



The Retreat

Press release

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Medical director joins experts from around UK to speak at eating disorders conference

The Retreat's medical director Chris Holman will be joining experts from around the UK who have international reputations in the field of eating disorders, at a conference in Scotland next week.

York-based mental health provider, The Retreat, will see its medical director, speak at the leading eating disorders conference on 8 and 9 November. It is the second annual two-day conference on eating disorders organised by NHS Grampian at the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre.

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 conference is targeted at health staff working with patients who have severe and enduring eating disorders.

A consultant psychiatrist at The Retreat for 14 years, Chris specialises in treating people with personality disorders and eating disorders. He runs the Acorn Unit at The Retreat - a women's-only residential unit which provides a 16-week treatment programme for patients, within a therapeutic community setting.

Chris explained: "I'm very much looking forward to speaking to other experts about our work here at The Retreat. We are one of only four mental health providers in the country which offers a residential therapeutic community facility for this group of people.

"I will be talking about The Retreat's inpatient programmes for people with borderline personality disorders and eating disorders. These are people – usually women – who often self-harm, have difficulty managing relationships, have an impaired sense of identity and a history of trauma and loss. Difficulties with eating, which are quite common for such people, can make it particularly difficult for them to get help."

Chris believes that, because of this relationship between eating disorders and personality disorders, a therapeutic community is the right environment to be treated.

Patients come to The Retreat from as far away as Wales and Scotland to receive treatment on the Acorn Unit.

"We now have people from all over the world interested in what we do at The Retreat – Russian, New Zealand and America," said Chris, who has just returned from

visiting the Ivy League psychiatric hospital group in New York with colleague Steve Trenchard, director of clinical services at The Retreat.

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.

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