

Princess Royal visits Astley Ainslie for outdoor concert with patients

NHS Lothian's Astley Ainslie Hospital welcomed HRH The Princess Royal on Saturday as part of a joint event between NHS Lothian and The Scottish Fiddle Orchestra.

The Princess Royal met staff and patients finding out about the incredibly important work of the NHS Lothian teams, including Occupational Therapy in supporting patients with rehabilitation. Afterwards The Princess Royal joined staff and patients to enjoy an outdoor concert by The Scottish Fiddle Orchestra as the orchestra's patron.



Photo of The Princess Royal at Astley Ainslie Hospital – Chris Watt Web – www.chriswatt.com

Sheena Muir, Hospital and Hosted Services Manager, NHS Lothian said: “It has been a real honour to welcome The Princess Royal to our site to meet patients and staff and to hear more about the incredible work our teams do, as well as the undeniable challenges we have faced over the last year as we responded to the Covid-19 pandemic.

“Occupational Therapists play a hugely important role in healthcare, from enabling people to continue living independently at home to supporting people with long rehabilitation journeys. All our teams work incredibly hard to support each individual patient both physically, mentally,

socially and emotionally and play a huge part of each person's healthcare experience. We are delighted that HRH The Princess Royal was keen to meet the team and find out more about their impact."

The event brought together music and healthcare in recognition of the incredible role music can play on health and wellbeing.



Photo – Chris Watt Web – www.chriswatt.com

Sheena Muir explained: "Music connects us and can transport us to particular moments in time, but it can also play a huge role in supporting our health and wellbeing. There have been many recent studies that have linked listening to music to positive medical outcomes, for example it has been demonstrated that Parkinson's patients can learn to walk more easily when rhythms assist their gait and that less anaesthetic is required when music is played to spinal surgery patients."

The Astley Ainslie Hospital provides rehabilitation services for adults with acquired brain injury, stroke, orthopaedic injuries, limb amputation and progressive neurological disorders such as multiple sclerosis. For many of these patients, rehabilitation is a long process which require extended stays in hospital.

Sheena continued: "Spending a long time in hospital can be really hard, with many of the simple activities that patients would have enjoyed before no longer being available to them. Partnering with the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra on this event has been really wonderful, as it has enabled us to bring a full orchestra on site for a fabulous concert of traditional Scottish music. For our patients this has offered a real sense of fun, excitement and occasion, with the added benefit of supporting their health and wellbeing."

The concert, which was held in the grounds of the hospital featured a selection of well-known traditional Scottish pieces including “Our Princess Royal”, “The Bluebell Polka” and the “Dashing White Sergeant” performed by the orchestra along with a range of soloists.

Bob Diament, Chairman of the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra said, “The Covid pandemic has had a huge impact on the performing arts which has been keenly felt by all within the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra. Over the last year, restrictions have meant that our musicians have been unable to play together or perform. As restrictions begin to ease, it has been a real pleasure and a privilege to deliver this special concert at the Astley Ainslie Hospital in front of our Patron, The Princess Royal, as well as patients and staff from across the service.”



Photo The Princess Royal meeting patients at Astley Ainslie 12 June 2021 – Chris Watt Web – www.chriswatt.com