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Media Release

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NHS rainbow badges worn with pride at the RUH

Staff at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust will start wearing NHS rainbow badges from tomorrow (Tuesday 17 September) to show support for LGBT+ patients, colleagues and visitors.

The NHS rainbow badge project is a way of demonstrating that the RUH is an open, non-judgemental and inclusive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. It is a way of signalling that people can feel confident in discussing LGBT+ issues with staff, and will be signposted to the appropriate support if needed.

A recent Stonewall survey, published in November 2018, estimates that nationally one in five LGBT+ people are not out to any healthcare professional about their sexual orientation. This can make a significant difference for patients, helping healthcare staff to best support all physical and mental health needs.

The launch has been planned by the hospital's LGBT+ staff network – a forum for staff, including allies, to talk about diversity issues and promote inclusion. The badges originated at Evelina London Children's Hospital and are now being adopted at hospitals across the UK.

Director for People Claire Radley said: "The RUH places a huge value on equality for both patients and staff, which is why one of our core values is that 'everyone matters'. I'm delighted that we have been able to support our staff network in launching the NHS rainbow badges at the RUH as a symbol of this.

“It is not just about wearing a badge though. There are simple things we can all do to promote inclusion, like thinking about the language we use. All staff at the RUH receive equality and diversity training and we will continue to develop our equality agenda to ensure that every individual receives the highest quality of care, regardless of how they identify.”

LGBT+ Staff Network Chair Steve Dunne-Howells, who works at the RUH as a Discharge Co-ordinator, added: “I’m really pleased that we’re able to introduce the badges at the RUH as a visible symbol of the culture of equality and inclusion. Simple things like this can make a big difference for people who may feel unsure about their identity or whether they disclose it.”

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