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## **Media Release**

### **EARLIER DETECTION OF CANCER AND BETTER TREATMENT FOR SURVIVORS**

#### **Cancer Reform Strategy one year on report published today**

The Royal United Hospital in Bath is working hard to diagnose more cancer cases earlier and improve the longer term treatment for cancer survivors, in line with a national report out today.

National Cancer Director Professor Mike Richards' first annual report, "Maintaining Momentum, Building for the Future", sets out the Government's progress against the Cancer Reform Strategy, highlights the achievements made by the NHS in the first year and identifies priorities for the year ahead.

The Cancer Reform Strategy, published last year, aims to improve the quality of cancer services in the NHS over a five year period. The strategy has helped direct cancer services at the RUH over the last twelve months; services which are improving all the time.

The RUH is already achieving the current cancer waiting times. This means anyone referred by their GP with suspected cancer will be seen within two weeks, and then their treatment will begin within 31 days of that treatment being agreed with the patient.

From today (1st December) new national targets mean that a patient's progression will be even more closely followed.

Sarah Hudson, Cancer Services Manager at the RUH said "Now we are able to follow the patient throughout their treatment to make sure they're getting the care they need as soon as possible. We will be checking every stage of their patient journey, right from diagnosis, to ensure we're getting it right for patients. The sooner we can diagnose cancer, the sooner we can begin the right course of treatment."

As a response to the Cancer Reform Strategy, the hospital has also focussed on improving screening services, including working with GPs on the successful further roll-out of bowel screening and a new digital mammography unit which produces clearer, more accurate images for patients with suspected breast cancer.

RUH patients diagnosed with cancer also benefit from the expertise of a cancer nurse specialist providing advice and support about the patient's individual treatment and care. The Cancer Information and Support Centre is open to anyone affected by cancer,

offering quality information and psychological support. A service is also provided by a benefits advisor, to help patients and carers make benefit claims.

Diane Fuller, Director of Patient Care Delivery, said “The Cancer Reform Strategy sets out a clear direction for cancer services over the next five years and shows how we will deliver cancer outcomes that are amongst the best in the world. This first report supports the successful work ongoing throughout cancer services in the hospital and provides a platform for our developments over the next few years.”

Looking to the future there are plans for a new oncology centre as part of the RUH’s five year redevelopment which aims to modernise clinical services and provide a better experience for patients and visitors alike.

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**Notes to Editors:**

1. For further information or to arrange an interview with Sarah Hudson please call the Communications office on 01225 821299.