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Media Release

Local residents mark 50 years of managing type 1 diabetes

Two Bath residents have received an award for successfully managing type 1 diabetes for 50 years.

Peter Cousins from Oldfield Park and Roger Strudwick of Southdown were each awarded the Nabarro Medal from Diabetes UK in recognition of having lived with the disease for half a century. The medal is named after Alan Nabarro OBE, who dedicated himself to improving life for people with diabetes.

The men received their medals at a ceremony at the RUH. Both men were keen to highlight how much has changed in managing the condition over the past 50 years.

Peter Cousins said: "I was diagnosed at the age of seven, following a nasty bout of gastroenteritis. The doctor immediately diagnosed type 1 diabetes. One of the biggest changes has been in the equipment we use. When I was first diagnosed, the needle I had was so big that I was given a contraption which resembled a 'harpoon gun' to help fire the syringe into me. I still have it at home."

Roger Strudwick, who received his diagnosis aged 19, agreed: "The needles were terrifying back then. The District Nurse would visit you and say 'shove that in your thigh!'. In some ways, I think it was probably more difficult being diagnosed at 19. I was a young man and I just wanted to get on and live. I didn't always get it right in the early days. But I have my diabetes under control now."

Both Peter and Roger now only require yearly outpatient appointments at the RUH diabetes clinic. Their medals were presented by RUH **Consultant Diabetologist, Dr Alex Ward**. She had high praise for both recipients: "I always feel humbled when I have the privilege to present the award to a person who has been managing their diabetes for (almost) longer than I have been alive! It is fantastic to see just how possible it is to live a long, full and active life with diabetes."

She continued: "Thankfully, treatment and management of diabetes has improved beyond all recognition over the past 50 years. Diabetes Nurses make the lives of those living with diabetes immeasurably better", to which both men nodded vigorously in agreement.

It was a proud day for Peter Cousins who joked: "It's been a long road. It took 50 years to get here today – which is quite something considering I only live a few miles away."

The number of Nabarro medals awarded by Diabetes UK has more than doubled in 10 years – due in part to increased awareness of the award but also as a result of the great strides made in improving diabetes care. In a further 10 years, both gentlemen will be eligible to receive the Diabetes UK's Robert Lawrence Medal.

Ends

For media enquiries, please call Tina Waller (External Communications Officer) on 01225 826282.



About the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust:

Locally and regionally referred to as the RUH, 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, Somerset and West Wiltshire.

The Trust was granted a license to operate as an NHS Foundation Trust on 1 November 2014.

The RUH is one of the City of Bath's largest employers with close to 5,000 members of staff and provides 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.

The RUH is in the first phase of a major redevelopment strategy which will include the provision of a brand new state-of-the-art Cancer Centre, Pathology Lab, Therapies Centre, Pharmacy, and an Information Management and Technology Centre.