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Media Release

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Carers Charter launched at RUH

A charter that supports and recognises the importance of carers launched this week at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust.

It promises to

- **identify and acknowledge** carers.
- help carers to **access support**.
- **communicate** with carers, and provide them with the information they need.
- **involve** carers in care, planning and decision-making for the person they care for.

Sharon Manhi, RUH Lead for Patient and Carer Experience, said: “In this national Carers Week we’re reminded of the important role that carers have in the care of their loved one.

“By listening to and involving carers we can ensure that the care we provide is person-centred and meets patients’ individual needs.

“There are 6.5 million people in the UK who are carers. Some don’t recognise themselves as a carer – they could be a wife, a husband, a child or a parent, and see looking after their loved one as part of their relationship. The support that the carer gives could be because their loved one has a physical disability, a long-term health condition, a mental health issue or a problem with substance misuse. Carers can be any age, including children and teenagers.”

Fiona Carr, from Peasedown St John, near Bath, has been a full-time carer for her husband John since he had a major stroke in 2014.

John spent four months in hospital following the stroke, with his time split between the RUH and St Martin's Hospital.

Fiona said: "When John initially had his stroke he couldn't talk and was paralysed down his right side. I knew immediately that this was a life-changing moment for us both and that I would need to give up my job to care for him full-time and make sure he had the level of support he needed.

"Being a carer can be very stressful and you need to make sure you care for yourself too. The Carers' Centre helps me to recharge my batteries and meet up with other carers, which is a great help.

"John had excellent care while he was at the RUH. The staff on the Acute Stroke Unit were fantastic. I definitely support the Carers Charter, particularly its aim to make sure carers can access the support they need."

You can find out more information about BANES Carers' Centre [here](#) and Carer Support Wiltshire [here](#)

As well as its Carers Charter, the Trust's Patient Experience team gathers feedback from carers about the services provided at the RUH, which is then shared across the organisation and used to improve those services. For more information see our website: <https://bit.ly/2ZjaiOP>

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 provides 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 and 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 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

Chair:
Alison Ryan

Chief Executive:
James Scott

