

NHS Bath and North East Somerset

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Stop the Spread of Norovirus

Media Launch

Opportunity for photographs interview and digital footage

**Tuesday 25th January 11am
Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Trust**

Three films, warning people about the devastating effects of bringing Norovirus into a hospital, are being launched jointly by a hospital and a primary care trust in the Southwest. This is the first time such a venture has been undertaken and the films will be seen on screens in GP surgeries across Bath and North East Somerset, and Wiltshire as well as council areas and health websites.

The films reveal the impact of what happens when Norovirus is brought from the community to a hospital. This is done through the eyes of a mother and child, a student and a visitor all suffering from Norovirus. This innovative project is the result of collaboration between the primary care trust, NHS Bath and North East Somerset and the Royal United Hospital, Bath NHS Trust.

The diarrhoea and vomiting infection, Norovirus causes outbreaks of sickness, creates unpleasant symptoms for people and puts NHS services under strain as the infection is spread within hospitals and health centres putting other vulnerable patients at risk of infection. Norovirus is highly contagious and is passed easily from one person to another through touching infected surfaces and then ingesting the bug.

NHS B&NES and the RUH are launching this campaign to inform people of the dangers, keep people safe from infection and stop the spread by encouraging people not to visit GP surgeries, health centres and hospitals when they have symptoms.

Midsomer Norton GP Dr Liz Hersch says,
“We are seeing a number of people presenting themselves at GP surgeries or hospitals with the vomiting bug norovirus. Perhaps some people don’t realise how contagious this bug is and by presenting yourself in public areas such as these how easily the infection spreads.

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The bug produces unpleasant symptoms but most people recover without treatment. We want to ensure people get help and advice but also avoid passing the infection on. We are putting out these films to inform people of the dangers and are looking for people to help us beat the bugs”

Medical Nurse Practitioner at the RUH, Debbie Crew says,
“Norovirus isn’t a hospital acquired infection, it’s rife in the community and it’s brought into hospitals. You get families with young children... but in fact probably the last place they should be is at the hospital with diarrhoea and vomiting. If norovirus is brought into a hospital it can have a devastating effect. It can affect staff members who can contract the disease and not be able to attend and look after patients, vulnerable patients can get it and become severely unwell and it can ultimately end in ward closures

Alongside the films, there will be posters, leaflets and web material reinforcing the messages.

Media Launch – Cardiology Seminar Room, RUH.

11.15 Screening of the films

11.40 Opportunities to interview

- GP Dr Liz Hersch
- RUH Medical Nurse Practitioner, Debbie Crewxxxxxxxx
- Infection control executive nurse Mary Lewis

Digital files available for broadcast

ENDS

For more information, please contact:

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Editor’s notes

The best way to receive treatment if you do have vomiting or diarrhoea is to ring your GP surgery. The triage nurse or GP on call can tell you over the phone if you need to be seen, and appropriate arrangements can be made Alternatively you can contact NHS Direct on 0845 4647.