

13 October 2011

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## Media Release

### Royal United Hospital hosts premier evening

Patients will be making their film debut at a special premier at the Royal United Hospital's Breast Unit on the 21 October 2011. The unit will preview a DVD of patients' experiences, and promote the Breakthrough Breast Cancer Service Pledge, which enables patient and health care professionals to work together to improve local breast care services.

The DVD will show patients talking openly about their experiences of breast cancer and their treatment. Through the 'Service Pledge', a Breakthrough Breast Cancer initiative, staff and patients will demonstrate how their joint working will benefit the Breast Cancer Service.

Dr Dorothy Goddard, Consultant Radiologist and Lead Clinician for the Breast Unit at the RUH, says: "The Service Pledge dovetails very neatly with the Trust's commitment to engage with patients and listen to their feedback on how patient services might be improved. We are very excited about the DVD – sponsored by Breakthrough Breast Cancer – which patients will be able to borrow for viewing at home. It will soon also be accessible via our website. We are very grateful to Breakthrough for providing us with the funding to make the DVD, and of course to all of our patients who have so generously given of their time and bravely shared their experiences in order to help others."

The Service Pledge involved Breakthrough staff carrying out a series of interviews and surveys with breast cancer patients over the last six months, to find out what the unit is doing well and to develop improvement goals which truly reflect patient need. These goals, and the standards that patients can expect during their treatment at the RUH, will be recorded in a professionally produced booklet which will be given to each newly diagnosed patient.

The staff and patients have been supported in this work by Vicky Sander, who as a former patient, is very well informed when it comes to understanding what patients want. Vicky has been trained as a patient representative by Breakthrough and says: "My role has been to review the reports to ensure they represent what patients really feel and to develop short, medium and long term improvement goals.

"There is often a very different perspective between the receiving and the giving end of healthcare, but interestingly the staff and patient perspectives on the Breast Unit have been very similar, which shows how in touch the staff are with their patients.

"I think this would make a wonderful model for other areas, for example prostate cancer. The more dialogue there is between these groups, the more patients will benefit."

Dr Goddard concludes: “We believe that feedback from our patients can make significant improvements to our service and their contribution to the Service Pledge will benefit many more patients locally and across the UK.”

**ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors**

A photo opportunity will be available at 3pm, when there will be the cutting of a celebration cake and an opportunity to photograph patients, staff and BBC’s Ali Vowels, which follows a presentation of a Breakthrough Pledge Plaque.

There will be an opportunity for radio interview on Tuesday 18 October in the morning. Please contact the Communications team on 01225 825799.