


dance
UK

TRINITY
MUSIC
LABAN
DANCE


BIRMINGHAM
ROYAL BALLET
Director David Bintley CBE

 UNIVERSITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
KNOWLEDGE • INNOVATION • ENTERPRISE

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital 
NHS Trust

National Institute of Dance Medicine and Science

first phase opening in 2012

Royal National Orthopaedic
Hospital's Central London
Outpatient Assessment Centre
Photographer: Paul Grundy

By **Helen Laws,**
Healthier Dancer
Programme Manager,
Dance UK

2012 is going to be a huge milestone for Dance UK's Healthier Dancer Programme, and for me personally the culmination of 13 years work to make a substantial difference to

dancers' health. After several years of hard slog fundraising we will be opening the initial phase of the first National Institute of Dance Medicine and Science (NIDMS) in Spring 2012. This will consist of a specialist NHS dance injury clinic at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital (RNOH) that can be accessed free by all dancers.

We are able to do this because we have received major donations from the Jerwood Charitable Foundation and British Harlequin, and further donations from SOLT/TMA, Trinity College London and so many of you as part of the Big Give Christmas Challenge 2010.

Over the next month or two Dance UK and NIDMS partners (Dance UK, Birmingham Royal Ballet's Jerwood Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Dance Injuries, Trinity Laban, University of Wolverhampton, University of Birmingham and the RNOH) will be finalising details and appointing staff for the new NHS clinic. A formal launch outlining the details of how the clinic will run and how dancers can access it will take place towards the end of the year.

This is the first exciting step in fulfilling our long-term ambitions to ensure ALL dancers access to affordable, comprehensive, specialist healthcare and dance science support. We are still a way off from our original target of raising £500,000 to deliver a comprehensive multidisciplinary service and vital research into dancers' injuries and their causes, and still further from having the funds needed to sustain a nationwide service into the future. But, the NIDMS founding partners have worked out a way of maximising the funds raised so far to be able to provide a specialist dance injury service embedded within the NHS.

This will kick start the project and be an impetus to raise further funds whilst practically helping dancers now!

The service will start with a dedicated dance specialist physiotherapist and an additional dance injury clinic led by Dr Roger Wolman, specialist in rheumatology and sports medicine, at the RNOH's central London Outpatient Assessment Centre, Bolsover Street, close to Euston. The new clinic will exist alongside the sports injury clinics also run by Dr Roger Wolman. This means that dancers in London who have been unable to afford private medical care will now have somewhere they can go to get their injuries diagnosed and treated by practitioners who understand their needs, free.

As is the case with accessing healthcare through the NHS normally or when making a claim through private medical insurance, dancers will still need to go to their GP to obtain a referral. Dance UK and the NIDMS partners will be

working hard to raise awareness of the existence of this new specialist service and you can help with that by informing your GP about it. Dance UK will produce an information sheet about the clinic which you can show to your GP. GPs will want to provide the most appropriate care (as well as cost effective) for their patients and will be interested to know more about this service at their disposal.

The funds raised so far will be used to kick-start this specialist service and if demand is demonstrated there is every chance it will become self-sustaining at the level required. The NIDMS partners have planned that if the model works successfully in London there will be additional funds released to start a similar service in Birmingham and then with further funds raised we may be able to roll it out in other locations nationally.

We are very excited to be able to finally offer a healthcare solution for those dancers who most need it and it seems that already that excitement is beginning to spread, illustrating what we have known for a long time, that there is a real need out there. A recent story in *The Stage*,

following an interview with Caroline Miller about Dance UK's work, plans and funding situation, chose to focus on this new development for dancers and within 48 hours it had been re-tweeted or posted on Facebook by hundreds of people around the world, far more than for any other stories coming out at that time. This really gives us hope that the service will be well used which is necessary for it to continue long term. We also hope that such positive responses will help us in the continued effort to raise further funds. We haven't forgotten, and neither should anyone else, that our ultimate vision is not just that dancers are able to access the right support when injured but that they have the input they require, whether that be regular massage or access to dance psychologists and physiologists, to more effectively prevent injury and maximise performance.

With that in mind, the NIDMS partners will, as per original ambitions and alongside the dance injury clinic, be working with all dance companies and schools who are interested to take part on the much needed longitudinal injury surveillance and health research to back up future injury prevention efforts with hard evidence.

So, keep checking your inboxes and the Dance UK website for the latest information on this project and get ready to take part or help in whatever capacity is appropriate. Please do contact us if you would like to discuss how you can donate towards this groundbreaking project, which will improve the lives of so many dancers. We also want to hear from you if you have further fundraising ideas, if you want to get involved in the research and of course, make sure you register with and talk to your GPs about this. ■

helen@danceuk.org

🔗 For further information visit bit.ly/dl6d9d