

## It's not just about drugs...

When asked about treatment for a disease most people tend immediately to think of drugs, but there are some diseases where non-drug therapies and other strategies are just as, or even more, important. Dementia is one of those illnesses where practical ways of coping, along with technological innovations, can do much to improve the quality of life of patients and their families.

We all make lists to remember what we need to do; for those with dementia taking it one step further helps enormously. Wipe clean weekly planner boards are just the start, nowadays you can buy Memory Aid Pendants (personal message recorders which hang around the neck) and Motion Detecting Message Reminders, which broadcast a pre-recorded message as someone walks past.

The computer has become one of the most widespread technological innovations, with many households having access to a PC or laptop. Day Care Centres are starting to provide computer access and training for older people to help overcome any lack of understanding and confidence and to show the advantages they can bring, such as access to information and services.

Author Sir Terry Pratchett is probably one of the best known celebrities to have been diagnosed with dementia. He has PCA, which is an unusual form of Alzheimer's disease which particularly affects the visual areas of the brain. After noticing that his typing and spelling had become erratic, Sir Terry has adapted how he writes by using voice recognition software so that his computer automatically converts his words into text. This has helped him to continue writing with his usual speed and success and his latest novel was published only a few weeks ago and almost immediately topped the hardback fiction best sellers list.

Computers can also help overcome the isolation that many people with dementia feel. Both email and web cameras make it much easier to keep in contact with friends and family. Over 800,000 people in the UK have dementia and the figure is expected to rise to over 1 million by 2025. By then, using computers and other technologies to communicate will be part of everyday life.



*Sir Terry and Prof. Roy Jones at the opening of the RICE Centre in 2008.*

## The in Touch project

RICE is working with another charity BIME, the Bath Institute of Medical Engineering and the University of Bath on a project funded by the EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Science Research Council). The project involves the development of new communication technology which will focus on reducing social

isolation among people with dementia. We are starting by forming three focus groups, and are looking for people with dementia, their family members, carers and health professionals. If you would like to contribute to these groups, please contact Nicolle on 01225 476420 or email [na229@bath.ac.uk](mailto:na229@bath.ac.uk). We are continuing to seek funding for this project, if you can help please let us know.

## Do you need a speaker?

If you would like to hear more about our work please contact the RICE Centre and we will arrange for someone to speak to your group. Tel 01225 476435



## Recruiting for Clinical Trials

At RICE, we are currently involved in two important clinical trials for people with Alzheimer's disease and we are looking for anyone who may wish to be involved.

The Concert Study is a Phase 3 international project testing Dimebon, a promising new drug for Alzheimer's disease. Some studies with Dimebon have already shown positive results. The purpose of this study is to find out whether Dimebon, when combined with Aricept (one of the standard treatments for Alzheimer's disease), improves memory, daily functioning and behaviour. Patients in this study must already be taking Aricept.

The second study is a Phase 2 trial for people who have Alzheimer's disease but who are not on Aricept or any of the standard treatments. The aim of this study is to test a potential new drug for Alzheimer's disease by comparing it to Aricept.

If you are interested in taking part in one of these trials, or would like to know more about them, then please contact Jan Ball or Nicolle Appleton on 01225 476420.

## CAN YOU HELP THE NEXT CARERS COURSE?

The latest Carers Course started on Friday 8th October. The course will help carers understand about different types of dementia and how the disease can progress. Other topics covered will include advice on how to develop strategies to deal with practical problems which may arise; explanations of services and benefits available within the community and legal advice on situations they may encounter.

**The course is free to all participants. Could your business, club or group fund a Carers Course? Phone 01225 476420 or email [info@rice.org.uk](mailto:info@rice.org.uk) to find out how you can help.**

## Cognitive Stimulation Therapy

CST is a treatment for people with mild to moderate dementia which can lead to worthwhile benefits in cognitive functioning, especially with language. Sessions aim to actively stimulate and engage people with dementia through fun activities and the social benefits of learning in a group.

The 7 week CST course is free to participants. The next one starts in January and has been funded by The Friends of St Martin's Hospital.

The course is open to anyone with a diagnosis of dementia.

Speak to Nicolle on 01225 476207 for more information.

*Recent course participants taking part in the food themed session.*



## WHAT IS A CLINICAL TRIAL?

Clinical trials are medical or health-related research studies that follow set guidelines. They can involve new medicines or therapies targeted at helping specific problems. Each trial has a set time span with results being measured during the trial and at the end. Clinical trials of new drugs are conducted in 4 phases. Each phase has a different purpose and helps researchers answer different questions.

- Phase 1 trials test for the first time a new medicine or treatment in a small group of people, often healthy volunteers, and evaluates safety and the medication dosage.
- In Phase 2 the group is larger and always involves patients. The tests check effectiveness and further evaluate the safety.
- In Phase 3 effectiveness is confirmed on a larger group of patients. Side effects are monitored and comparisons with other commonly used medicines or treatments may take place. This phase of testing should tell whether the new medicine or treatment is both effective and acceptably safe.
- Finally Phase 4 trials involve ongoing checking of the safety of a new medicine once it has received permission to be used and is being prescribed by doctors everywhere.

## Who can participate in a clinical trial?

All clinical trials have guidelines about who can participate. Selection can be based on factors such as age, gender, the type and stage of a disease, previous treatment history, and other medical conditions. Some research studies seek participants with particular illnesses or conditions, while others need healthy participants.



## Friends of RICE

The Friends are a group of people - members of the public, healthy volunteers and some ex-patients and their family members - who out of appreciation for the work of the Institute, have banded together to raise funds for our vital research programme. First formed in the early years of RICE, the Friends still have a number of original members helping today.

Friends pay an annual minimum subscription of £5 to cover basic running costs. Additional support goes directly into funding the research programme. The support of the Friends has enabled the purchase of equipment as well as funding Carers' Courses, new research and amenities for patients.

The Friends help with fundraising activities. These include our annual sponsored walk, organising Christmas Fayres, selling Christmas cards and raffle tickets, and hosting coffee mornings, and fetes.

We are looking to add to our group of Friends. If you feel you would like to help and meet like-minded people determined to fight dementia and improve the quality of life for all involved, please phone 01225 476420 or email [info@rice.org.uk](mailto:info@rice.org.uk) for more information. You don't have to be a Bath resident, you can influence fundraising anywhere in support of RICE.

## BATH CHARITIES ANNUAL FAYRE

On Saturday 13th November the Bath Charities Annual Fayre takes place in the Brunswick Room at the Guildhall, Bath.

Eight local charities will this year offer a range of games, goods and raffles to help you get into the Christmas Spirit.

Two Friends of RICE, Leslie Walker and Rosie Cole, are supervising the RICE stall.

The Fayre will run from 10am to 2.30pm.



**Christmas Cards are available at RICE and by post or from 'Cards for Good Causes' shops in Bath, Frome and Wells**



## Thanks for the Memory

The 17th annual Memory Trail took place on Sunday 19th September, when 83 people and a number of four-legged friends walked the beautiful countryside around Wellow. A big thank you to everyone who participated and also to all the volunteers who helped on the day. Those collecting sponsorship are asked to return forms and funds by 25th October when the winner of the fabulous spa voucher prize, generously donated by the MacDonald Bath Spa Hotel, will be chosen.

Thanks also to Moles Brewery of Melksham for supplying soft drinks for our thirsty walkers.



*Helpers and walkers enjoying the day – including Joe, Amber & Fritz!*

## Partis College Fete



The annual Partis College Fete is organised by Friend of RICE Phyllis Roberts. Partis College is a late Georgian listed building of 30 terraced houses founded in 1825 by Mrs Ann Partis, especially for single and widowed women.

Today's residents all support the Fete started by Phyllis in the 1990s. This year there was a wide variety of stalls including produce from the kitchen gardens and a beautiful range of handcrafted cards made by the newest Friend of RICE Teri Florence and the Partis College craft group. The total raised for RICE was £500.

A big thank you to Phyllis, Ruth Phillips, Teri and all of the residents for allowing their home to once again host one of our longest running fundraising events.



*Phyllis and Teri with some handmade cards*

## Fundraising – meeting rooms

Are you looking for a meeting room? At the RICE Centre in Bath we have two rooms, separated by a sound-proofed partition which can be removed to provide one larger room.

Both rooms combined hold around 35 to 40 people theatre style and 24 boardroom style. Power point projection and interactive whiteboard facilities are available, and refreshments can be arranged through RUH Catering.

Prices start from as little as £65 for half a day. If you'd like to know more, phone 01225 476420 or email [info@rice.org.uk](mailto:info@rice.org.uk)



A Carers Course using the combined rooms

## DEMENTIA STRATEGY

The Government's 2009 Dementia Strategy highlighted the importance of dedicated centres for specialist care, such as the RICE Memory Clinic held every week in Bath.

The strategy calls for a country-wide network of clinics. The 12th National Memory Clinic Conference took place in September. It is an annual event for health care professionals which this year had a particular focus on current issues in the management of patients with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Professor Roy Jones, Director of RICE, was invited to participate as one of the speakers in the Debate of the Day, discussing whether the National Guidance is a help or a hindrance.

## A Big Thank You

The Institute would like to thank the following for their recent support:

Mr Brian & Mrs Margaret Roper; The Medlock Charitable Trust; St John's Hospital; Bath Boules Charitable Trust; The Rolfe Charitable Trust; Keynsham Town Council; Burningham & Brown; The Friends of St Martin's Hospital; The Stephen Clark 1957 Charitable Trust; The St Vincent Lodge Charitable Trust; The Raven Pub; Fuller, Smith & Turner plc; Wiltshire Farm Foods; Intel Corporation (UK) Ltd; The Yorkshire Building Society Charitable Foundation; The Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick; The Verdon Smith Charitable Trust; Tuckers Grave Inn.

## BATH HALF MARATHON 2011

# We need you!

### On Sunday 6th March 2011

Do you know anyone, either friend, family or work colleague who could join RICE Director Professor Roy Jones and RICE Trustee Dr Chris Dyer in this year's Bath Half Marathon? We still have a number of FREE places available, all we ask is that you raise a minimum of £250 in sponsorship.

All the money raised goes to helping RICE with our vital research into Alzheimer's and other dementia.

**Come and have as much fun as Loretto did this year!**



### The Research Institute for the Care of Older People

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