



**Date** 04.12.17

Tel: 01225 826230 / 826282

[Ruh-tr.communicationteam@nhs.net](mailto:Ruh-tr.communicationteam@nhs.net)  
[www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)  
<https://twitter.com/RUHBath>

## Media Release

### New dermatology service cuts appointment waiting times ...

A new community-based dermatology service provided by local GPs with specialist support from the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Trust has led to waiting times for appointments being cut from 25 to two weeks.

The shorter waiting times for common, non-urgent skin conditions, such as acne and eczema, mean quicker diagnosis for skin complaints and reduced numbers of hospital visits.

The service, for patients registered with a Bath and North East Somerset GP, began in September and has already seen more than 100 patients. It combines the expertise of a specialist GP with consultant support from the dermatology team at the RUH.

It is commissioned by NHS Bath and North East Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group and led by B&NES Enhanced Medical Services (BEMS).

Dr Andrew Smith, CEO of BEMS, and local GP, said: "Even some of the more common skin complaints can have a real debilitating effect on the lives of the patients, causing issues in the workplace and unsightly conditions can mean that going out in public can be very stressful. This new service is great as it means that we can deal with the issue early and minimise the discomfort and wider effects on the patient.

"Under this service, our specialist GP is effectively part of the hospital dermatology team, but in a more convenient location. There will be instances where specific equipment, treatment or expertise



needed means that a patient may still need a hospital visit, but mainly we can deal with the issues in the community and speedily.”

Dr Inma Mauri-Sole, Associate Specialist in Dermatology and Clinical lead at the RUH said: “This new service should help us prioritise patients that need our input and expertise, whilst not disadvantaging other patients with less urgent skin conditions.

“It means they can be seen, diagnosed and treated quicker by a GP with a special interest and expertise in dermatology, and at the same time they can educate the wider GP community about general common dermatology problems. We are very proud to be part of this project and hope that it will organically adapt and grow with time.”

The new service runs on Wednesday and Thursday mornings from Rush Hill Surgery in Bath and Elm Hayes Surgery in Paulton.

Ends

## **Notes**

### **About BEMS+**

Bath and North East Somerset Enhanced Medical Services (BEMS+) is a local not-for-profit organisation that works across the community to provide care and clinical services for patients on behalf of all 26 GP practices in Bath & North East Somerset. It develops innovative projects and evidence based ways of working to improve GP access and services for patients. Its work supports the national vision for better local, community-based care. For more information please contact Lisa Boustead on 0772 0711102 or email on [lisa.boustead@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lisa.boustead@yahoo.co.uk)

### **About Bath and North East Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group**

NHS Bath and North East Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (BaNES CCG) is responsible for planning and buying health services for the 199,660 patients who are registered with one of the 26 GP practices based in Bath and North East Somerset. It has a budget of £257m for 2017/18 to provide local health services including primary care services.

The Community Dermatology Service was awarded to BEMS as prime contractor in a three-year contract and is for B&NES residents only.

Skin conditions are the most common reason for people to consult their GP with a new problem and it is estimated that nearly 13 million people visit their GP with a skin problem each year in England and Wales.



## 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 565 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 was 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.
- 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 working towards building a purpose built RNHRD and Therapies Centre and a new Dyson Cancer Centre. For more details visit: [www.ruh.nhs.uk/about/fit\\_for\\_the\\_future](http://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](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

