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## Media Release

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### Bells and bubbles as Suki, 7, kicks cancer

A SEVEN-YEAR-OLD cancer survivor has celebrated beating cancer surrounded by family and friends – including her ‘hospital bestie’ – at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust.

Suki Corbett, from Devizes in Wiltshire, was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL) in January 2017 when she was just four years old. In the few months leading up to Suki’s diagnosis, GPs attributed the then four-year-old’s poor health to a virus. As her condition deteriorated, her parents, Rachel and Pete Corbett, consulted a paediatrician and eventually received the devastating news that their daughter had leukaemia.

Suki’s treatment included regular high-dose chemotherapy, blood and platelet transfusions and steroid medication. She suffered from weight loss and gain, constant nausea and vomiting and lost her hair as a result of the treatment. Her mother recalls birthdays and Christmases spent in hospital.

In February this year Suki become the first to experience a 'trainee scientist' tour of the pathology laboratory at the RUH. On the tour, she was given her own mini lab coat and ID badge, booked in and labelled her own blood samples and watched as the machines whizzed and whirred processing them. Next she tested her sample to discover what blood type she was, looked at samples through a microscope and had a race with a scientist to fill up and then empty a pipette. The tour was topped off with a goody bag and certificate. Suki was happy and healthy as she celebrated completing a gruelling two and a half years of treatment with her family and friends, by blowing bubbles and, most importantly, ringing the end of treatment bell three times to symbolise the end of her treatment for ALL.

“During the early weeks of Suki's diagnosis, I can remember watching films of other children ring their bell, it felt a whole other world away, but a world we were so determined to get to,” Rachel Corbett said.

“Reaching the end of her treatment has been far more emotional than I ever anticipated and seeing Suki ring the bell is such a huge milestone for her, for us all. It is wonderful to see her beaming smile.”

Commenting on the support the family received throughout Suki’s treatment, Rachel said: “Over the past couple of years, Children with Cancer UK has helped fund research and development for the chemotherapy treatment Suki has received for her leukaemia. They've also provided us with memorable family days and special times with other oncology families – people we're now proud to call our friends.

“Suki's doctors, nurses and all healthcare staff have been incredible throughout her treatment. It's a world you never expect to be immersed in, but we've met some truly wonderful people.”

Looking to the future, Rachel added: “It's amazing to watch Suki grow in strength week on week since finishing treatment. We cannot wait to see her get involved in so many more activities now, and watch her grow into a strong and determined little lady.

“However, a lot of people do have the perception that once treatment finishes, and a child has their last dose of chemotherapy, that that’s it and you can get on with life. But we now have to deal with a new norm. Suki has been really affected, both physically and mentally, and will have ongoing side-effects from the treatment for the rest of her life.

“While our life has changed forever since dealing with childhood cancer, one thing is for sure we are determined to enjoy every precious moment.”

And what did Suki have to say about her treatment, ringing the bell, and her hopes for the future?

“It was horrid having the medicine but the doctors and mummy and daddy kept saying if you have it, it'll made you better, and it has, and now I've finally rung the bell and finished treatment.

“Today I'm so joyful, happy and excited. And when I grow up I want to be a doctor - I just think they are amazing,” she said.

Hospital best friend Matilda Fisher, 6, who underwent ALL treatment side-by-side with Suki also joined in on the celebrations.

“Matilda is my really special friend and she came to watch me ring the bell – we’ve both had leukaemia and we both understand what we’ve been through – other friends might not know what it’s been like and that’s why it’s so special,” Suki said.

## 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)