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For 17th January 2008

Research Centre for older people finally moves to its new home

Local charity RICE has moved today (Thursday 17th January) to its new home at the Royal United Hospital (RUH) site after 23 years at St Martin's Hospital.

The new building will be known as the RICE Centre and clinics will resume there on Tuesday 22nd January. With the move there has also been a slight change in the official name of the charity which is RICE (Research Institute for the Care of Older People).

The Research Centre is unique in having overnight accommodation specifically to undertake research into the problems faced by older people. Up to 800 local people are seen and helped at RICE clinics every year.

The move means that RICE has a much bigger building so that new areas of research will be possible and the centre is close to the Older People's Unit at the RUH.

The Institute is internationally recognised for its research and part of the European Alzheimer's Disease Consortium. Professor Roy Jones, RICE's director is Professor of Clinical Gerontology at the School for Health, University of Bath and also works with the Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership in his role as the Clinical Lead for the NHS South West Dementias and Neurodegenerative Diseases Research Network (DeNDRoN) which will also be based at the new centre.

Professor Jones:

'This is a very special day for RICE. After many years in the planning we are delighted to move into our purpose-built research centre at the RUH. It is an excellent opportunity for us, both to continue with the research and care that we have provided for the community for many years and to develop new areas in collaboration with colleagues at the RUH and the University of Bath. Naturally we are sad to leave St Martin's Hospital and the tremendous support we have received from everyone there over the last 23 years.'

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Editor's notes

The Institute is a registered charity based in Bath and we look at some of the problems faced by older people in their daily life, particularly those associated with conditions such as Alzheimer's disease. The work involves holding memory clinics, running carers' courses (for the relatives of patients with Alzheimer's disease), studies to try and find therapeutic remedies for these conditions and various other projects. The Institute has limited funding from the NHS (less than 15%) and has to rely on grants, donations and fund raising activities to support this important work. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia which affects over 750,000 in this country. Our move to the RUH comes at the end of a four-year campaign to fundraise £2 million pound for the new RICE building.

Our clinics serve the people of Bath and North East Somerset and West Wiltshire.