

# Robert Fergusson national brain injury unit opened



The first patients to be treated in the new brain injury unit at the brand new Royal Edinburgh Campus in Morningside have been transferred there earlier this month.

The Robert Fergusson Unit is a specialist clinic for the treatment of patients from across the country suffering psychiatric or behavioural problems after a head injury. It was first set up 25 years ago but now has a modern healthcare environment with nursing staff, neuropsychiatrists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and social workers all on hand. The team works to create a bespoke care package around each patient.

Michele Yeaman Senior Charge Nurse NHS Lothian said: “It is wonderful to be in our new, fit for purpose unit. Transferring our patients and the team from the old, dated wards to their new environment has been met with excitement and apprehension.

“Staff are working together to find new ways to deliver continuous care during this period of transition. Our patients are already starting to settle into their new routines and space.”

The National Brain Injury Unit has been built as part of the £48 million first phase of the Royal Edinburgh Campus redevelopment which was handed over to NHS Lothian on time and on budget by development partner Hub South East Scotland and main contractor Morrison Construction in December 2016.

Phase one redevelopment includes new accommodation for the adult acute mental health inpatient service, older people’s mental health assessment, Intensive Psychiatric Care Service

(IPCU) and the new Robert Fergusson national brain injury unit.

Further redevelopment of the campus is planned to be undertaken in phased stages over the next 7 years. In November 2014, the Scottish Government committed a further £120 million for future phases of the campus redevelopment.

Phase Two work is likely to include, but is not limited to, a new Integrated Rehabilitation Facility, a newly refurbished MacKinnon House and a new Facilities Management Centre. This second phase is again being delivered by Hub South East and its contractor, Morrison Construction, and work on this is being progressed this year.



Robert Fergusson's statue outside the Canongate Kirk

### ***ROBERT FERGUSSON***

Robert Fergusson (5 September 1750 -16 October 1774) was an Edinburgh poet who, despite a short life, had a highly influential career, especially through its impact on Robert Burns.

The hospital was founded after the premature and tragic death of Robert Fergusson, at the age of 24. Fergusson is known to have suffered from depression, but it was in fact a serious head injury, sustained after a fall down a flight of stairs, that led to the poet being deemed 'insensible.'

When his mother could no longer look after him, Fergusson was incarcerated in the city's Bedlam madhouse, attached to a workhouse, and he died there in October 1774, almost certainly as a result of his head injury.

Fergusson's doctor, Andrew Duncan, was moved by the poet's death, and he resolved to set up a hospital in the city which would look after the mentally ill with greater dignity and

respect. Duncan launched a fundraising appeal in 1792, and eventually, in 1806, Parliament granted £2000 from estates forfeited during the Jacobite rebellion in 1745.