# How our rehabilitation

# gets results



The Queen Alexandra Hospital Home since 1919

Autumn/Winter 2021



www.careforveterans.org.uk 01903 213458

### **Dear Supporters**

#### As we come to the end of 2021, we are thankful for the slight return to normality across the country.

At Care for Veterans, this has meant that trips out have resumed, with several residents and staff recently attending Founder's Day at the Royal Hospital Chelsea (pictured). Preparations are also underway for some of our veterans to march past the Cenotaph on Remembrance Day.

Our Wellbeing Hub has also fully opened, therapy services are working well, and our dining room and day room are now available for the residents, who no longer need to have meals served in their rooms. I feel certain that they, like many of us, have enjoyed that ability to interact again.

The safety of our residents and staff remains our highest priority. The relaxation of restrictions for care homes has been considerably slower than it has for many other areas. Therefore, visiting remains quite restricted, and residents still face regular testing. Flu vaccines are complete, and we are currently awaiting a date for the Covid booster vaccination programme. Our 'Green Project' continues, and after the arrival of our electric-powered ambulance in March, the next project is to replace our eight ageing gas boilers, which have poor efficiency levels. We are considering replacement boilers, biomass boilers

and micro-heat and power pumps. As well as improving our environmental footprint,

this further cost-saving has never been more critical with the current situation with gas prices and the long-term effect on utility bills.

Our staff continue to work hard and deliver care to all our deserving veterans. I would like to sign off by thanking them, our volunteers and you, our supporters, for your continued efforts in supporting Care for Veterans.

Thank you all.

Andy Neaves, CEO Care for Veterans

Inside this newsletter: Your tickets for our Grand Prize Draw (read more on page 7).



On Thursday 11 November, we will remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives in the line of duty.

This year, we are asking our residents, supporters and staff to send us their words and photos to help us create a **Remembrance display**.

Scan the QR code to visit

careforveterans.org.uk/Remembrance, call Sue on 01903 218444 or email sue.harris@careforveterans.org.uk

I always remember those whom I was with who now lie in Saint Manvieu War Cemetery.

I saw that many of the regimental numbers were very close to my own and, therefore, we 18-yearolds were probably in the same intake.

As I stood by their graves, I was deeply saddened and thought, 'I am standing here, and you

are lying there.'

Peter Hawkins, a resident at Care for Veterans who sadly passed away in March 2021 aged 95.

His words live on to remind us that he would be thinking of his fallen comrades during Remembrance.



Peter Hawkins in 1944

ANNO DOMINI MDCXCII RAF and Army veterans, Doug and Len, enjoy the Royal Hospital Chelsea's Founder's Day Parade

# A 'hub'bub of wellbeing activities

After the past year or so of restrictions, the new look 'Wellbeing Hub' is in full swing offering a wide range of exciting activities to stimulate both bodies and minds.

Lead Occupational Therapist at Care for Veterans, Jennifer Chouchelamane, explains:

We have a varied timetable of activities to cover the physical, mental and social aspects of wellbeing. This includes a daily chair-based exercise class, Monday movies, cookery club, music appreciation, darts competitions, mental agility games and quizzes, and relaxation/mindfulness sessions.

relaxation/mindfulness sessions. We have also started to resume outings and social events. When the weather permits, we take advantage of the lovely gardens here or go out into the local community. Residents also suggest ideas, and we are trying out new activities, such as Race Nights and a 'Who wants to be a Millionaire?' quiz. The feedback from residents has been very positive. The team are thrilled to see our veterans enjoying themselves, especially after such a difficult year.

Watching the footie... a photo of Army veterans, Steve and Len, celebrating England's semi-final win made it into the national papers



Wellbeing is more than just being well, it is about having fun, reminiscing about the old, learning about the new, making new friends and sharing your passions. Jennifer Chouchelamane, Lead Occupational Therapist



All of our residents are welcome to participate in activities, whatever their ability.

We have also created spaces for residents to enjoy their individual passions, such as jigsaws, painting, reading or weaving as well as offering a library of games, books, music and films to loan out.

Centre: 10-pin bowling success for Navy veteran, Ray

# Supporting ex-military to overcome their toughest challenge yet...

Lead Physiotherapist, Emma, explains how goals, motivation and the right type of exercises can make a meaningful difference to someone's quality of life.

Our physiotherapy aims to support a person to improve their quality of life, increase their independence, and reduce their pain. Emma explains how they help residents get results:

We set goals by getting to know each resident to understand what they want to achieve in the long and short term. I am always keen to emphasise that it is their goal and not 'our' (Care for Veterans) goal.

If a resident needs to use a full sling hoist to transfer from their bed to a wheelchair, which requires two people to assist, we might set a goal for them to progress to using a mobility aid, such as a standing hoist. Reaching this goal can improve someone's everyday life by increasing their independence and reducing their care needs.

We always take the time to explain the benefits of a specific exercise. If a person constantly slips down in their wheelchair, it can cause back pain and pressure sores. If they understand that we are strengthening their core muscles to help them sit better and lessen their discomfort, the sessions are more meaningful.



Residents take part in the VE Day 10k

When working with someone with a progressive neurological disorder, like MS or Parkinson's, we can still support them to achieve long-term goals for independence. We adjust our approach to include equipment or find a different way around.

Our residents are fully aware that they have challenging physical impairments, which can be very disheartening. However, we know that physiotherapy can help people attain incredible results, so we help someone focus on what they can achieve and show them how to make the most of their day.

Our gym is a very positive place, and we make our sessions fun by playing music and adding in a bit of competition and a few challenges.

Because we are working with ex-military personnel, they often come from a background of peak fitness. A goal that feels small, such as being able to stand and transfer, might not feel very challenging. Former Warrant Officer in the Royal Engineers, Steve, has previously completed ultra-marathons, but an accident left him partially paralysed with a severe brain injury.

To motivate Steve, we set him a goal to cycle the distance from Land's End to John O'Groats on the assisted static bikes. He worked hard each session, and it was a fantastic achievement when he completed it.



Care for Veterans provides a great environment, and we feel fortunate as a physiotherapy team that we get to spend quite a lot of time with our residents. We get to know them, and they often tell us stories of their past, their families, and their military history. We respect them all, and it's a pleasure to get to know them on this basis.

Emma Curtis, Lead Physiotherapist

## Roy's rehabilitation success

Roy had recently come to the area from London to be closer to his daughter and was looking for a new home.

On Christmas Day 2019, he suffered a stroke which put him in hospital and left him with limited mobility.

#### Roy explains: "I'd never been in hospital in my life before, then I ended up on the stroke ward."

He had also been recently diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which causes breathing difficulties.

Roy came to Care for Veterans in February 2020, just before the first Covid lockdown. One year and one month later, he left the charity to live independently in a supported living apartment not far away in Worthing town centre.

He gets his own breakfast and dinner, with his main meal provided at lunchtime by the in-house catering.

There's no doubt that I needed the time at Care for Veterans to recover from my stroke. I wouldn't have been able to come home straight after leaving the hospital. I saw a lot of people worse off than me on the stroke ward, so I feel very lucky. I enjoyed the physiotherapy with Emma three times a week, and I liked the carers; they were all very good.

I'm really pleased that I've found this place, it's a nice flat, and it's very quiet, which is great! The people are good, and my daughter comes over several times a week and takes me out. I like to sit outside with a cup of tea and watch the squirrels and foxes.

Roy, past resident at Care for Veterans

# Do you know someone who needs our help?

We provide residential nursing care, rehabilitation, respite and end-of-life care.

We support anyone over 18 who has served in the armed forces and their families.

Call 01903 213458 or visit careforveterans.org.uk

Roy with Lead Physiotherapist, Emma, in his new home

#### Lead Physiotherapist, Emma, worked with Roy three times a week during physiotherapy sessions. She said:

Roy is a very independent man, and the sudden decline in his health was quite a shock. He would say, 'All I wanted was my own place; how did this happen?' He really wanted to get back to the point before his stroke where he was going to find a nice place to live near his daughter.

At Care for Veterans, we work with an individual to understand what they want to achieve then set realistic goals. For Roy, this meant working on ways he could live independently again and assessing how he progressed. It involved building up the strength to allow him to transfer from his bed to his wheelchair safely. We also worked on his balance and cardio.

When Roy was looking at places to live, we went with him to assess whether they would be suitable for his needs. I am so thrilled that we were able to help Roy get what he wanted, and it is lovely to see how well he is doing in his new home.

# Just £4 a month to play our lottery



Every month, three lucky winners win cash prizes of £200, £25 and £10.

After paying the cash prizes, we receive 100% of the money raised.

To sign up, call 01903 218444 or visit careforveterans.org.uk/lottery



Craig during a virtual reality (VR) session with David and (below) a session with Dudley planting seeds for the vegetable garden

# The veteran who showed me how I could make a difference

Craig Burley, a Rehabilitation Technician in the Occupational Therapy Department, explains how an inspirational veteran changed his career path forever.

Craig was a Healthcare Assistant on Norfolk Wing when he started working with Steve, an ex-paratrooper who had reached the rank of Colour Sergeant.

Steve had completed over 300 jumps when, during a jump, the parachute opened too quickly, severing his vertebrae and leaving him with quadriplegia. He was still a young man, and Care for Veterans became his home for 25 years. Craig explains how this friendship would shape the rest of his career:

The Occupational Therapist at the time had got Steve a specialist wheelchair controlled with a soft button that he pushed with his chin so that he would go everywhere.

*He had environmental controls operated by* blowing into a mouthpiece to control his bed, TV, and lights. He was amazing.

He'd get me to set it up and help him troubleshoot any issues. When a position came up in the Occupational Therapy Department, Steve told me to go for it and said he thought I'd be really good. I got the job as Occupational Therapy Assistant in 2018.

Occupational Therapy is about making a person's life as independent as possible by helping with functional tasks such as how you brush your teeth, how you roll in bed and how you get around; all the stuff that we take for granted.

When we work with people with acquired brain injury or mobility limiting impairments, it's about utilising the movements they can control to help someone live more independently.

> You are constantly asking questions about how best to help someone and researching what technology and equipment are available. We often discuss ideas with other occupational therapists and healthcare professionals.

When people are here for rehabilitation,

it's how we can adapt what we've done here to their home environment, so they can live as independently as possible.

It's about helping someone access a drawer or turn on the light. It's often about those little things, and our job is to make their life easier and better.

Craig has just started an Occupational Therapy degree at Brighton University.

If it wasn't for residents like Steve and also a WWII veteran, Dixie, who pushed me to take this role, then I wouldn't be going to university and wouldn't have found a career that I wanted to spend the rest of my life in.

It's funny the people you meet; at the time, you don't think about the impact they can have on your future. The sad thing is that they have both passed away now, but I still think about them a lot.

Craig Burley, Rehabilitation Technician

We need your help to buy vital equipment

Recent times have been incredibly challenging, not only for our residents but for the charity's overall financial situation.

Cost-saving initiatives, such as our Green Project, have enabled us to reduce some of our overheads. However, some costs we cannot further reduce or avoid. These include the equipment which plays a vital part in the day-to-day lives of our veterans, and without it, we simply cannot provide our high standard of care.

It's vital we maintain our equipment to ensure we make basic care requirements as comfortable and dignified as possible. Any contribution towards our equipment is deeply appreciated.

James Bacharew, Head of Fundraising and Marketing

### **Bariatric Bed**

Disabilities and conditions which limit a person's mobility can significantly increase the risk of obesity.



To comfortably cater for all the veterans who need our help, we need to purchase a specialist bariatric bed. The bed is wider to allow more space and freedom of movement to help prevent pressure sores. Its design enables nursing staff to assist someone safely. We need one bed at a cost of £3,000.

## Very grand prizes to be won

Fancy winning a luxury night at the iconic Savoy Hotel, an experience operating the controls of a 'Fast Jet' simulator or £250 in cash?

Inside this newsletter, you will find tickets for the annual Care for Veterans' Grand Prize Draw. Some of the prizes you could win include:

- £250 cash.
- A luxury one night stay for two at The Savoy, London, in a Deluxe King Room inclusive of a full English breakfast.
- A rare opportunity for two people to experience a two-hour visit and tour of the Flight Simulation Facility at BAE Systems, Rochester, Kent.

### 'Sara Stedy' **Transfer Aid**

This transfer aid assists residents who can rise from seated to standing. It enables the user to participate in



transfers, which helps to improve muscle tone to help maintain mobility. We would like to purchase one at a cost of £900.

### Call Bells

These are essential communication devices that allow residents to call our nursing staff for everyday care assistance or in the event of an emergency. In constant use by 60 residents, they often need repair or replacement to ensure we provide a high standard of care and the reassurance that



help is only a click of a button away. Each call bell costs **£121**.

If you want to buy the tickets or sell them, please send us back the stubs along with your payment before 14 December 2021.



If you don't want to buy tickets on this occasion, please pass them on or recycle them. Please don't return them.

The draw will take place at 3pm on 16 December 2021.

To buy tickets online, please visit careforveterans.org.uk/prize-draw



### **Care for Veterans Regular Donation Form**



Every donation is important to us but regular gifts are especially valuable. They provide us with more reliable income, allowing us to plan more effectively.

Please return the completed form in the **Freepost envelope provided**. Thank you!

Yes, I/we would like to give a **regular** 

#### donation of £

To be paid every: Month □ Quarter □ Year □

Title:\_\_\_\_\_ Full name:\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone no:\_\_\_\_\_

Email:

To the Manager of

Bank/Building Society

Branch address:

Postcode:

Please debit my account number:\_\_\_\_\_

Sort code: \_\_\_\_

Reference:

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society: Please pay Care for Veterans Direct Debits, from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Care for Veterans and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signed:\_\_\_

\_\_ Date:\_\_\_ /

#### Increase your donation by 25p of Gift Aid on every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by Care for Veterans from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address (as detailed above) is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

 $\Box$  I want to Gift Aid my donation of £\_\_\_\_

and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past four years to Care for Veterans.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay the difference  $\Box$  (please tick)

Signed:

Date: /

Please notify Care for Veterans if you wish to cancel this donation, change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on income and/or capital gains.

#### Contact preferences

Please tick below the ways you would prefer to hear from Care for Veterans. We will keep your details safe and secure. Please see our Privacy Policy on our website for further information. You can opt out at any time.

Post 

Email 
Phone 
Do NOT contact me

### One-off Donation Form



Any donation, no matter how large or small, will help us to continue to provide vital services for veterans in need of care and rehabilitation.

I/we would like to give a **one-off donation of £** 

Title:	Full name:	
	-	

Address:\_

Postcode:\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone no:\_\_\_\_\_

Email:\_

#### Method of payment

□ I enclose a cheque made payable to Care
for Veterans, <b>OR</b>
□ Please debit my VISA/MasterCard/Debit/
Maestro card with the amount specified
above

Card no:

Start date: / /

Expiry date: \_\_\_/ \_/

Security no:\_\_\_\_\_ (The last 3 digits on the back of the card)

# If you'd prefer to donate by card over the phone, please call 01903 218444.

#### Increase your donation by 25p of Gift Aid on every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by Care for Veterans from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address (as detailed above) is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

□ I want to Gift Aid my donation of £\_\_\_\_\_ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past four years to Care for Veterans. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay the difference □ (please tick) Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_/\_\_/

Contact preferences

Please tick below the ways you would prefer to hear from Care for Veterans. We will keep your details safe and secure. Please see our Privacy Policy on our website for further information. You can opt out at any time.

Post 

Email 
Phone 
Do NOT contact me

### RAF veteran 'takes off' with his stories

Current resident, John, joined the RAF in 1951 when he was called up for his national service during the Cold War. He served as an engineer on a Washington Bomber B-29 in RAF Watton in Norfolk.

John shares some memories of the three years he spent with the 192 Squadron, flying very near Russia to test their radar systems. He explains:

It was a bit scary at times. One time, we lost an engine and had to limp back to do an emergency landing just outside Baghdad in Iraq. I was the engineer on board, and I had to repair the engine. When I think back to looking out of the window and seeing an engine misfiring over territory which is not very safe, I think 'crumbs'! The amazing thing is that there wasn't any fear! We were trained to do the job, and we just did it without thinking.

On coming to live at Care for Veterans in October 2020, John said:

I arrived last October, but it's mostly been in lockdown. I enjoy the physiotherapy; I do it as much as I can and try to keep fit. Most afternoons, I go down to the Wellbeing Hub to see what's going on. I like to keep my mind active; although the body's wearing out, the mind is still what it was!

Read John's full interview and watch the video at careforveterans.org.uk/john or scan the QR code.

### Leading Wren in our nest

Care for Veterans' volunteer, June, shares her experience serving in the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) and how she ended up as the face of their recruitment campaign.

June explains: *I joined the WRNS in October 1969, leaving my home town of Gloucester to undertake basic training at HMS Dauntless in Reading before going on* 

to HMS Pembroke in Chatham, Kent. I trained as a Wren Writer (G), basically a secretary, and became part of the Commodore's team at HMS Drake in Plymouth. After that, I was posted to Norway to work for NATO – an exciting time being locked into the side of a mountain to undertake secretive work (the Cold War was still taking place).





WRNS



Meeting Tony Blackburn at the opening of the Mayflower Post Hotel I returned to England to HMS President as a Leading Wren for Director WRNS and was on hand to be in a photo for a new recruitment leaflet. I left the WRNS in 1973 after a four-year contract, having enjoyed every minute!

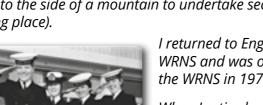
When I retired a few years ago, I wanted to take up volunteering, and when the chance to join the Fundraising Team at Care for Veterans came about, I was overjoyed. I love being a volunteer and hope to continue on a more 'normal' basis in the future.

Thank you to all of our volunteers. We hope it won't be long until restrictions allow us to welcome you all back.

Visit careforveterans.org.uk/volunteering, scan the QR code or call Sue on 01903 218444 to learn about volunteer opportunities.







# Service charities' lockdown lifeline

# The last 18-months had a huge impact on the charity's income, with most fundraising events cancelled. The longstanding support of our armed forces charities was a vital lifeline for us throughout the pandemic.

This support meant that our resident veterans were still able to benefit from our expert care and rehabilitation and allowed them to continue working towards their personal goals. Below are some of the incredible awards we received:

A grant from ABF The Soldiers' Charity to support our rehabilitation services. This benefits former Royal Engineer, Steve, who is currently learning to use specialist computers and software to keep in touch with friends and learn new skills.



Ex-Senior Aircraftman, John, enjoys the social activities organised in our Wellbeing Hub. A grant from the **RAF Benevolent Fund** ensures he can try his hand at arts, crafts, and games, whilst enjoying the comradeship of others.

Benevolent Fund

A grant from the **Veterans' Foundation** helps us provide a host of rehabilitation activities, including the cookery

sessions run by our occupational therapy team.



In July, we were delighted to receive the final part of our three-year **Trinity House** award towards our general costs.



Aldershot Church of England Services

**Trust** made a donation towards our new electric-powered ambulance. Money saved on running costs can be spent on care services.





The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity Greenwich Hospital Grant helped towards the rehabilitation of veterans, and supported people like Ray, a former Royal Navy Deep-Sea Diver.



THE ARMED FORCES

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust has supported a range of initiatives, the most recent being a second grant to allow veterans to enjoy sporting activities. D-Day veteran, Len, is one of our residents who enjoyed a trip to a nearby park where he made full use of a specially designed bike.

Queen Mary's Roehampton Trust has

supported us for many years. During this time, their generosity has touched the lives of many veterans like former Army Intelligence Officer, Nathan. He received rehabilitation following a brain haemorrhage and has been able to return to life in the community. We would like to express our very grateful thanks to all the charitable trusts and foundations which have supported Care for Veterans throughout the pandemic.

Andy Neaves, Chief Executive





# An i-watering 162m drop

On 14 September, fundraisers raised over £15,000 for disabled veterans by completing the UK's highest controlled descent from Brighton's British Airways i360 viewing tower.



Former Royal Engineer from Milton Keynes, Aaron 'AJ' Card, was the first to sign up for the challenge and was the first to jump. He said:

"When I heard about some of the amazing things that Care for Veterans has done for some of its residents, I was blown away and wanted to know what I could do to support the charity."

Thank you to everyone who took part and helped to raise such an incredible amount. To sign up for next years' event on Thursday 23 June, visit careforveterans.org.uk/iDrop or call Christine on 01903 218444.





### Our runners are on the home stretch

With so many events cancelled, we have been incredibly grateful for the overwhelming support from our community of runners.

So far, our 'Keep Calm and Keep Running' series has raised £8,754. These funds help us continue providing our life-changing care and rehabilitation to disabled ex-armed forces personnel when they need it the most. We are so grateful for this support during what has been a challenging time for the charity.

The last event in the series is Race for Remembrance,

which takes place around 11 November to honour our

based on 11. Register at careforveterans.org.uk/RforR

fallen heroes. You can complete 11k or another challenge



Over 230 people took part in our VE Day 10k Race (May 2021)



**Carol Concert - Sunday 12 December 2pm** It's been too long since our last annual Carol Concert at the stunning Lancing College Chapel. Tickets are £10 each.

Christmas Market - Saturday 27 November 12pm-6pm We are thrilled to be able to host our Christmas Market at our facility in Worthing. Find out about becoming a stallholder.

Christmas Trees - Order before 17 December Our beautiful 'non-drop' Nordmann Fir trees are available to order for pick up from our facility in Worthing.

**Christmas cards - Order before 15 December** Order online from our eBay shop or give us a call.

See the back page for our full events list, visit careforveterans.org.uk/events or call 01903 218444.



This November, take part in Race for Remembrance. Just £15 to sign up, includes a medal.

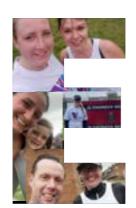
Call Sue on 01903 218444 or visit careforveterans.org.uk/RforR





In May, The BIG Plant and Bake Sale raised £4,000 for disabled veterans













In 2019, over 500 people attended the event at Lancing College Chapel

On Friday 11 June, our Clay Pigeon Shoot raised £4,600 for disabled veterans. Nine teams had a go at shooting clays at Southdown Gun Club. A huge thank you to our sponsors; This Media Larke and Robins Row Insurance.



Visit careforveterans.org.uk/clay-shoot call Christine on 01903 218444 to sign up for 2022.

#### A lasting gift for disabled veterans

Gifts left to us in wills enable us to support disabled veterans now and in the future. One of our supporters, Stanford Legal Services, is offering a free, no-obligation will-writing service. Visit careforveterans.org.uk/legacy or call Paul Stanford on 01903 340186.





# Upcoming events 2021/22

We are very excited about our upcoming events, with more planned for 2022. Visit careforveterans.org.uk/events or call 01903 218444.



### 2021



# Register your interest and book tickets online at careforveterans.org.uk/events



#### Get in touch on 01903 218444 or email fundraising@careforveterans.org.uk

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