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Friends volunteers making a difference in the Emergency Department

Friends of the RUH volunteers who help out in the hospital's busy accident and emergency department have proved such a success that A&E staff are now appealing for more volunteers to come forward.

The volunteers support patients in A&E with the little things that can make a big difference - making patients a cup of tea, providing a listening ear to them and their relatives and helping them feel comfortable at what can be a worrying and stressful time.

Their work is helping to free up time for busy clinical staff to focus on providing high quality care for our patients.

One of the volunteers, Andy Edwards, said: "It's always very busy because there's so much going on. I'll serve tea and coffee to patients, their relatives and friends and help out at meal times too.

"A big part of the role is listening to patients. They are in unfamiliar surroundings and often scared, so you can help to reassure them. Sometimes patients or their relatives just want to sit and talk and we provide that listening ear."

Andy decided to volunteer after the death of his wife, who was an oncology patient. He said: "I approached the hospital to see how I could help. The RUH had been so good to us that I wanted to give something back.

"If you're willing to really put your heart into it you'll get so much out of it. It's a very satisfying and rewarding role."

Samantha Nolan, Manager of the Friends of the RUH Volunteer Services, said: "The feedback we have received from staff has been fantastic. The volunteers are praised for their support of patients, relatives and staff and are crucial and valued members of the Emergency Department team.

“If you’d like to help out, please get in touch. Just a few hours a week or a fortnight can really help and you’ll receive training and support.”

If you’d like to volunteer at the RUH, call 01225 824046 or visit the Friends website – www.friendsoftheruh.org.uk

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