

14.03.2018

**Communications Department**  
Royal United Hospital  
Combe Park  
Bath  
BA1 3NG

Tel: 01225 826230 / 821459  
Mobile: 07557 756658 (office hours)

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

## Media Release

### **Dorothy House has presented a Joint Award for Innovative Thinking to Helen Meehan at RUH, Bath and Rachel Saunderson at Dorothy House.**

Dorothy House Hospice Care has presented a joint award for innovative thinking to Helen Meehan, a senior nurse at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH) and Rachel Saunderson, Hospice at Home Manager at Dorothy House. The joint award is part of the Hospice's Annual Employee Awards which recognise excellence, innovation and commitment among staff and celebrates effective partnership-working.

The Award recognises the innovative thinking that lead to the development of an 'Enhanced Discharge Service.' Using the "Better Care Fund" as an enabler, Dorothy House partnered with the RUH and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group to launch the Enhanced Discharge Service in July 2016. The service has gone from strength to strength in recent years and aims to help patients at the end of life get home quickly following acute care in hospital and provides ongoing hospice care in their home.

**Helen Meehan and the Specialist Palliative Care Team at the RUH** liaised regularly with the Dorothy House team to identify patients in the last stages of life wishing to be discharged home with support from the Hospice at Home service. Carer visits and up to 24-hour carer support are then provided by the Hospice. The Enhanced Discharge Service has meant that over 130 patients were able to die at home and in their preferred place of care between July 2016 and January 2018.

Helen Meehan, Lead Nurse at the RUH for Palliative Care and End of Life, was recognised for her role as a key partner in developing tools to facilitate the Enhanced Discharge Service across the hospital.

Helen said: "I have always felt that supporting patients nearing the end of life and their families enables you to truly use all your skills as a nurse. To care for the dying person and their family is such a privilege. As a lead nurse I feel passionately about supporting all staff to do the best that they can do, to care with compassion and to enable the patient and their family to be supported with dignity and respect. This includes helping someone to be discharged from hospital with the appropriate care and support that they need."



"For some patients home is where they wish to be in their last days or weeks of life, with their family, with friends and with home comforts. Many patients will require support with personal care to enable them to be supported at home or support for their families in providing care. The Enhanced Discharge Service can provide this carer support, in the patient's own home.

"This initiative has made such a real and tangible difference to how we support rapid discharge home to preferred place of care for patients nearing the end of life. It has been such a pleasure to work collaboratively with Dorothy House Hospice Care to establish this service."

**Rachel Saunderson, Hospice at Home Manager at Dorothy House Hospice Care** said: "It is gratifying to all of us working on this project across partner organisations that the Enhanced Discharge Service has given more patients the choice to die at home if they wish. It has also significantly reduced the length of hospital stay for these end of life patients. The service supports patients in those important last days of life with faster discharge and is responsive and flexible both to patient and family needs. I look forward to the ongoing development of this valuable service in 2018 and beyond."

**Wayne de Leeuw, Executive Clinical Lead for Community Services at Dorothy House** said: "Well done to both Rachel and Helen on their award. They have worked collaboratively to achieve some great results and helped many patients and their families spend precious time together at home during their loved one's final days. Due to the success of the Enhanced Discharge Service it has now been expanded to include patients from the Bath and North East Somerset and Somerset CCG areas."

To find out more about Dorothy House Hospice Care visit [www.dorothyhouse.org.uk](http://www.dorothyhouse.org.uk) or call T: 01225 722 988. For information on the RUH, Bath visit [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk) call T: 01225 428331.

## 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 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)

Chairman:  
Brian Stables

Chief Executive:  
James Scott

