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RUH reassures patients on attending elective care appointments

Patients waiting for elective, planned treatments at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH) are being reassured that it is safe to take up their rescheduled appointment dates as the hospital returns to providing 'new normal' services.

With the number of people in hospitals with COVID-19 continuing to decline, services across the South West are gearing up to work their way through the backlog of patients who had their treatments delayed at the height of the pandemic.

RUH Head of Surgery Derek Robinson said: "It's perfectly understandable that some people may have concerns about coming into hospital.

"I want to reassure everyone that we are here and ready to provide treatment for those who need our care, that the hospital is safe and that it's really important to attend your appointment. If you feel you need to be seen, whether it's for a planned appointment or in the emergency department, please do come to hospital. Our staff will be using the correct infection-control measures and protective equipment and we will help you in the safest possible manner."

The RUH is now restoring more elective, planned treatments and surgery, seeing more outpatients either face to face or by virtual appointments, and working with independent providers in Bath to adapt services to ensure that patients in greatest clinical need or waiting longest are prioritised.

Over the coming weeks, people who need important planned procedures, including surgery, will begin to be scheduled for that care.

Chair:
Alison Ryan

Interim Chief Executive:
Libby Walters



At the same time, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) [guidelines](#) have changed for patients self-isolating before elective treatments. Previously at the RUH, all patients, and their households, were asked to isolate for 14 days before the date of surgery.

Now, pre-operation, those categorised as clinically vulnerable must

- Socially distance for 14 days and follow hand hygiene measures
- Have a COVID-19 swab test 72 hours pre-op
- Self-isolate for three days post COVID swab

Those who are clinically extremely vulnerable must

- Self-isolate for 14 days
- Have a COVID-19 swab test 72 hours pre-op

Children, unless clinically extremely vulnerable, must

- Socially distance for 14 days
- Have a COVID-19 swab test 72 hours pre-op

Dr Michael Marsh, Medical Director at NHS England and Improvement said:

“The resumption of elective treatments is a very positive step in the restoration of services in the South West. Whilst the numbers of outstanding electives are large, we know we can work through this with the help of patients who need treatment.

“Inevitably there will continue to be delays. However, rest assured those people in need of treatment will receive it as soon as practicably possible.”

Watch our video link [here](#)

Ends

Notes to Editor:

The World Health Organization has designated 2020 as 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 are 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

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