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## **Celebrating Frome's new maternity team**

Mums and babies were the guests of honour when Frome Birth Centre hosted a special party to launch its new maternity 'Continuity of Carer' team.

The team of midwives and specialist support staff at the unit, based at Frome Community Hospital, now offers a more personalised pathway of care for women from early pregnancy through to childbirth and beyond.

Under the new system a woman is seen by and gets to know a dedicated small group of midwives who visit her at home, see her at regular clinics, attend the birth and continue her personal post-natal care.

The Frome service is provided by The Rowan Team project. Midwife Karen Patrick said: "This new way of working means we're out and about in the community, meeting mothers from the very start of their pregnancy and staying with them before, during and after labour. It's very supportive and reassuring and, in the short time we've been operating, it's been very successful with positive feedback from mothers and families.

"The way our two Maternity Support Workers fit into the team is a great asset, helping to support midwives during care in labour – particularly at night. The overnight on-call service they provide to support women with feeding in their own homes during the early days is invaluable and supports the maternity transformation plan to offer personalised care at home."

Rachael McNamara, from Frome, cradling three-week-old Gryffyn, said: "For me the care throughout my pregnancy and birth was really lovely. I knew my nominated midwife, she knew me and my husband and little girl – it was really personalised care."

First-time mum Natalie Taylor's baby Amelie was the Rowan team's first baby. Natalie, from Westbury, said: "The whole experience was amazing. The midwives became like friends, and that gave me a lot of confidence. It was just good to always have a friendly face, someone I knew and who knew me during my pregnancy."

Lisa Cheek, RUH Director of Nursing and Midwifery, said: "We are committed to offering this model of care to as many women as possible. Evidence shows that it benefits mothers and their baby, creating trust and confidence in their midwife team and making their birth experience a wonderful, life-changing time."

The Continuity of Carer plan is based on the recommendations of the NHS Better Births report. Its aim for maternity services is to make them safer, more personalised, kinder, more professional and more family friendly. Continuity of Carer is one of this year's priorities for the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust and coincides with 2020 international Year of the Nurse and Midwife, a worldwide celebration highlighting the vital role of staff in providing essential health services.

The Frome Rowan Team is the first of four such groups in the Trust providing community continuity of carer – the others are in Bath, Chippenham and Paulton birthing centres – and more teams will be established across the Trust area.

Continuity of carer is aligned with recently-approved plans to transform maternity services across Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire – changes that will mean more equal access to choice for women about where to have their babies, a more effective use of resources, a better supported homebirth service and enhanced antenatal and postnatal care.

## Ends

### Notes to Editor:

The World Health Organization has announced that 2020 will be the Year of the Nurse and Midwife to commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> 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](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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James Scott



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