



## **Arthritis event spreads vital awareness**

The Haywood Hospital marked World Arthritis Day on 12<sup>th</sup> October by hosting a special information event with specialists and patients.

The event, entitled *All About Arthritis*, attracted crowds of over 150 people. It was open to the wider public but was especially aimed at people with arthritis and related conditions, and their carers.

Arthritis is one of the highest causes of disability worldwide, yet access to information and self management can be difficult. The Haywood Foundation funded event aimed to change that.

There was a wealth of information on offer for attendees to learn more about their health and how best to manage it. An exhibition area featured NHS services such as occupational health, physiotherapy and podiatry as well as partner organisations including Age UK, Disability Solutions, Port Vale FC Foundation Trust and Closer to Home Walking Network.

Visitors were also treated to bite-size 'soapbox' talks from consultants, physiotherapists, nurses and nutritionists and local socially inclusive dance group, Frontline Dance offered sit-down dance demonstrations designed to offer an exercise regime for all ages and disabilities. Also on offer were taster sessions of yoga and Thai Chi.

Volunteers from the hospitals PIER room (Patient Information, Education and Resources) provided a wonderful support network to help visitors around the event and were on hand to answer questions and talk about their own conditions.

Patients who attended enjoyed the day immensely. They commented:

**“One of the best things about the day was being able to talk to other patients, and find out how they manage their joint pain. I also enjoyed listening to the presentations from consultants and physiotherapists, I learned a lot about the conditions being discussed.”**

**“I thought it was very informative, especially the soapbox speakers. We enjoyed a Tai Chi class, and it would be great to see classes or indeed any of the other groups also available in the Staffordshire Moorlands. On the whole we enjoyed it.”**

**“What a fantastic day, and a unique opportunity to speak to professionals and get more information about local groups.”**

Chairman of the Haywood Foundation, the arthritis charity who organised *All About Arthritis*, professor Andy Hassall said: **“We are delighted with the great response to today’s event. The Haywood Foundation exists to make the lives of those with arthritis and their carers easier through funding research and providing information and signposting. I hope today’s event will encourage more people to benefit from our work in the local community.”**