

London's newest museum is set in a NHS hospital

For immediate release

This week saw the capital gain a new museum with a difference, one that's set unusually among five NHS hospitals in West and North West London.

After a process of five years, Imperial College Healthcare Charity Art Collection has just been granted museum status following accreditation from Arts Council England (ACE).

It means the collection of more than 2000 artworks meets the stringent national standards and benchmarks set by ACE and is an assurance of quality in terms of the collection's management and the way it is developed for the benefit of its users.

The accreditation uniquely places Imperial College Healthcare Charity Art Collection alongside well-known and established museums and galleries such as the British Museum and the National Gallery. It is currently the only working hospital art collection to be accredited by ACE.

Among the broad spectrum of works across St Mary's, Hammersmith, Charing Cross, Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea and Western Eye hospitals, are rare and striking pieces by up and coming artists and established names such as David Mach RA, Tracey Emin RA, Bridget Riley and Julian Opie.

Lucy Zacaria, Head of Arts at Imperial College Healthcare Charity, says: "We're extremely proud that the collection has been granted museum status. Getting to this point has been a long process and involved a large number of staff and volunteers over that period of time. Although you may not naturally associate art with hospitals, we know the collection makes a huge difference to the wellbeing of patients, staff and visitors.

"Having the right piece of art can completely transform the hospital environment. We always listen and work closely with staff to make sure any installation of artwork is appropriate and respectful to its surroundings and patients, helping to make an often daunting experience more bearable. It helps to shift perceptions of what a hospital environment can feel like for patients into something that is a warmer, more welcoming place to be."

Although the majority of works are installed in public spaces such as corridors and waiting areas, St Mary's, Hammersmith and Charing Cross hospitals also feature a number of dedicated gallery spaces. The charity's temporary Art in Focus exhibitions highlight art created by a specific artist or follow a central theme. Currently, the Cambridge Wing Gallery at St Mary's Hospital features a series of arresting works by artist Tim Head. The next major exhibition at Charing Cross Hospital is being installed in early November and will feature 22 etchings by Norman Ackroyd RA.

The arts team also run an active programme of arts events for the benefit of patients and staff, including regular creative workshops for patients with dementia, music sessions for young patients and a hugely popular creative workshop series that is open to the wider hospital community.

To find out more about Imperial College Healthcare Charity Art Collection, the ways you can get involved and where to visit some of the collection, visit www.imperialcharity.org.uk/art-collections.

-Notes to editors-

For more information about the Imperial College Healthcare Charity Art Collection, email bevis.man@imperial.nnhs.uk or call 020 3312 2061. Website: www.imperialcharity.org.uk. Stay up to date with the charity's latest news on social media on Twitter at [@ImperialCharity](https://twitter.com/ImperialCharity), Instagram [imperialcharity](https://www.instagram.com/imperialcharity) and Facebook.

Imperial College Healthcare Charity

Imperial College Healthcare Charity raises funds for five London hospitals within Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust: Charing Cross, Hammersmith, Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea, St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals. Since 2009, the charity has awarded over £34 million in grants to over 480 pieces of clinical research and healthcare projects across the hospitals, all of which aim to improve patient healthcare.

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust provides acute and specialist health care for around a million people annually. We have five hospitals as well as community services across North West London. With Imperial College London, we are a designated academic health science centre, improving care through rapid translation of research and excellence in education.