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## Chief Constable becomes patron of Gloucestershire-based charity

Submitted by howardlake on 24 August, 2008 - 09:03.

The UK's longest established meningitis charity - The Meningitis Trust - is delighted to welcome Chief Constable of Gloucestershire police, Dr Timothy Brain OBE, as an honorary patron.

The Trust, which has its Head Office in Stroud, Gloucestershire, is celebrating its 21st anniversary this year and is looking to build its profile both nationally and locally. The charity is proud of its Gloucestershire roots - it was set up by a group of parents from Stroud after a number of meningitis cases in the area caused concern amongst its residents - and feels that Dr Brain 's involvement in its work creates a strong connection to the people of Gloucestershire.

Dr Brain, OBE QPM BA PhD FRSA CCMI, has been Chief Constable of Gloucestershire constabulary since 2001 and is a well respected figure of the Gloucestershire community. He is also known nationally for his work, particularly after the flooding and water emergency in Gloucestershire last summer, where his force executed an impressive rescue effort.

The Meningitis Trust's Chief Executive, Sue Davie, is thrilled to have Dr Brain's support for the work of the Trust. She says; "Having Dr Brain onboard is really important to us and the work we do. Meningitis and meningococcal septicaemia are diseases that can affect anyone, of any age, at any time, and we work to raise awareness of the disease and the impact it can have on the individual, their family, friends and even whole communities. Having the support of such an influential and well respected figure, will enable us to reach wider audiences and give a boost to our work"

Dr Brain said: "I am always happy to help support and promote the good work of Gloucestershire based organisations, but I am particularly proud to give my patronage to the Meningitis Trust. Meningitis brings devastation to the lives of thousands of individuals, and their friends and families, in the UK each year. These people need our help and support, so the work the Trust carries out on their behalf is absolutely vital. If I can help to progress this work in the future, it will be an honour."

A recent survey carried out by the Meningitis Trust indicated that as many as 4,516 people living in Gloucestershire today have had either viral or bacterial meningitis. That means in an average size town with a population of 250,000 people, around 2,000 residents will have had some form of meningitis. Every year, there will, on average, be another 36 cases.

Many people survive meningitis, but thousands are left with debilitating after-effects including loss of sight and hearing, brain damage, epilepsy, learning difficulties, and where septicaemia (blood poisoning) has occurred, limb loss and scarring. The impact of the disease can change lives in a matter of minutes.

More than 20,000 people are helped by the Meningitis Trust each year through a freephone 24-hour helpline (0800 028 1828), counselling, home visits, one-to-one contact and community support. The Trust also gives away more than £130,000 every year in financial support grants and distributes millions of leaflets, posters, symptoms cards, information sheets and other materials which raise awareness of meningitis.

- Ends -

### Editor's Notes:

For further information please contact the Meningitis Trust press office on 01453 769018/768006/769030 or visit the website at [www.meningitis-trust.org](http://www.meningitis-trust.org)

Survey carried out online by CCB fastMap Ltd, London. Of 22,000 adults, reflecting the UK's population in terms of age and geography, 3,600 people responded.

### About the Meningitis Trust

As many as 500,000 people living in the UK today have had either viral or bacterial meningitis. And up to 10 million adults in the UK - one adult in every four - knows of someone who has had the disease. The Meningitis Trust, a registered charity, helps and supports everyone struggling to cope with the impact of meningitis through the following professional free services:

- " a freephone 24-hour nurse-led helpline - 0800 028 18 28
- " counselling
- " home visiting
- " financial grants to fund special equipment; respite care; therapeutic activities; special training; travel and accommodation costs.

The Meningitis Trust is the UK's longest established meningitis charity and is completely reliant on voluntary donations to continue its work.

### About meningitis

Meningitis is life-threatening and affects the membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord. Meningitis and associated septicaemia (blood poisoning) can kill within hours and can affect anyone at any time. Those most at risk are children under the age of five, teenagers and young adults, and people over 55.

Symptoms commonly include fever with cold hands and feet, vomiting, headache, stiff neck, dislike of bright lights, joint or muscle pain, drowsiness, confusion, and, in babies, a dislike of being handled, pale blotchy skin, an unusual cry and a blank staring expression. Both adults and children may also have a rash that doesn't fade under pressure (a sign of septicaemia). Symptoms may appear in any order and some may not appear at all.

For more information visit the website

[www.meningitis-trust.org](http://www.meningitis-trust.org)

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