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## Media Release

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### RUH launches new female sterilisation service

The Royal United Hospital has become the first hospital in the South West to offer a new procedure which allows women to undergo sterilisation and return to all normal activities within 24 hours of treatment.

The minimally invasive procedure, hysteroscopic sterilisation, is permanent and takes less than 10 minutes to perform.

Patients can leave the hospital after about an hour with no need to stay overnight in hospital. Most find they can return to normal activities in less than a day.

Consultant Gynaecologist Aysha Qureshi said: "Standard female sterilisation techniques involve a general anaesthetic and a longer recovery time.

"This procedure is the preferred choice of many patients and is recognized as best practice as it requires no anaesthetic, no incision, and allows women to continue with all normal activities within 24 hours of treatment.

"It is also a very appropriate procedure for those patients who are not suited to having a general anaesthetic.

"Although the actual procedure is quite quick, women are counselled at length about their decision to be sterilised and are fully aware of the implications of undergoing what is a permanent procedure, as they are if they are undergoing standard sterilisation."

Women interested in hysteroscopic sterilisation should speak to their GP and ask to be referred to the RUH. We are of course continuing to offer standard sterilisation to those patients who would prefer to have this procedure.

Hysteroscopic sterilisation is supported by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. The procedure involves the patient being given a local anaesthetic. A hysteroscope is inserted through the vagina and cervix, and a flexible micro-insert is passed through the hysteroscope using a guide wire and placed in each of the fallopian tubes. The micro-inserts induce scar tissue formation, which occludes the fallopian tubes and prevents conception.

The success of the procedure is confirmed after three months by ultrasound.

#### Case study: Laura's story

Laura was one of the first patients to undergo the new method of female sterilisation at the RUH. This is her story.



“I chose to undergo the procedure as I had exhausted all other avenues of contraception and my husband and I had decided that we did not want to add to our existing family; I love my kids, but I didn’t want anymore. I went to an NHS walk-in centre for advice and the doctor told me about the new hysteroscopic sterilisation technique and I was immediately interested. The doctor referred me straight to Mrs Qureshi at the RUH and I was seen very quickly.

Mrs Qureshi was brilliant. She listened carefully to my reasons for wanting to undergo the procedure and answered all of my questions. I was never under the illusion that this was a simple decision, the procedure cannot be reversed. I was also offered counselling.

My procedure was then booked and I would have been seen within the two months had I not contracted a chest infection. I was back in hospital and ready for surgery just three months after my initial referral. I arrived ready one afternoon – I had been allowed to have a light lunch before the procedure; I was prescribed some analgesia and waited approximately 20 minutes before I was ready to be taken through to the procedure room. I was then introduced to all the staff who would be present during the operation, this helped to reassure and relax me. The procedure itself took only 10 minutes to complete, it was a little uncomfortable but not as bad as I expected it to be. After the procedure was completed I was kept in for recovery, given tea and biscuits and discharged home after only one hour.

It took me just two days to recover after the procedure – a surgical sterilisation would normally take five days to recover from, and as I have two small children the quick recovery time was a real advantage.

Three months after the procedure I had a follow-up ultrasound which was used to check to see if the inserted coils were in the correct position – which they were. I then had a final appointment a week later with Mrs Qureshi who was extremely pleased with how the procedure had gone. I have no regrets following this procedure and I would wholeheartedly recommend it to any women considering a sterilisation.”

**Ends**