

11.12.20

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Media Release

Increased infection control measures at RUH

Patients and visitors to the RUH in Bath are being asked to support stricter infection prevention and control measures throughout the hospital as the coronavirus outbreak continues.

The action, on top of measures put in place in the spring, includes reducing the number of public entrances and providing manned PPE stations. It is being taken to counter a potential rise in COVID-19 patients needing care this winter and to address so-called 'coronavirus fatigue' among the general public.

Cara Charles-Barks, Chief Executive of the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, said: "We're calling on everyone to do their bit to help stop the spread of this terrible virus, to protect themselves and others, and to reduce demand on services at the RUH.

"We're just coming out of seeing a serious peak in the number of COVID-positive patients at the hospital and an increase in the number of our staff who have the infection. This has put a huge burden on our teams and threatened our ability to maintain all the other services we provide."

The Trust has now taken immediate steps including:

- Reduced public entrances to the RUH
- Staffed stations providing PPE, hand gel and social distancing advice
- With visiting suspended, increased checks and challenges on people entering the RUH
- Increased 'hands, face, space' signage at entrances, on corridors and wards
- Marshals in clinical areas to support the existing ward PPE champions

Lisa Cheek, RUH Director of Nursing and Midwifery, said: "We need to ensure that all staff, visitors and patients follow good hand hygiene, social distancing and correct use of PPE at all times. We have to remain vigilant until mass vaccination is widely effective.

"That's why it's so important that everyone who comes to the RUH, our patients, visitors and our staff, plays their part in helping prevent the spread of infection. We all need to be personally responsible to keep ourselves and others safe.

“Our A&E department is open 24/7 if you do need us. So please don't ignore serious things like chest pains, breathing difficulties, head injuries or you've been involved in an accident. These are emergencies and we're here for you.”

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