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Media Release

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Sun, Sea & STI-free

A walk-in clinic to help people prepare for a safe and sexually transmitted infection free summer is running at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust Sexual Health Service.

The free walk-in session, on Saturday 1 June at the Riverside Clinic, Bath, between 9.15am - 12.00pm, is for anyone aged 18 or over who would like a general pre-summer STI check-up.

Dr Kate Horn, Consultant in Sexual Health and HIV Medicine, said: "Our walk-in sessions are for those with no symptoms that would just like a routine check-up and some peace of mind. It's free, quick and very straightforward. Our team are all very friendly, non-judgemental and easy to talk to."

Alongside the clinic, the Riverside team have written some top-tips to promote safe and responsible sexual health during the summer holidays.

"We'd like to encourage people to think about their sexual health before they go on holiday rather than when they get back. Take some simple preventative measures and you'll come back smiling, sun-kissed and STI free!"

1. Visit a clinic for an STI test before going on holiday

Start at the beginning – don't take an STI on holiday with you! Before jetting off, get tested so that if necessary you can be treated for any infections before you leave home. Please remember it can take up to 14 days to receive your results so plan ahead to reduce the risk.

2. Carry a condom in your pocket/bag/shoe/sock/bra so that you always have one available and then remember to use it!

Make sure your condoms are new and unopened, have the BSI kitemark or CE mark (this means they are good quality), are in date and do not have any holes in them.

3. Watch what you drink

Alcohol is part of the holiday for many of us but we all know that we can make poor decisions when we have drunk too much so try to keep within safe limits.

4. Look out for yourself and your friends

Drinks can be spiked so you need to be aware and not leave your drinks unattended. If you see your friend going off with someone you don't know – ask them if they're OK. Get them to look out for you too.

5. Visit a clinic for an STI test when you return

If you have had sex on holiday and have any concerns about possible infection, come and get a check-up when you get home.

Not everybody with a sexually transmitted infection (STI) shows signs or symptoms of the infection. If left untreated, STIs may result in serious and difficult-to-treat complications. Chlamydia is the most common bacterial STI diagnosed in England (accounting for 46.1% of all STIs diagnosed in 2015). About 70% of infected females and 50% of males will not have any obvious signs or symptoms or they may be so mild they are not noticed.

You can read more information here <http://www.ruh.nhs.uk/sexualhealth>

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 759 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 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, cancer related fatigue and fatigue linked to other long term conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

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 building a purpose-built RNHRD and Therapies Centre and working towards new Dyson Cancer Centre. For more details visit: 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