About Rookwood Hospital (Historical Roots)

Rookwood House was built in 1866 by the late Colonel Sir Edward Stock Hill KCB for his own occupation. He died in 1902 and his wife, Lady Hill continued in occupation at Rookwood until 1917.

Early in 1918, Rookwood was taken over for an Officer’s Convalescence Home and provided treatment for Welsh Paraplegic Pensioners.

In 1932 it became a general hospital after extension.

Currently Rookwood Hospital is home to the Welsh Spinal Injuries Unit and a Neurological Rehabilitation Unit and is part of the University Hospital of Wales NHS Trust (3rd largest trust in the UK).

Location

Rookwood is situated in Cardiff the Welsh capitol, in close proximity to the M4, approximately 45 minutes from the Severn Bridge.

About the Spinal Unit

The Spinal Injuries Unit is one of only 12 designated Spinal Units in the UK and Ireland. Patients are admitted from South and Mid Wales, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, although priority is given to Welsh patients. Patients from North Wales tend to be admitted to the Midlands Centre for Spinal Injuries in Oswestry.

The Spinal Unit consists of two wards, with an inpatient capacity of 40 beds. The patient group includes older teenagers and adults with spinal cord injury of various origins (traumatic, medical, post-surgical, spina bifida).

Rookwood is a Rehabilitation Hospital with limited acute services on site (acute services are housed within the University Hospital of Wales, approximately 2 miles away). Therefore, patients are admitted to Rookwood when they are medically stable for the following:

- Intensive Multi-disciplinary Rehabilitation
- Nursing Management (e.g. bladder/bowel management, pressure area management/healing)
- Multi-disciplinary assessment re: Rehab potential
Rehabilitation

The aims of rehabilitation are multi-factorial:

- Optimising physical function and independence
- Facilitating emotional adaptation and re-integration into the community
- Educating patients about their injury
- Providing support for family and carers

To achieve the above goals it is essential that patients are active participants in their own rehabilitation. To facilitate this process, regular Goal Planning Meetings are held for each patient.

Goal Planning

Goal Planning Meetings are regular meetings, held on the Ward between the Patient and their Rehabilitation Team. It gives the individual the opportunity to meet with the Team and discuss how their rehabilitation is progressing, their strengths and needs. The patient is able to invite members of their family to attend the meeting and is an excellent forum in which the patient/or their family can ask questions of the Team re: their rehabilitation or their condition. The main aim of the meetings is for the patient, with the guidance of the Team to set goals or targets to work towards in the coming weeks therefore, helping to put the patient in control of their own rehabilitation. The member of the Team that organises the meetings is called the Key worker.

Soon after a patient is admitted they will be allocated a member of the Team as their Key Worker. The role of the Key Worker is to provide information to patients, liaise with the rest of the MDT to co-ordinate a patient’s care, help patients prepare for goal planning meetings and chair the meeting (if the patient does not wish to do so themselves).

The Multi-Disciplinary Team

Consultant - Mr C Inman  
Ward Manager - Kath Evans

The Specialist Multi-disciplinary Team (MDT) consists of:

- Medical Staff
- Nursing Staff
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Psychologist
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Discharge Liaison Nurse
- Dietician
- Pharmacists
- Radiologists
- Access to Social Workers/Benefits Officers
Facilities

- Driving Assessment Centre
- Hydrotherapy Pool
- Internet Café
- Artificial Limb and Appliance Centre (ALAC) – including services for the provision of wheelchairs
- Transitional Living Unit
- Multi Sensory Environment

Initiatives

SPUR – a charity formed in 2003, dedicated to raising funds to benefit patients treated at the Unit. Recent monies raised have been utilised to set up the Spur Room, which includes two computer rooms, kitchen, TV, seating area for patients and relatives.

SCIP – Spinal Cord Information Programme.

CYNCOED – As part of their rehabilitation/re-integration programme, patients have the opportunity to attend The Welsh Sports Centre for the Disabled at The University of Wales Institute Cardiff (UWIC), Cyncoed Campus. The Sports Centre houses a gym which is fully equipped for both able-bodied and disabled users. The Cyncoed sessions allow patients to work out in a non-hospital environment, with the aim of increasing self-esteem and encouraging a positive attitude to exercise after discharge from hospital

Access to Sport

- Participation in annual Inter Spinal Unit Games
- Liaison with Disability Sport Wales Development Office