

The Forever Friends Appeal



Press Release
Date: 09.10.20

Hospital charity thanks supporters for completing virtual walking marathon

The first virtual walking marathon created by The Forever Friends Appeal has been a great success. During September the charity saw participants clock up 4,657 miles to raise much-needed funds for the Royal United Hospitals Bath.

Thanks to the 197 people who took part in the My Walk of Life Marathon the charity has received £34,225 to help transform patient care on the hospital's wards with some of funds also going towards the Dyson Cancer Centre and the Speech and Language Therapy Appeal.

Rhyannon Boyd, Head of Fundraising, The Forever Friends Appeal said: "I would like to thank everyone who's taken part. You've really helped make a difference to our patients and their families.

"We missed seeing our supporters take to the canal path this year, however we've loved seeing everyone's updates online and reading our walker's stories about why they are walking for the RUH. We've also enjoyed seeing peoples' photos as they've walked the 26.2 mile distance in a day or throughout the month as they recorded their daily steps. Thank you for supporting our local hospital."

The charity welcomed a number of teams who fundraised collectively, including staff tracking their steps to raise money for their wards and families and friends walking together virtually to raise funds in memory of a loved one.

For many of the other participants The My Walk of Life Marathon was seen as an opportunity to thank hospital staff by raising funds because of their own personal connection with the RUH. Alan Morley, aged 70 from Bath took part to raise funds for the RUH's cancer services.

Alan said: "Thank you to all who have sponsored me and kept me going. Since lockdown I have been walking long distances and I thought 26.2 miles in a month would be easy so I decided to walk at least a marathon each week until the end of September and I managed to walk 353 miles in total.

"My reason for doing this is because I had bowel cancer in 2009 and after surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy at the RUH I was given the all clear in August 2015. However a year later it was discovered that I had a different and rare cancer called pseudomyxoma peritonei which affects three people per million per year worldwide.

"My treatment was done at one of the two hospitals in the UK that treat this cancer, however all my ongoing diagnostic tests and oncology consultations are conducted at the RUH. So, this was my way to say thank you to the staff for looking after me for the last 11 years."

The Forever Friends Appeal invites anyone wishing to take part in next year's Walk of Life which will be on Saturday 18 September 2021 to sign up at www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk

Ends

For more information contact Rebecca Hedges, Marketing and Communications Officer on 01225 826282 or email: Rebecca.hedges@nhs.net

Notes to Editor:

- The Forever Friends Appeal is the charity for the Royal United Hospitals, Bath.
- Like many organisations The Forever Friends Appeal has postponed and moved some of its events online because of the timing of the coronavirus pandemic, social distancing and the strict restrictions on mass gatherings.
- The Forever Friends Appeal fundraises to support areas in the RUH where it is needed most. The charity is currently running a Speech and Language Therapy Appeal, Breast Unit Appeal and the Cancer Care Campaign for the planned Dyson Cancer Centre

About the Royal United Hospitals Bath

- 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.
- For more information about RUH Bath visit www.ruh.nhs.uk