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RUH launches new follow-up clinic for Critical Care patients

Patients who have spent time in the Critical Care unit at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Trust now have the option of attending a new follow-up clinic which will check on their physical and mental health.

Launched this week, the clinic, one of the first of its kind in the south west, aims to identify any ongoing needs or concerns that patients may have following their stay in the unit.

Patients will be contacted one to two months after they have left Critical Care, to see if they may benefit from attending the clinic.

Appointments will then be offered to patients who have experienced negative effects linked to their admission, such as reduced mobility, loss of independence, changes in mood, nightmares or flashbacks.

Caroline Ficke, Physiotherapy Team Leader, said: "This clinic is all about identifying and meeting the needs of people who have left Critical Care but who still need both physical and mental support.

"Being admitted to the unit can be a traumatic experience, so we make sure we focus on supporting a patient's mental health as much as we do their physical rehabilitation."

Dr Andy Georgiou, Lead Consultant for Critical Care, said: "We know that a lot of patients struggle when they leave the unit and the hospital. They don't always have access to the support they need.

"This clinic brings the key support services likely to benefit the patient together in one clinic to support those people who need it the most."

The clinic is one of the first of its kind in the south west and one of only a few to offer patients access to a consultant, nurse, physiotherapist and psychologist, all of whom specialise in intensive care medicine.

Former Critical Care patient Andrew Forster, 62, was one of the first patients to attend the new clinic.

He said: “I was in Critical Care for about seven weeks last year. I’m making good progress but I’m nowhere near back to normal yet and have been suffering with high levels of anxiety and have had trouble sleeping too.

“Visiting the follow-up clinic has been a great help to me. I was able to talk with a psychologist, which has been really helpful and had a very positive affect. I also met with Caroline and she gave me some exercises to take away with me to help with my rehabilitation – my aim is to get back to playing bowls again as soon as possible!

“People leaving Critical Care can have negative effects which are often compared to PTSD. This clinic will be really important in helping people like me to recover physically and mentally from the experience.”

You can find out more information about the new follow-up clinic on our website [here](#), by calling 01225 825057 or emailing ruh-tr.criticalcarefollowup@nhs.net

The clinic will be run at the RUH initially on a one-year trial.

Ends

Notes to Editor:

The World Health Organization has announced that 2020 will be the Year of the Nurse and Midwife to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale. Our nurses and midwives are a big part of the RUH family and throughout the year we will be celebrating the work they do, going above and beyond every day to give our patients compassionate care.

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 has opened the purpose-built RNHRD and Brownsword Therapies Centre and is now working towards the 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

Chair:
Alison Ryan

Chief Executive:
James Scott



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