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Media Release

RUH patients to benefit from new body scanner – the first of its kind in the UK

The latest in scanning technology is being installed at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, reducing scanning time for patients and creating clearer images which will help with diagnosis.

The Veriton digital (solid state) gamma camera is the first of its kind to be installed anywhere in the country and will be housed in the RUH's Clinical Imaging and Measurement department

The funding for the new equipment has only been made possible thanks to the generosity of the Bath Cancer Unit Support Group (BCUSG), which has donated an incredible £340,000 towards its purchase, in addition to the other equipment and facilities it already helps to fund for the RUH's cancer patients.

In addition to the new technology, the department's camera examination room is being refurbished to provide a modern, bright, comfortable space for patients to be scanned in.

Consultant Medical Physicist Martyn Evans said: "When patients attend the Clinical Imaging and Measurement department for a scan they are injected with a slightly radioactive material, called a 'tracer', that is taken up by cells in the part of the body that is being scanned.

"The tracer then emits gamma photons which are detected by the specialist camera (a gamma camera) to build up an image. The Veriton system uses 12 digital detectors mounted on robotic arms that trace the contours of the patient. Each detector can swivel allowing the camera to be focused on specific areas in the body. This data is then used to complete a detailed image through the part of the body under investigation.

"These state of-the-art digital detectors allow, clearer, more detailed images to be acquired faster than before."

As well as the gamma camera (which provides an image of cell function), the Veriton system includes a CT scanner which provides a structural image. The two images can be fused together to further enhance diagnosis.

RUH Medical Director Bernie Marden said: “We’re excited to be the first hospital anywhere in the UK to be installing this Veriton gamma camera – the very latest in scanning technology.

“It will help our patients by reducing scanning times, creating much clearer images to help with diagnosis and will also mean that patients are exposed to smaller doses of radiation for their scan, thanks to the scanner’s increased sensitivity.

“I would like to thank the Bath Cancer Unit Support Group for their incredible generosity and tireless fundraising. Without their support we would not be fortunate enough to have this new scanner at the RUH.”

BCUSG chairman Mike Taylor said: “We are delighted to once again be able to help the RUH acquire the most up-to-date technology for the benefit of patients. Not only are the results of a much higher standard aiding diagnosis but a greater number of patients can be scanned thus helping to reduce waiting times.”

Peter Dobson, CEO of Link Medical Limited, said: “Both Link Medical and Spectrum Dynamics are delighted by the decision by the RUH to purchase the UK’s first Veriton-CT system. We would like to add our thanks to the Bath Cancer Unit Support Group for their support and to the Clinical Imaging and Measurement team of radiologists, clinical scientists and technologists at the RUH.”

Preparation work for the installation of the scanner is now underway. It is hoped it will be ready for patients from November 2020.

To donate to the Bath Cancer Unit Support Group, or to discuss becoming a corporate partner, please email Alan Webb at fundraising@bcusg.org or phone 07896 741233.

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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