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Media Release

Waking up to sleep disorders

This World Sleep Day, The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust's (RUH) Respiratory Sleep team is raising awareness of sleep disorders caused by respiratory problems.

Our specialist team cares for patients with problems related to Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA) – a condition that interrupts your breathing when you are asleep.

Signs of OSA include: loud snoring, noisy and laboured breathing and repeated short periods where breathing is interrupted by gasping or snorting.

Geraldine O'Connell-Ramsay, Principal Respiratory Clinical Physiologist at the RUH said: "Sleep is essential for a person's health and wellbeing, not getting enough affects your health, which can have a big impact on your quality of life and it increases the risk of developing certain conditions. If you think you have OSA, it's important to visit your GP in case you need to be referred to a sleep specialist for further tests and treatment."

The RUH's Respiratory Sleep team has been running for more than 20 years and offers specialist diagnostic tests, initial assessments of sleep related disorders and treatments.

Geraldine said: "Our diagnostic sleep studies are performed daily to establish if patients have sleep disordered breathing. We give patients equipment to monitor their breathing whilst sleeping and based on these results consultants may refer the patients for treatment or organise a more detailed study."

Treatment can include lifestyle changes or Mandibular repositioning devices (MRDs) focusing on reducing the number of breathing pauses you have when you're asleep. You should feel less sleepy during the day, have a better quality of life and reduce your risk of getting health complications and having accidents.

In February, the Respiratory Sleep Service won the Most Innovative Team of the Year at the Trust's 2017 New Year's Honours Awards. The team was recognised for the extensive work undertaken to fine tune the service to provide a better experience for patients and ensure faster access for those who require the team's help.

World Sleep Day also falls during Healthcare Science Week and our Respiratory Sleep team is just of one many Healthcare Science specialisms we have at the RUH. There are over 50,000



healthcare scientists (HCS) working in the NHS and public health services and Healthcare Science Week celebrates the essential role HCS play in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of a wide variety of medical conditions.

More information about our Respiratory department and sleep studies can be found at: http://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/respiratory/lung_function_sleep_studies.asp

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Notes to Editor:

Who's affected?

You're more likely to have OSA if:

- you are a man and middle aged
- you are a woman past your menopause
- you are overweight or obese
- you have a large neck size - 17 inches or more
- you have a small airway, a set-back lower jaw or a small lower jaw, large tonsils, a large tongue or nasal blockage
- you have a medical condition that makes some of these factors more likely such as Down's syndrome

OSA can be made worse by drinking alcohol, using sedatives such as sleeping pills and smoking

- The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust provides acute treatment and care for a catchment population of around 500,000 people in Bath, and the surrounding towns and villages in North East Somerset and Western Wiltshire. The hospital provides healthcare to the population served by four Clinical Commissioning Groups: Bath & North East Somerset CCG, Wiltshire CCG, Somerset CCG and South Gloucestershire CCG.
- The Trust provides 565 beds and a comprehensive range of acute services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.
- In 2015 The Royal United Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was acquired the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) NHS Foundation Trust. The RNHRD treats patients from across the country offering services in rheumatology, chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME.
- The RUH is changing - we have an exciting programme of redevelopment underway transforming our site and further improving the services we provide. The Trust is now working towards building a purpose built RNHRD and Therapies Centre and a new Dyson Cancer Centre. For more details visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk/about/fit_for_the_future
- For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk

