

Media information for immediate use



Raising awareness of World Encephalitis Day 2017

A member of NHS Ayrshire & Arran staff is raising awareness of World Encephalitis Day by telling her own personal story.

Pauline Murray is a Deputy Charge Nurse in the Intensive Care Unit at University Hospital Crosshouse and was diagnosed with a rare form of encephalitis in January 2015.

Pauline explains: “There are several different types of encephalitis. I developed a rare auto-immune strain where my own immune system attacked my brain, causing inflammation. The symptoms I experienced were very unusual; changes in my personality and feeling anxious. Physical symptoms were nausea, dizziness and tingling down my arm.

“Because I had such a rare strain of encephalitis I was diagnosed and treated in Southern General Hospital in Glasgow and was in hospital for a month where I received IV immunoglobulin therapy and continued on a nine-month course of high dose steroids. I was off work for four months, but was able to return to work in a non-clinical role to help my recovery. It has been a long process and it’s only just now that I’m beginning to feel that I’m getting back to my old self, including driving. In fact, it was such a life-changing experience that I’m now a more empathetic person as a result.”

Part of this year’s campaign is illuminating iconic landmarks and local buildings to turn the world red and shine a light on encephalitis. This year Blackpool Tower, Trafalgar Square and Niagara Falls are among the landmarks taking part. Locally, Pauline has arranged for the flower clock at the top of John Finnie Street in

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Kilmarnock to turn red to show support. To continue raising awareness Pauline is also running the 10k 'Roon the Toon' in June.

World Encephalitis Day takes place on 22 February every year and is the global awareness day for people who have been directly or indirectly affected by encephalitis.

For more information visit www.worldencephalitisday.org/

Ends

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Deputy Charge Nurse Pauline Murray raising awareness of World Encephalitis Day 2017.

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Notes to editor: Encephalitis is an inflammation of the brain. The inflammation is caused either by an infection invading the brain (infectious encephalitis) or through the immune system attacking the brain in error (post-infectious or autoimmune encephalitis). Anyone at any age can get encephalitis. There are around 500,000 cases globally each year.

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