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## Press release

### **York mental health experts share knowledge with USA colleagues**

Two York mental health experts are visiting the USA next week to share their unique treatment practices with American colleagues.

Consultant psychiatrist Chris Holman and director of clinical services Steve Trenchard from The Retreat in York are flying out to meet the Ivy League psychiatric hospital group in New York on Wednesday (24 October).

The Ivy League is a collection of seven USA psychiatric hospitals that drew their origins from the moral treatment methods used at The Retreat in York. Founded more than 200-years-ago by William Tuke, The Retreat was the first mental health provider to practice this treatment method which emphasised kindness and order for patients, within an attractive environment.

The Retreat is a not-for-profit, specialist mental health provider, working with the NHS to provide care for people with complex and difficult needs.

The Retreat's links with the Ivy League go back hundreds of years. Like The Retreat, the seven hospitals within the Ivy League share a history of origins in the moral treatment movement. The group has committed itself to communicating research findings and new initiatives aimed at improving care for the mentally ill.

"All psychiatric hospitals in New England, USA, drew their influence from The Retreat," Chris explained.

"We are extremely honoured to have been invited to join the Ivy League. This invitation is an enormous vote of confidence in our organisation. It has been extremely helpful for us to join this prestigious group of hospitals and we are very much looking forward to the visit. We will be meeting with members of the group to talk about various aspects of service development and best practice."

Chris and Steve will be talking to the Ivy League about examples of innovative practice and The Retreat's highlights and challenges over the last year.

"We will be focusing on the opening of The Retreat's Hannah Unit," said Chris.

The million pound revamp of Hannah Unit at The Retreat has taken 12 months to complete and patients are now enjoying the refurbished environment. Providing accommodation for people recovering from psychosis, the new-look 12-bedded unit has been expanded to give patients more living space, en-suite facilities and gender specific areas.

“We have created an environment where people can construct meaningful lives. Before the refurbishment, the rooms were all the wrong shape and size. The environment affects the way you behave and we now have an environment that is ideally suited to the high quality clinical service our staff team on Hannah has been delivering for a number of years,” Chris added.

ENDS

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