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Communications Department

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## Media Release

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### Supporting Families and Carers at the RUH

The Royal United Hospital's Head of Patient Experience, Theresa Hegarty, has been recognised for her work with families and carers.

Theresa will be presented with the 2013 Health & Social Care Partner Award at the Carer's Centre first annual awards ceremony this month. Awards are given in recognition of the role that carers' play in society, and brings together young people, volunteers and partner organisations.

As part of her role, Theresa works with staff to develop partnership working with families and carers of patients, as they are integral to patient care at the RUH. Theresa also works closely with organisations from Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) and Wiltshire to encourage a greater role for their staff to get involved with carers at our hospital. The Carers' Centre was the first organisation to base a member of its team, Neil Drinkwater, at the RUH. Jackie Short from Carer Support Wiltshire also has a base here.

Theresa is delighted to receive such an accolade: "I am very honoured to have been nominated for the Health & Social Care Partner Award.

"It is the first award I've had in my career and is very special as it is coming from a community organisation, which recognises the role of families and carers' and the contribution that they make, a subject which is dear to my heart.

"I am so pleased that carer organisations from BANES and Wiltshire recognise the need for close partnership working with the RUH, and that we have positive and strong relationships with them; they are providing excellent staff to work with us in the hospital and their support is helping us to improve patient, family and carer experience here."

The Carers' Centre provides expert help for carers who are struggling emotionally with their caring role, feeling isolated and in need of a friend or needing support when dealing with health and care planning. Some of the services they offer include free counselling, long term advocacy support and a befriending service.

To find out more about the Carers' Centre in BANES or about Carer Support Wiltshire, you can visit [www.banescarerscentre.org.uk](http://www.banescarerscentre.org.uk) or [www.carersinwiltshire.co.uk](http://www.carersinwiltshire.co.uk)

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