

# HEARTNEWS

for our Trusts and Individual Supporters

## WE HATE HEART FAILURE

That's why we're fighting  
to mend broken hearts



**When you have a heart attack, a portion of your heart muscle is damaged and dies. At the moment, once your heart is damaged, you will live with that damage for the rest of your life – it cannot be reversed.**

This can lead to heart failure, a devastating condition which affects hundreds of thousands of people across the UK and millions worldwide.

### **This is Bronnach's story:**

Bronnach, a secondary school teacher from Leeds, was 34 when she suffered a number of heart attacks after two of her coronary arteries tore, just eight days after the birth of her third child.



"I was clammy, I had pains in my jaw and ear, I had really bad shortness of breath and heavy arms however, I did not feel any pains in my chest."

When the symptoms returned three days later, she went to hospital.

"They hooked me up to an electrocardiogram (ECG) and that showed I was having a huge heart attack.

The consultant said they we were going to have to do open heart surgery. I asked him, will it be in a couple of days, and he said no, you are going in now."

As they started the bypass surgery they noticed that her third coronary artery had dissected. Bronnach needed 6 bypasses to restore blood flow to her heart. Her condition was so unstable in the hours after the operation that she was given the last rites by a priest.

Bronnach is now living with heart failure which has drastically reduced her quality of life. She struggles to walk short distances and has to use a mobility scooter so she can join the family on walks.

"I am extremely tired and I sleep for hours every day... there are days when I am too exhausted to even lift the baby."

Our Mending Broken Hearts programme of research offers hope of a cure for people like Bronnach.

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### **60 SECOND INTERVIEW**

Fighting talk meets cardiac genetic  
nurse Tootie Bueser

# MEET OUR NEW BHF PROFESSOR

**Mark Kearney appeared in our recent television adverts. He is BHF Professor of Cardiovascular and Diabetes Research at the University of Leeds and a consultant cardiologist.**

He and his team are leading several ground-breaking research projects which could lead to new treatments for people with type 2 diabetes, which severely increases their risk of developing coronary heart disease.

“There are 2.3 million people living with coronary heart disease in the UK. I am a Professor now, but I was just a junior doctor when I realised the sheer enormity of cardiovascular disease. Stroke, angina, heart disease, heart attack, heart failure – there are just so many people blighted by it.

All I want is for the people I treat to have an equal chance of surviving a heart attack. When they do make it, I want them to have an equal chance of responding to the drugs and treatments that help them manage their heart failure. So I'll keep on working until they do.”



## A Word from The Chief Executive Simon Gillespie

It's four months since I joined the British Heart Foundation (BHF) and I am enjoying meeting staff, volunteers and supporters to build on the BHF's strengths to continue our track record of significant achievements.



I want my contribution to the BHF to be having led an already great organisation to be even greater, so that people automatically think of the BHF when they're donating money to a charity. My aim is for everyone to understand the difference we make to the UK's heart health.

As one of our supporters, you are already a part of the fight against coronary heart disease and, with your help; it's a fight we can win through pioneering research and life-saving support. Thanks to our supporters we're able to invest millions into research, which helps to improve and potentially save lives. Thanks to supporters such as you, we're winning the fight for every heartbeat.

## How to save a life

**On average, three people die every day due to a shortage of donor organs. That adds up to over 1,000 lives lost every year.**

For some critically ill heart failure patients, a heart transplant can be their only option for survival.

Join the Organ Donor Register today at [bhf.org.uk/transplant](http://bhf.org.uk/transplant)

Once you've signed the register, it's vital you tell your friends and family that you want to be a donor and have a conversation about their wishes too.

Letting them know what you want is a simple conversation to have and could make a difficult decision easier at a very hard time.



**THE GREAT BRITISH BAG-ATHON IS BACK. JOIN IN AND HELP US RAISE 1 MILLION BAGS OF UNWANTED THINGS**

## Intravenous diuretic delivery in the home



With your generous support we are funding a two-year pilot programme at 12 UK sites to assess safe, effective ways for specialist nursing teams to administer intravenous diuretics at home or in day care. Initial findings suggest the service is effective, safe and preferred by patients and carers. It has the potential to reduce in-patient bed days, making significant savings.

Norah Taggart, 83, from East Sussex, has benefited from this new service. Norah has had heart failure for nearly three years and previously spent several weeks in hospital being treated for excessive fluid retention, a common symptom of heart failure. However, in June 2012, she was given the diuretic (medicine to help remove the fluid) straight into her bloodstream (intravenously), this time in the comfort of her own home.

"It was so much easier than going into hospital. The nurse can spend longer with you, and without interruption. I used to feel terribly guilty about my husband Gerard visiting me in hospital. He's 84, parking at the hospital is a nightmare and he's had hip replacement surgery, so doesn't find it easy to get around. He'd be exhausted when he arrived, so it's made a big difference for him too.

All the heart nurses have been brilliant; I can't speak highly enough of them.



The Inman Charity for their generous gift of £4,500 towards the BHF Centres of Regenerative Medicine

The BHF is grateful to SJ Berwin for their generosity in hosting our exciting Legal Event "An Evening of Ambition and Reality" in May 2013

The Rumi Foundation for generously hosting an exquisite evening in support of our Mending Broken Hearts programme.

**YOU'RE  
A STAR  
THANK  
YOU**

## Welcome to our Women's Room

**Our online Women's Room is now open for women living with a heart condition, or those worried about their heart health.**

Heart disease is still thought of as a man's problem. But around 3.3million UK women live with some form of heart or circulatory disease.

Our new online hub features stories about seven brave women who've shared their experiences of coronary heart disease and we've created a women-only area in our online community. This allows women to share their own experiences and find support from other women who know exactly what they're going through.

Heart patient and BHF supporter, Rachel Boothroyd, inspired us to create the Women's Room after telling us how she thought we could make our online content even more useful and reassuring for women like her.

Please help us spread the word. Visit: [bhf.org.uk/women](http://bhf.org.uk/women)



**IGS THROUGHOUT SEPTEMBER TO RAISE VITAL FUNDS FOR LIFE-SAVING RESEARCH INTO HEART DISEASE.**

## Inheritance tax (IHT) – what a relief!

Did you know that if you leave over 10% of your estate to charity in your Will, the rate of any IHT due is reduced from 40% to 36%? You could leave a legacy to charity whilst reducing the rate of IHT payable so that the other beneficiaries of your estate are not affected, or may even receive more than if no gift to charity were made.

Withers, a leading law firm, have kindly agreed to host an event on 30th October 6.30-7.30pm near St Paul's, explaining the relief. If you would like to attend please email [exclusiveevents@bhf.org.uk](mailto:exclusiveevents@bhf.org.uk) as soon as possible as spaces are limited.

## SIXTY SECOND INTERVIEW



**This month we meet Tootie Bueser, a BHF funded Cardiac Genetic Nurse at King's College Hospital and Guy's & St Thomas' Hospital in London.**

### How long have you worked for the BHF?

I was a BHF funded nurse for three years and have been a supported nurse for seven months. It's an innovative role, bringing together two major branches of medicine-cardiology and genetics to improve patient care. Genetics was a new field to me so I knew there would be a lot of challenges but that there would also be potential for professional growth and development.

### What does your role involve?

I work with patients and families who are affected or at risk of inherited cardiac conditions such as Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy (a disease of the heart muscle) and Long QT Syndrome, a rare inherited heart rhythm disturbance. I make sure they get an accurate diagnosis, and facilitate family screening and genetic testing. I provide support throughout the patient journey.

### What are the best bits?

Working in a fast-paced and rapidly changing field, so I'm continuously keeping myself up-to-date. Working with patients of all ages – it's rare in nursing to have the opportunity to work with adults and children. I also work with a great team.

### What are the main challenges?

You have to be flexible and have a vast toolkit of nursing skills so that you can support patients who can be very distressed and may have the possibility of sudden cardiac death looming.

### What would you like people to know about your job?

It's very rewarding; particularly when your patient gets on their feet again after surviving a cardiac arrest and you know you've helped them.

## Upcoming events

### Inheritance Tax Explained

30 October, 6.30 - 7.30pm

**Venue:** 16 Old Bailey, London

Leading law firm Withers explain the benefits of inheritance tax at their office near St. Pauls.

### Tunnel of Love

12 November 2013, 7pm onwards

**Venue:** One Mayfair, North Audley Street, London, W1K 6ZA

Guests will enjoy a drinks reception with canapés, sumptuous three course meal, glamorous games and dazzling entertainment all followed by the legendary party that has made Tunnel of Love the unmissable charity fundraiser of the year! For more information or to book your tickets please visit: [bhf.org.uk/tolove](http://bhf.org.uk/tolove) or email: [specialevents@bhf.org.uk](mailto:specialevents@bhf.org.uk)

### Annual Reception

25 November, 6.30pm – 8.30pm

**Venue:** The Surgeons Library, The Royal College of Surgeons in London.

Join us at our Annual Reception to celebrate BHF's year of successes which we could not have achieved without our fantastic supporters.

## 2014 Events

### BHF Round Table Event

Meet with our CEO and Medical Director for a discussion about our ground-breaking Mending Broken Hearts programme of research. More information to follow.

### Visit one of our labs

Several times a year, we arrange visits for small groups to BHF-funded research centres. It's a great opportunity to see the science in action, meet the researchers and learn more about their amazing work. Our next event will take place in London.

To find out more about our events and lab visits, please email Hayley Calvert at [exclusiveevents@bhf.org.uk](mailto:exclusiveevents@bhf.org.uk) or call 020 7554 0320

## And finally, a huge thank you

For your continued interest in the BHF. We receive no Government funding, so our work depends entirely on donations from our supporters. To find out more about supporting our work, please visit [bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk).