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Media Release

Project SEARCH wins national award

Congratulations to Project SEARCH, the partnership at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust that helps students with learning disabilities to find jobs, that's been named a winner in the Health Service Journal (HSJ) national awards.

Project SEARCH, a collaboration between the RUH Trust, Fosse Way School in Radstock and Virgin Care, won the Widening Participation category at the awards ceremony in London (21st November).

Teacher Tony Kelly said: "It's fantastic to be recognised by our health service peers for all the hard work we do and the positive impact Project SEARCH has on young people with learning disabilities.

"It's very rewarding to see how our students develop into confident, sociable and able young adults with experience in work and social skills that can really help them to succeed in the job market."

Project SEARCH is a one year course supported by the Trust that helps students aged 18-24 with learning disabilities to gain work experience and find jobs.

The RUH enrolls up to a dozen students on the programme and, from their classroom on site, they go out to into the hospital to work as trainees in around 40 departments and wards. A number have gone on to permanent employment with the Trust.

Trust Chief Executive James Scott said: "I'm thrilled that the Project SEARCH team was won this award. The Trust is proud to challenge traditional perceptions about employing people with learning disabilities. With Project SEARCH we help to provide our students



with good instruction and tuition to enable them to perform in their roles, and significantly increase their prospects of full-time employment. The RUH is a better place because of them.”

The Project SEARCH initiative originated at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center in the US. The Bath partnership was the first pilot on this side of the Atlantic.

For more information go to <http://www.fossewayschool.co.uk/project-search/>

The Trust also had two other finalists shortlisted for HSJ awards. In the Patient Safety category, for improved outcomes for inpatients developing Sepsis and Acute Kidney Injury using Quality Improvement methodology; and in the Improving Outcomes through Learning and Development category, increasing capacity and capability in Quality Improvement resulting in improved patient care across the organisation.

Ends

Notes to Editor:

- 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 has 759 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 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, chronic fatigue syndrome/ME, cancer related fatigue and fatigue linked to other long term conditions such as multiple sclerosis
- 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 building a purpose built RNHRD and Therapies Centre and working towards the 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

