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## Media Release

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### **RUH cardiac physiologist wins NHS female fellowship**

A cardiac physiologist at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust has been awarded a prestigious 12-month NHS fellowship for female healthcare scientists.

Helen Hodgson is one of 32 candidates chosen for the 2019 Chief Scientific Officer's (CSO) WISE Fellowship programme for NHS England.

It offers a unique opportunity within the NHS and beyond for mid-career female healthcare scientists to gain invaluable leadership experience.

Helen, a Highly Specialist Cardiac Physiologist at the RUH Cardiac Centre, said: "I never thought for a moment that I'd be chosen when I applied. I am utterly delighted to have been given this wonderful opportunity – it's probably the proudest I've felt in my career."

Helen has worked at the RUH Cardiac Centre since 1993, gaining experience in many aspects of diagnostic cardiology including cardiac rehabilitation and community echo services. She is now involved in raising awareness and support for people with atrial fibrillation (AF), a common condition when the heart beats irregularly.

She voluntarily runs a regular AF patient support group in Frome in Somerset, backed by the Atrial Fibrillation Association, offering knowledge, information and understanding of the condition. It's the subject she plans to concentrate on during her fellowship year.

She said: “I’d like to create a model of best practice for AF at the RUH. We’re always looking to further improve patients’ experience of being in hospital, and by gathering and hearing their feedback I hope be able to give AF patients a bigger say on services for their benefit.

“I hope the process will also enhance my leadership skills, particularly to inspire future healthcare scientists. I want them to realise that they can make a difference and to listen and learn from patients.”

Over the next 12 months, Helen will receive bespoke leadership development training and be mentored by senior leaders in healthcare, industry and academia, as well as speaking and ambassadorial opportunities through the CSO and WISE networks. She will also have the opportunity to join senior leaders at NHS England healthcare science advisory meetings.

Trust Medical Director Dr Bernie Marden said: “We are very proud of Helen for her work and dedication in and outside of work in benefiting patients, particularly those with AF. This fellowship will give her the opportunity to grow and develop as a leader in an incredibly important area of healthcare. This will not only benefit Helen personally but will be great for the RUH and for the patients we care for.”

There are around 300 healthcare scientists working at the RUH. They use their knowledge in science and technical skills to advance care either by working directly with patients, or in supporting roles or involvement in research and innovation.

For more information about atrial fibrillation see <http://www.hearhythmalliance.org/afa/uk/>

**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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Alison Ryan

Chief Executive:  
James Scott

