http://www.rageuk.org/>