

Picture: ANGELA SHARPE

ROYDON

Musician stages concert to raise cash for research into condition

A musician who suffers from a rare genetic illness is holding a concert on Sunday to raise money for the association that promotes research into the condition.

When Michael Dann was first diagnosed with CVID (Common Variable Immune Deficiency) 10 years ago he had to spend a day in hospital every three weeks having treatment to prevent him picking up life-threatening infections.

At that time only about 5,000 cases were recorded in the UK and little was known about how to treat the condition effectively.

But life changed dramatically when he was given the chance in 1999 to take part in a drugs trial at Papworth Hospital - becoming their first patient to be taught how to immunise himself at home. He and wife Kate underwent a 10-week training course to learn the technique, and Mr Dann, aged 43, now spends just two hours a week being infused intravenously with the blood product immunoglobulin. "If I hadn't had the treatment I probably wouldn't be here because

my last bout of pneumonia was really bad. I was in hospital for a week, and the next time it would have been worse," he explained. "I still pick up bugs, and have to be careful not to come into contact with someone with something nasty, like chicken pox for example. But I am probably one of the healthiest in the Papworth clinic."

A music teacher, keyboard player and leading light in local drama group Mere Players, Mr Dann hopes to raise the profile of CVID patients through the schools and organisations he works with. He is also a member of the Primary Immunodeficiency Association (PIA), which organises the Jeans for Genes fundraising campaign and will benefit from the concert. It takes place at Roydon Village Hall, near Diss, at 3pm on Sunday, with proceeds for the PIA and South Norfolk Youth Symphonic Band. Tickets, at £6 including refreshments, can be obtained by calling 01379 740041, or 01379 642572.



MUSIC MAN: Michael Dann's life changed dramatically when he was taught to treat his condition at home.