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Media Release

RUH awarded Soil Association Catering Mark

The Royal United Hospital in Bath has been awarded the Soil Association's prestigious 'Food for Life' Bronze Catering Mark for the food it serves for patients, staff and visitors in the hospital's public restaurants.

The Catering Mark provides an independent endorsement for organisations who demonstrate a continued commitment to serving food that is seasonal, sustainable, free range, local, traceable and healthy. Organisations awarded with the mark must meet strict criteria and are regularly audited to ensure standards are kept high.

On Wednesday 23rd December, Lizzi Testani from the Soil Association visited the RUH to present a plaque to the team responsible for meeting the high standards required to obtain the mark. The RUH is one of just 29 hospitals in the UK to have achieved the accreditation.

Mike Newport, Head of Hotel Services lead his team through the rigorous assessment process and was delighted to receive the award. He said: "We have a proven and longstanding commitment to providing good quality, healthy and nutritious, freshly prepared meals here at the RUH. We are already a recipient of the Gold Award for B&NES Council's 'Eat Out Well' initiative and consistently carry the highest safety rating from the Food Standards Agency.

"Achieving the Bronze Catering Mark from the Soil Association is further evidence of our focus on constant improvement to the offering of healthy food at the Trust."

Lizzi Testani of the Soil Association said: "The Catering Mark is the result of lots of dedicated effort by the team at the Royal United Hospital in Bath. Achieving this endorsement is an exceptional achievement in the healthcare sector and a demonstration of the hospital's dedication to serving fresh, ethical, sustainable food that meets nutritional guidelines. Healthy places must be serving food that is good for the environment and good for us."

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Notes to the editor:

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- **The Soil Association - www.soilassociation.org**
The Soil Association is the UK's leading membership charity campaigning for healthy, humane and sustainable food, farming and land use. **The Soil Association's Food for Life**



Catering Mark provides a framework for food providers to improve the food they serve by using fresh, sustainable ingredients which are free from harmful additives and better for animal welfare.

- **Requirements for achieving the Bronze Catering Mark include:**
 - A minimum of 75% of the menu must be freshly prepared
 - All meat and poultry on the menu must be Farm Assured (from farms that satisfy UK animal welfare standards)
 - All eggs used are from free range hens
 - Demonstrable use of local suppliers
 - No Fish from the marine conservation fish to avoid list are used on the menu
 - Seasonal fruit and vegetables are incorporated into the menus
 - No genetically modified foods are used
 - No undesirable additives or artificial trans fats are used
 - The caterer can demonstrate compliance with government salt reduction targets and nutrition standards
 - Use of lower fat cheese in dishes
 - The cooking of vegetables, potatoes and rice/pasta without salt
 - Drinking water is prominently available and encouraged as an alternative to sugar content drinks
 - Information on food provenance is on display
 - Only approved verified suppliers are used to ensure high food safety standards
 - Plenty of fresh fruit is available and is a cheaper alternative to hot puddings.

- **The Hospital Food Standards Report**
www.gov.uk/government/publications/establishing-food-standards-for-nhs-hospitals
The Hospital Food Standards Report published in August 2014 emphasised the important role that the Food for Life Catering Mark plays in verifying compliance with Government Nutrition Standards and rewarding excellence in hospital food. The report recognises that good food is an integral part of a hospital's role in patient care, rehabilitation and health promotion and it's vital that patients, visitors and hospital staff have consistent access to good quality, nutritious food.