Annual review

National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society

2018


wear purple for JIA at NRAS

CONTENTS

Cover image: Diwali Fundraising Event to raise money for our 'Apni Jung' South Asian resources on our website in Hindi. Pictured above are Dr. Kanta Kumar, Ailsa Bosworth, Councillor Harmohinderpal Singh Sohal (Mayor of Slough), Mrs Ranjit Kaur Sohal (Mayor's wife), Clare Jacklin

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

2018 has been a stand-out year for me in more ways than one. It was incredibly busy, full of achievement by the team and we finished the year in a strong financial position – all good. However, for me it was tinged with a mix of other feelings as it was my last full year as the NRAS CEO, a job I have loved almost every minute of since founding NRAS in 2001.

I have determined to stand down as CEO at the AGM in June 2019 as by then I will have celebrated a milestone birthday, and feel I need to cut back on my hours a bit! My daughter is having her second baby at the end of August, 2019 and my husband will have sold his business and retired by then and I need to be more available than I am currently to spend a bit more time with family. I'm not disappearing from the NRAS family quite yet however, as I feel I have more to do and more to give and so I will be taking on a part time role from July 2019 as NRAS National Patient Champion to support NRAS in a variety of different ways such that my experience as CEO and having RA for nearly 40 years can continue to contribute and be of value. I will also be contributing to the work of EULAR (European League Against Rheumatism) and convening an exciting research project relating to self-management with a group of health professionals from all over Europe in 2019 as well as contributing to other EULAR Taskforce work.

We launched a landmark report into the emotional and mental health of adults with RA and Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis in 2018 and a key recommendation was to have our mental health measured and prioritised in the same way as our physical health. Fortunately, mental health is now out of the shadows and in the mainstream and we will be working to fulfil the report's recommendations over the next year. We also launched our New2RA and Living Better with RA packs at the BSR Congress in May and these have been hugely welcomed by individuals and health professionals. They literally flew off our stand at the BSR and our Medicines in RA booklet (contained in both packs) won first prize in the long-term conditions category at the BMA Patient Information Awards this year.

Many of our other achievements and stand-out events, statistics and financial reporting for 2018 are contained in this review of the year which I hope you will enjoy reading. I am extremely proud of what the NRAS team, our members, volunteers and trustees have achieved over the year and look forward to working with them all in my new capacity as their National Champion. We have a lot of exciting work in the pipeline for 2019 including new website builds starting, major technology projects to further our self-management resources and much more. I hope you will continue to support the work of this great organisation.

Ailsa Bosworth MBE

REBECCA’S STORY

From left: Mark and Glenda Studholme, Rebecca Studholme

Thanks to our wonderful fundraisers like Rebecca and her family, NRAS can continue to help many others with RA across the UK.

“I found out about NRAS through social media and attended an amazing conference in Leeds where we got to hear from professionals in the field. This led me onto thinking how I could I help NRAS to continue the fantastic work they do and opportunities they give to people suffering from RA.

My diagnosis came completely out of the blue 5 years ago, at the age of 23 in my first year of PE teaching. I had been active all my life. I had never heard of RA and as most people do, only thought it was for old people. I decided pretty quickly after my diagnosis that I would not let it take over or change my life. I have continued to live a healthy lifestyle and play hockey to a high, competitive standard.

My first fundraising event was ‘Coniston 14’ a 14-mile run around Coniston Lake and I even managed to persuade my Dad to run with me. I have been very lucky in the fact that I have been able to control my RA extremely well which has led me onto taking part in several other fundraising events for NRAS such as the Yorkshire 3 Peaks, sponsored runs and most recently walking The Dales Way, 82 miles from Ilkley to Windermere.

All of this could not have been achieved without my fantastic family who have joined me on my challenges and my friends who have sponsored me at every opportunity. I have to date raised over £3,000 for NRAS and certainly don’t plan on stopping any time soon.” Rebecca has been one of our amazing fundraisers in 2018.

WHAT WE DO

Changing Minds, Changing Services, Changing Lives for People with RA and JIA

The National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society (NRAS), is the only patient-led organisation in the UK specialising in rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA). Due to its targeted focus on RA and JIA, NRAS provides truly expert and wide-ranging services to support, educate and campaign for people living with these complex autoimmune conditions, their families and the health professionals who treat them.

The NRAS vision is to support all with RA or JIA to live life to the full, with an underpinning mission

- To support everyone living with the impact of RA or JIA at the start and every step of their journey
- To inform – be their first choice for reliable information
- Empower all to have a voice and take control of their RA or JIA

NRAS has 25 staff at the time of publication, one of whom is embedded within a health provider and organising and delivering our face to face supported self-management programmes in the South of England. We take pride in the fact that everything we stand for and do is patient-led through regular engagement with our Members, Volunteers and the wider RA and JIA public across the UK. We conduct regular social research on issues affecting quality of life and publish surveys and reports which we use to campaign for access to better and more equitable services in all parts of the UK. We support a great deal of clinical and academic research in a variety of ways and we collaborate widely with partners such as the British Society for Rheumatology, NHS England, EULAR (European League Against Rheumatism), the Scottish Society for Rheumatology, IMID-Bio Consortium, The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), disability consortia and alliances as well as with the Pharmaceutical Industry.

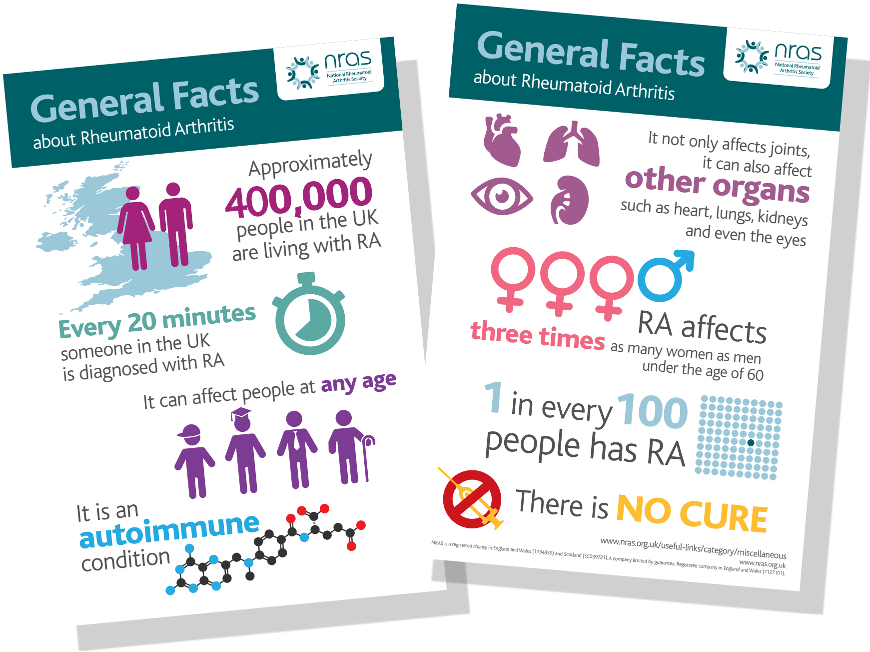
Sir David Amess MP at Parliamentary launch of The Future of Immunology event – a collaboration between Abbvie, UK Bioindustry Association, NRAS and the British Society for Immunology

WHY WE DO IT

RA and JIA are both incurable auto-immune diseases. RA (Rheumatoid Arthritis) is a systemic auto-immune disease which can strike at any age over 16 years old with devastating impact not just on physical health but also on mental health, work and family life.

RA is extremely painful, causes severe fatigue and if untreated or inadequately treated, can lead to joint destruction and disability. Due to its systemic nature, RA can affect other organs including the heart, lungs and eyes. Fortunately, today we have a large number of standard disease modifying drugs and advanced therapies which are very effective, and whilst there remains unmet need, we are better able to get the disease under control more rapidly than used to be the case many years ago and people diagnosed today can expect to lead a good quality of life.

The facts and figures about RA



General Facts
about Rheumatoid Arthritis

Approximately **400,000** people in the UK are living with RA

Every 20 minutes someone in the UK is diagnosed with RA

It can affect people at **any age**

It is an **autoimmune** condition

General Facts
about Rheumatoid Arthritis

It not only affects joints, it can also affect **other organs** such as heart, lungs, kidneys and even the eyes

RA affects **three times** as many women as men under the age of 60

1 in every 100 people has RA

There is **NO CURE**

www.nras.org.uk/useful-links/category/miscellaneous
www.nras.org.uk

NRAS is a registered charity in England and Wales (1134859) and Scotland (SC039721). A company limited by guarantee. Registered company in England and Wales (7127101).

Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis is diagnosed when the child or young person is under the age of 16. JIA is an umbrella term for 7 different types of inflammatory arthritis affecting children and young people. There are approximately 12,000 children in the UK with JIA, and between 1,000 to 1,500 diagnosed in the UK every year. The goal of every paediatric rheumatologist is to get the child or young person into remission as soon as possible.

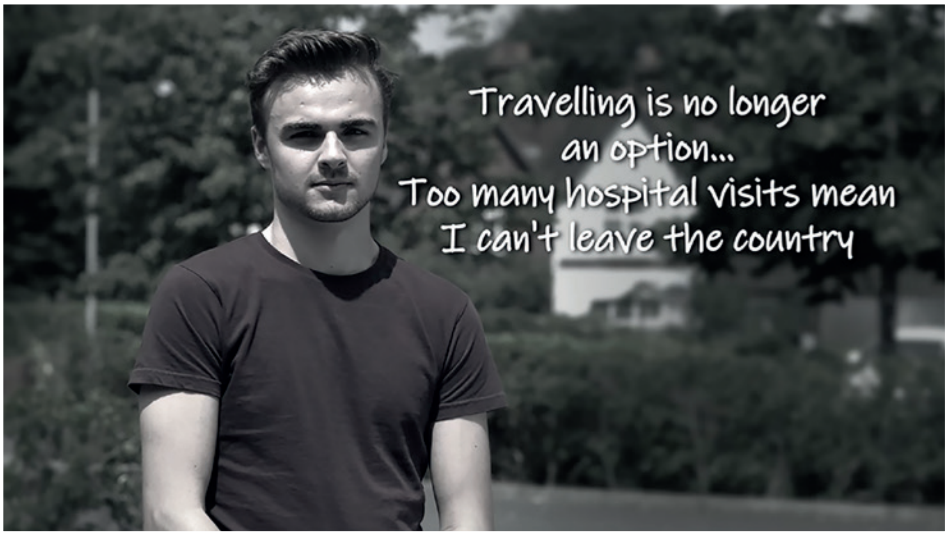
Pictures taken at our Family Day in Ilkley, 2018

CHANGING MINDS

Raising awareness of invisible diseases

Our statistics have been growing year on year in terms of the total number of people we reach

RA Awareness Week (RAAW) is NRAS' annual opportunity to have a real push on raising awareness of Rheumatoid Arthritis across the UK. Of course, we raise awareness all year round, however we make a point of launching new resources, videos, key messages obtained through vox pop polls, surveys etc. and other key data during RAAW. This sustained daily release of messages and materials during the whole week builds momentum and really makes a difference. Our statistics have been growing year on year in terms of the total number of people we reach, and this year was even better than previous years as you can see in the infographics on the opposite page. In 2018 we released a new and quite hard-hitting video, #ReframeRA, featuring people of different ages talking about how RA has impacted their lives. Over the week it received over 97,000 views and can be seen on our YouTube channel.



#WearPurpleforJIA

#WearPurpleforJIA day this year was on on 8th June. We asked schools and workplaces across the UK for support by permitting students, staff and employees to wear purple, organise purple-themed events at home or the workplace, and spread the word across social media to help raise awareness of JIA.

This national awareness day aims to fundraise and, more importantly, inform and educate the general public that children can get arthritis too.

Although there are over 12,000 children under the age of 16 in the UK affected by JIA, diagnoses can often take months, or sometimes years. As JIA is one of the most common causes of physical disability in childhood, early identification is vital.

Our success with the fundraising campaign #WearPurpleforJIA has meant many more children and families can enjoy the benefits of our family fun days and bushcraft days and meant that we have been able to re-print and expand on our resources for children and young people, their families, schools and the health care professionals who care for them.

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS AWARENESS WEEK 2018

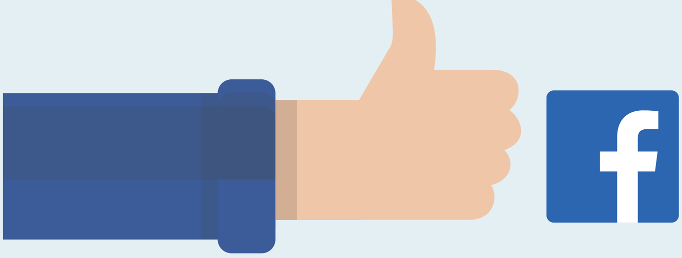
nras
National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society

Broadening perceptions, knowledge and understanding of RA –18-24 June

facebook Reach

461,392

Over 800 new social media followers



Twitter Impressions

88,736

facebook Engagement

19,982

Number of Retweets:

664

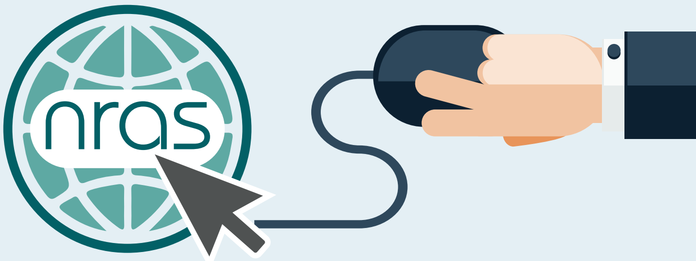
Twitter Engagement

4,383

#ReframeRA

Total video views

97,324



Website traffic
18,000 visits

Total Impressions

999,099

Total Engagement

25,070

These figures compare RA Awareness Week 2018 to 2017

Our reach during RA Awareness Week 2018 was **higher than ever**, changing perceptions that RA is a disease of the elderly.

CHANGING SERVICES

NRAS is widely known for its effective policy and public affairs campaigns as influencing and shaping the policy environment in a practical way to ensure equitable access to best treatment and care for all with JIA and RA.

In fact, this is a key strategic aim. In 2018, NRAS launched its landmark new report exploring the impact of RA and JIA on mental health and well-being. Following a survey by NRAS and City University, many shocking statistics were found, including:

- People with RA and adult JIA are much less satisfied with life, believe the things in their life are less worthwhile, and are less happy.
- One in 3 people who had asked for or were offered psychological support had never received it.
- The proportion of people scoring poorly on life satisfaction and life worth was over 7 times greater in those with RA and adult JIA.

An event was held in Parliament to launch the report along with the Shadow Mental Health Minister and the President of the British Society for Rheumatology. We shall be working with the BSR to implement the recommendations in the report over the coming year.

Ailsa and BSR President, Dr. Liz Price at the Launch of Emotional Wellbeing Matters Report

NRAS continued to engage with politicians from across the political spectrum, in Westminster, Holyrood and Cardiff Bay on issues including health, work, social care and more. We were invited to present the key findings of the Work Matters report in the European Parliament and have been invited to present our Emotional Wellbeing Matters report at the EULAR congress 2019 in Madrid.

NRAS Ambassadors

Our Ambassadors' networks in Scotland, Wales and Manchester continued to help us raise awareness and campaign for change where health and social care is devolved within the UK. Ambassadors have been working on big projects including developing a new Quality Registry in Scotland to boost standards of care, a campaign in Wales to establish a paediatric rheumatology specialist centre in Cardiff and developing an RA treatment pathway in Manchester which includes education and supported self-management interventions at critical time points. The work of our Ambassadors across the UK really makes a difference and without their hard work on the ground in these locations, we would not be able to achieve as much. We need more Ambassadors, particularly in Manchester and Wales and we will be seeking to build on our networks in the coming year.

Influencing Employers

This year we have filmed two important videos targeting employers and emphasising the importance of improving the level of support for people living with chronic fluctuating conditions like RA and JIA in the workplace. The first of these is an interview between Ailsa and Rain Newton-Smith, Chief Economist at the CBI and the second is Ailsa interviewing Neil Carberry, CEO of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation. We are planning to launch these important resources collaboratively with both these key organisations during 2019 which will result in reaching a large number of employers across the UK, raising significant awareness of 'invisible disease' in this sector.

CHANGING LIVES

Our Helpline, Information and Support Team at work

This person [the helpline operator] had a very positive attitude which has encouraged me to carry on.

NRAS Member

My telephone conversation today lifted a great weight off my shoulders. The person I spoke to knew empathetically how I felt, showed clear understanding of all my concerns, answered my questions with insight and depth of subject knowledge and pointed me in the right direction.

NRAS Member

Calls to the helpline increased in 2018.

The Information and Support team received and responded to thousands of contacts to the helpline, with an increased number of email and social media queries and in fact with social media queries doubling those of the previous year, showing the growth in people using channels such as Facebook to ask questions. Phone contacts remain the most popular way to contact the helpline, making up nearly three-quarters of total contacts.

In addition to the above, over 4000 posts on our HealthUnlocked forum were read by trained staff, generating around 100 replies, mostly written by the Information and Support team. We carried out a major new helpline audit at the end of 2018 and analysis of the first 100 callers surveyed revealed the following findings: When asked how much control respondents felt they had over the impact of RA on their daily life, the mean average from 0-10 was 4, and the majority of responses were somewhere in the middle of this range. However, a concerning 12 people reported feeling they had no control.

- Alarmingly, 82% of those surveyed scored their level of concern about their disease at 7 or higher out of 10, while only 11% scored it at 5 or below.
- 96% of survey respondents said that they would definitely or very likely recommend NRAS and its services to another person, with the majority of these (79% overall) saying that they definitely would. One person preferred not to answer, while nobody responded 'maybe' or 'not at all'.

There is a huge amount of work involved in keeping our many information resources up to date and current as well as writing regular content for the NRAS Members' magazines. Major additions were made to our popular 'Medicines in RA' booklet, making it the definitive guide to all types of medication used in RA. Interestingly our most popular publication in 2018 (updated and re-branded in 2018) was our 'Employer's Guide to RA'.

HealthUnlocked

Our online community NRAS/HealthUnlocked grew substantially in 2018 and registered members stood at nearly 24,000 at the end of 2018. We work very closely with our partner HealthUnlocked and our vision is not just to be the largest global RA peer support community but to provide the best experience, highest quality information, education, resources and support for people affected by RA - where they can learn from each other, access the expertise and support of the NRAS team, find tailored and personalised content and services and achieve better outcomes. Longer term, we see this digital health solution being deployed in clinical care where the NRAS HealthUnlocked community is prescribed as part of the clinical/medical pathway, providing a much more holistic care approach which is, we believe, the way long term conditions like RA should be managed.

Our Community Groups

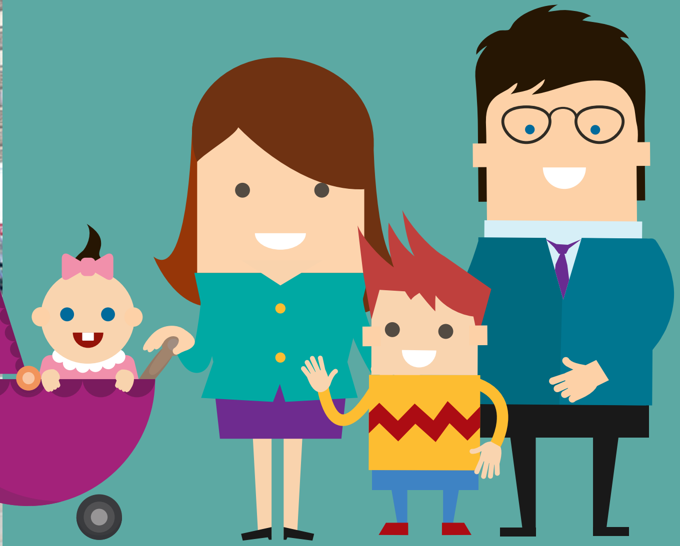
Our groups across the UK number 37 and provide a valuable service connecting and supporting people in local areas. The majority of our groups are supported by local rheumatology units who provide speakers and sign-post new patients to this resource. We have found in recent years that there is less growth in new group start-ups as social media has expanded electronic ways of connecting people, however, they remain an important social link for many and we would like to extend our thanks to all our wonderful NRAS Group Co-ordinators who work so hard to keep our groups current and addressing the issues that matter to their local RA communities.

Growing our JIA Service

Last year we provided detailed information on the work involved in establishing our children's service since launch in 2014 and the huge growth we had achieved in reaching families living with the impact of JIA. The statistics shared in 2017 were impressive and this year the data shows even further growth.

Parliamentary Event to celebrate our JIA Family fundraisers

20th June 2018



39% more families interacting with NRAS in 2018 than in 2017

Highlights of the year included a residential weekend for children with JIA and their families. We funded and hosted a weekend break for 10 families at Kielder Water in Northumberland, one parent drove all the way from Cornwall with her 5 children in a campervan to join us!

In Westminster we honoured thirty of our most prolific and enthusiastic fundraisers; we celebrated their endeavours and enjoyed afternoon tea in parliament and numbers of MPs attended to meet with their young constituents.

The JIA team has established a respected position amongst paediatric rheumatology teams as a reliable and informed organisation that does exceptional work in supporting children with JIA, their families and the health care professionals who care for them. Our award-winning publication, 'Managing JIA in School' and 'JIA Explained' are used by health professionals across the UK for their patients and families.

A MEMBER’S STORY

by Harry Bhamrah

I was born in Kenya and moved to London when I was 16. I am married with two daughters, one is a GP (which is handy) and the other an orthodontist consultant, I am also blessed with a 4-month old grandson.

In September 2016 I was on a walking holiday in Italy and I found that my eyes were very irritable - this was I believe the start of my rheumatoid arthritis with secondary Sjogren’s syndrome! I had to cut short my Italian vacation and upon my return saw my GP immediately. It took endless tests, at various hospitals before I finally got a diagnosis. This was a very distressing time.

The consultant at Hillingdon advised me to contact the NRAS Helpline and thank heavens he did. In the beginning, I used to call them [the helpline] every few days because they were the only people who had time to listen to me and offered me guidance as to what I could do next - they were truly a Godsend! When I was depressed and worried, I really don’t know what I would have done without their friendly support!

It was a long time before I was prescribed a ‘biologic’ drug’ treatment – which thank God means I am now in remission. This enabled me to rekindle my love of travel and earlier this year to take a tour of Israel where I walked on the very long wall of Old Jerusalem!

My way of dealing with RA is to try and ignore it and get on with life! My very helpful GP recommended I attend a ‘mindfulness for health’ course this year which I found really useful. I also attend an exercise class on Monday mornings, and we have tea and a chat afterwards - this is a great start to my week! I believe the key is keeping busy and staying interested in many activities. I also belong to two walking groups and regularly walk in the Chess Valley which keeps me fit.

In October 2017, I travelled with an uncle, from the Punjab in the north to Kerala in the south of India - it was so hot and humid, just like this summer in the UK. I did find the weather made my RA more tolerable which was a bonus. I am already booked on a grand tour of China including walking the Great Wall of China which I am really looking forward to. One day I hope to visit Chennai (Madras) and Goa, but one day at a time.

At the moment by current bug bear is fatigue, so I’m grateful to have just received the “Fatigue Matters” booklet. I find all the NRAS booklets helpful and easy to read. They are good to have around to refer back to and offer great supportive information.

My advice to anyone newly diagnosed with RA is to keep positive, ‘walk on the sunny side of the road’, have faith and be grateful for what you have - and use the NRAS Helpline, they have been my lifeline and I consider them my friends at the end of a telephone line. Thank you!

OUR MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS

> Just a a few lines to say the Stirling NRAS Gathering was excellent. Very informative and good to see a large crowd. Excellent lunch and coffee/ tea breaks.
>
> *NRAS Member*

Our membership for people living with or affected by RA and for health professionals continues to grow and our Member's magazine is something which many thousands look forward to receiving three times a year.

Successful and well-attended Rheum4You Events were held in Stirling, London, Durham and Cardiff. These events are open to members and non-members alike, attract large audiences and are supported by key speakers from the field of rheumatology.

Rheum4You held in Durham – Dr. Martin Lee presenting

NRAS supports a great many research projects and studies across the UK and Europe aiming to improve the lives of all those living with RA and JIA

We and our members are often asked to participate in research studies and amongst others in 2018, contributed to the following in a more hands-on way by providing patient representation either on steering committees, patient recruitment or patient participation groups:

APPiPRA
study

MATURA/STRAP
trial

QUASAR
Sleep study

HQIP/BSR
National Early
Inflammatory
Arthritis Audit

That was a fantastic and useful webinar – thank you so much!

Thank you for being clear about passing on or not to children – your clarity has made me cry!

NRAS ACTIVITY AROUND THE UK DURING 2018

New Webinar Series launched

2018 saw the launch of a new service which has rapidly become extremely popular with members and non-members alike – a series of regular webinars on a wide variety of subjects of interest to people with RA/JIA. After the live viewing, these webinars are then available to view on our website **www.nras.org.uk/webinar-recordings-2018**

Presentations

- Representatives from NRAS presented at both the BSR rheumatology conference and the EULAR Congress
- Representatives from NRAS presented at health professionals training events e.g. West Midlands Rheumatology Forum, Response Nurse event, Sustainable Healthcare Conference

Collaborations

- Global collaborations took place with a number of patient organisations as part of RA Matters (Eli Lilly initiative) and RA NarRAtive (Pfizer initiative)
- NRAS was part of the CEO programme of collaborative sharing within EULAR PARE
- NRAS is working with NHS England Biosimilars National Programme board and the National Adalimumab Patient Working Group

Academic institutes that we have worked with during 2018 in various degrees include;

KING'S College LONDON
University of Salford MANCHESTER
MANCHESTER 1824 The University of Manchester
Loughborough University
UCL
CITY UNIVERSITY OF LONDON EST 1894
Queen Mary University of London
CARDIFF UNIVERSITY
THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
University of HUDDERSFIELD
BU Bournemouth University

New resources available to all

We supply free information resources on a wide variety of topics. Rheumatology healthcare professionals across the UK rely on NRAS publications for sharing vital information with their patients about all aspects of living with rheumatoid arthritis or juvenile idiopathic arthritis. In 2018 we launched 3 new booklets – ***New2RA***, ***Living Better with RA*** and ***Fatigue Matters***. These complemented the ***Medicines in RA*** booklet launched the previous year. To ease the distribution of these new resources we developed two information packs containing a collection of three of the relevant booklets in each. ***New2RA*** pack is for newly diagnosed and ***Living Better with RA*** for those with more established disease.

WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM...

We have a brilliant fundraising team of 7 and a diverse range of income streams. In 2018 we focussed on building the team and growing our sustainable income streams which includes membership.

NRAS receives no statutory funding and relies entirely on funds raised through voluntary donations from individuals, trusts and companies as well as from funds raised through membership, events and legacies. We are extremely grateful to all of our generous donors, fundraisers and members for their support in 2018.

Out of every pound spent by NRAS, 80p is spent delivering services to our beneficiaries and 20p is spent on raising each £1. In 2018 funds raised include:

Total Consolidated Accounts for 2018 (NRAS and NRAS Community Services Limited (trading company),

£1,294,353

One of our more popular events in 2018 was our Diwali evening which raised funds to help us continue to develop our Apni Jung (our Fight) against RA with materials in Hindi for the South Asian population across the UK.

● Trusts, Grants & Contracts | **7%**

NRAS has been generously funded by many different trusts and foundations in 2018. This funding has supported our core activities including JIA services and our information and support services (including our helpline, publications and digital information tools such as webinars and interactive Love Your Heart programme)

● Legacies & Gifts in Memory | **34%**

We are extremely grateful to all those who have chosen to support NRAS by leaving a gift in their will or by remembering a loved one with a collection in their memory. Support such as this allows NRAS to make a lasting difference to all those who rely on our help now and in the future

● Donations | **25%**

NRAS continues to receive tremendous support through individual and regular (NRAS friend) donations. This funding is invaluable and is vital in enabling us to be there for those who need us

● Corporate (including pharmaceutical income) | **10%**

Corporate funding in 2018 has allowed NRAS to deliver specific projects which have benefitted the RA population in the UK

● Membership | **6%**

Membership income remained steady in 2018 helping us to maintain the quality of our members' benefits and to provide useful information days across the country

● Events & Community | **11%**

The number of people taking part in NRAS organised events, sporting challenges and community events has been increasing every year.

● Income (Investments & Interest) | **2%**

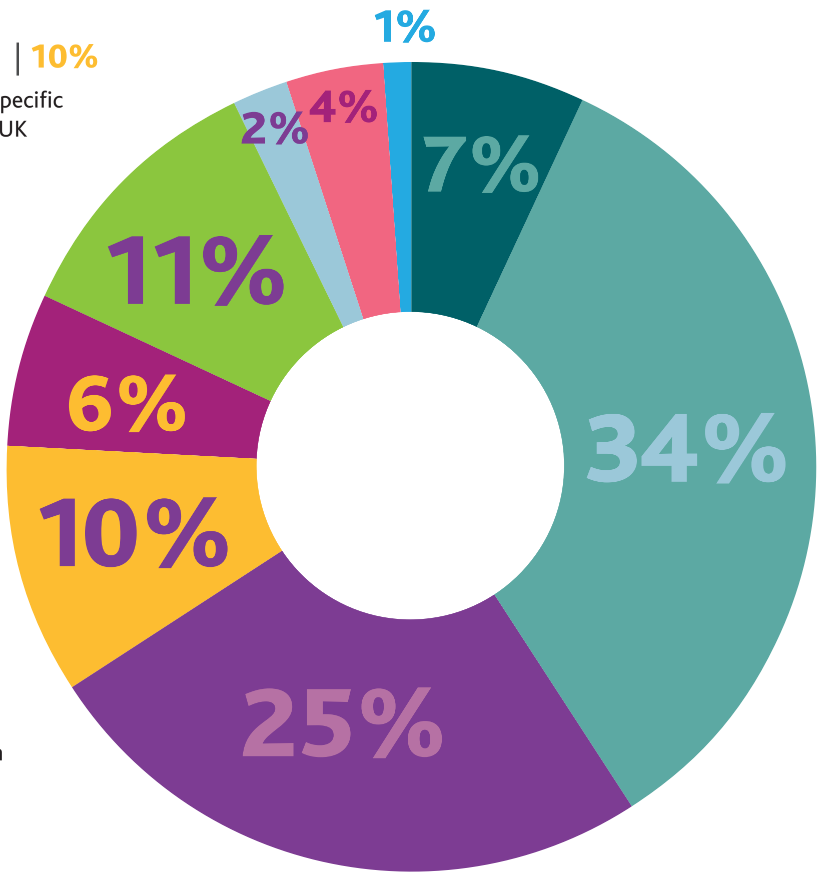
A small proportion of our income was derived from investment income

● Research, Consultancy & Studies | **4%**

We receive income from research projects and academic studies that we contribute to and participate in and from speakers' fees

● Gift Aid | **1%**

We receive additional income from individual donors who have chosen to Gift aid their donations.



WORKING WITH THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

It can be helpful to work with the pharmaceutical companies which manufacture and market medicines for Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) and/or Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA). These partnerships give NRAS important and necessary background information about clinical trial data, help to inform our Helpline, Information and Support Team about new drugs and devices, and provide us with further opportunities to raise awareness of these conditions and the need to improve the quality of care for people RA and people living with JIA, including access to services and medicines.

As a charity, NRAS has to raise funds on a continual basis in order to exist and execute our charitable functions and we therefore receive funding from a variety of sources, which includes pharmaceutical companies. This can be in the form of sponsorship or educational grants or funding for particular activities undertaken by NRAS. For more information about how we work with pharma, please visit our website.

In 2018 we received income from the following companies.

PHARMA INCOME BREAKDOWN FOR 2018

Abbvie	£53,655.00
Amgen	£2,653.00
BMS	£500.00
Celltrion	£8,000.00
Janssen	£8,000.00
Eli Lilly	£24,389.00
Mylan	£785.00
Nordic	£2,650.00
Novartis	£495.00
Roche	£1,160.00
Sanofi	£12,000.00
SOBI	£8,000.00
UCB	£8,500.00
TOTAL	**£130,787.00**

Message from our Chair

GORDON TAYLOR

NRAS has come a long way in just 18 years since our launch in October 2001 and we have cemented our position as the only patient-led specialist organisation providing support and advocacy specifically for over 400, 000 people in the UK living with rheumatoid arthritis and over 12,000 children and their families living with the impact of Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis.

We take pride in the fact that everything we do and stand for is patient-led. Our team works closely with members, volunteers and the wider populations of people with RA and JIA, our Board of Trustees and our team of medical and allied health advisors to develop, design, co-ordinate and deliver a wide range of high-quality services for all affected by RA and JIA. Everything that we do is only possible because of the dedication of this team of people and I extend my thanks and gratitude to each and every one of them for making 2018 such a successful year. We delivered a very solid financial performance in 2018 enabling the charity to look to the future with sufficient funds to support our continued growth and development in 2019. Achieving sustainable income levels of over £1.2 million per annum was a key strategic aim for us and this has been successfully achieved, along with all our key aims for 2016-2019 enabling us to invest with confidence in our core charitable services. For more information on our strategic aims during the last 3 years, please refer to our website, www.nras.org.uk/publications.

During the year we updated six of the information booklets that we make available to anyone affected by RA and JIA, whether it be a patient, a carer, a family member or a healthcare professional, and also expanded our Helpline services to enable us to support increased contact levels by phone and email. We have continued to raise awareness of RA and JIA through campaigning where we have worked hard to influence and shape the policy and service environment to ensure equitable access to the best treatment and care for all with RA and JIA.

Going forward, we will be focusing on a number of transformational projects which will demonstrate the value that NRAS brings to improving the lives and outcomes of people with RA and JIA, whilst leading the way in the use of real world evidence and data to enable us to provide better and more personalised services to those we serve.

We will also be embarking on a Digital Transformation Project which includes complete re-development of both websites and will revolutionise how we engage with our beneficiaries by widening access to our services to those target groups who are statistically the hardest to reach and consequently have poorer outcomes. We shall be embarking on a two-year project to digitalise our face to face supported self-management programmes to ensure they benefit many more thousands of people.

Our founder and Chief Executive, Ailsa Bosworth MBE, will be standing down as Chief Executive with effect from the AGM on June 26th 2019 and both Ailsa and I are delighted that our Deputy Chief Executive, Clare Jacklin, who has worked alongside Ailsa for the past 12 years, has successfully gone through a rigorous internal recruitment process, laid down by the Board and will be appointed as the new CEO at the AGM. Ailsa has led NRAS to become an internationally renowned patient organisation with an exceptional reputation and a long list of achievements over the past 17 years, and we are both sure that NRAS will go on to do a lot more in future.

Ailsa will not be disappearing; she still feels she has more to give and more to do and as the UK's most well-known RA patient she will be taking on the role of 'National Patient Champion' for NRAS and working part-time to support the organisation in a variety of different ways using her invaluable experience as CEO and as a long-term patient.

I would like to thank the NRAS Team and my colleagues on the Board for an exceptionally good year and look forward to the challenges of the coming year with optimism.

Gordon Taylor
Chair

THE TEAM BEHIND NRAS 2018

Ailsa Bosworth	Founder, CEO
Anne Gilbert	JIA Services Manager
Beverley Briggs	Senior Information and Support Coordinator
Cara Brandi	Head of Fundraising
Bronwen Cranfield	Community Fundraiser
Caroline Pryer	Information and Support Coordinator
Clare Jacklin	Director of External Affairs
Dawn Waterman	Trust & Grants Fundraising Manager
Emma Sanders	Individual Giving and Membership Officer
Gill Weedon	Fundraising Co-ordinator
Ian Hayward	Finance Director (part year)
Helen Ball	Finance Director at year end
Karen Keech	Local Services Supervisor
Katie Kent	Web & Digital Media Assistant
Kim Fitchett	RA Services Engagement and Outreach Supervisor
Lorraine Price	Executive Assistant to CEO
Matt Bezzant	Public and Policy Affairs Manager
Michele Le Tissier	Marketing and Communications Manager
Raman Fenech	Fundraising Events Co-ordinator
Shivam Arora	Web and Digital Media Manager
Victoria Butler	Information & Support Manager
Tracy Bracher	Membership Officer
Sarah Watford	Information & Support Coordinator
Debbie Skinner	Information & Support Coordinator
Emma Bartlett	Services Administrator
Emma Spicer	Senior Trusts & Grants Fundraiser

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