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## Media Release

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### Helping elderly patients prepare to return home

An innovative new project has been launched at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH) which aims to encourage elderly patients to get up and about and prepare them for their return home.

The 'Dayroom to Doorstep' initiative, the brainchild of Senior Sister Helen Slocombe, with support from Occupational Therapist Annabel Hafner, has seen a once underused dayroom on Combe ward brought back to life by staff.

The bright and airy dayroom is now a focal point for patients on the ward, which specialises in care for older people. It is kitted out with comfy chairs and a big table and has been sensitively decorated to compliment a number of vintage props, including an old television and rotary dial telephone. There is even a piano for the occasional sing song.

The dayroom is the venue for games and art sessions, while patients are encouraged to get up and about and make themselves a cup of tea in the dayroom's kitchen.

Annabel said: "Encouraging the patients to get out of bed and move around is so important for their muscle strength. It also builds their confidence and independence.

"We also encourage patients on the ward to dress in their own clothes while they are with us as this has been shown to aid their recovery."

During Wimbledon, staff had the ace idea of treating patients to strawberries and cream in the dayroom, which they loved.

Helen said: "We've really changed the way we work on Combe ward, making sure the dayroom is at the centre of everything that happens on the ward from daily lunch clubs to ensuring timely discharges.

“Patients are much more mobile and socialising with one another. It also helps the hospital with patient flow. On a day a patient is due to be discharged, we will support them into the day room as early as possible to prepare them for their journey home, at the same time freeing up a much-needed bed.

“The Dayroom to Doorstep project has been a real success and there are plans to expand it to other wards at the RUH.”

The project has attracted worldwide attention, with Helen and Annabel speaking at a virtual ‘End PJ Paralysis’ global summit conference, which focused on the different work being done to encourage hospital patients to get up and about, wearing their own clothes, to boost their recovery.

Also speaking at the conference, was Team Lead Occupational Therapist Nicola Stirling, who talked about “Spreading the End PJ Paralysis love” message throughout the RUH.

Nicola said: “This is such an important message and we are so passionate about it here at the RUH. Supporting patients to get up, get dressed and get moving gives them back their identity and sense of purpose, which is often lost whilst in hospital. It’s all about helping our patients feel like themselves again.”

For more information go to [www.endpjparalysis.org](http://www.endpjparalysis.org)

## 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](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)

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Matters  
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