

The Forever Friends Appeal



Press Release
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RUH patients benefit from revolutionary technology

A generous legacy and donation from a local charitable trust is making a huge difference to patients needing complex facial and dental surgery at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH).

Clinicians in the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Orthodontics (OMFS) department now have access to a brand new in-house 3D surgical planning and prosthetic design service, enabling them to plan surgical procedures in ways that were previously not possible.

By being able to provide this service, the department is seeing many benefits for their patients. There is no longer a need for patients to travel to Bristol for a special type of scan as all the treatment can be done at the RUH, helping to reduce anxiety and waiting times.

Serryth Colbert, Consultant in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, said: "The new scanner and the additional pieces of equipment, such as the 3D printer and the surgical design software is dramatically improving our efficiency in diagnosis and surgical treatment planning."

"To highlight how valuable this new service is, we saw a young patient as an emergency during the first COVID lockdown. He had a terrible jaw infection and difficulty breathing. Furthermore, he had a phobia of hospitals and that, combined with his anxiety over lockdown, meant he didn't seek help until the symptoms had progressed significantly."

"He had a scan using the new equipment and we printed a 3D model of his jaw. We were able to produce a diagnostic aide and reassure him by showing him the model and talking him through how the surgery would be done. The operation was a great success, and thanks to the pre-operative surgical planning, we were able to reduce his stay in hospital."

"Without a doubt the new scanner and 3D printer is improving patient outcomes, as well as reducing surgical time and patient waiting times. We are so grateful to the gentleman who left a gift in his will to our department and to the charitable Trust for their support. The impact is highly beneficial and we are providing the best treatment possible for our patients."

The advanced scanner is also being used on a daily basis to assess a number of conditions, including impacted teeth, fractures, trauma, facial bone malposition, cysts and tumours.

Chris Keating, Specialty 3D and Dental Technician, who runs the 3D digital printing service said:

"We have been able to revolutionise the way in which we approach a patient's case. This technology allows surgeons to enhance the precision of treatment and the planning of surgical procedures. 3D digital models can either be printed for diagnostic purposes or they can go on to be used in multiple stages of pre-operative surgical planning and implant design."

“The technology can also be used in other departments including orthopaedics that may need a customised surgical plate and cardiology, who have the opportunity of converting 2D clinical imaging into 3D anatomical models for heart surgeries and aneurisms. This technology has opened up new potential for treatment – the sky is the limit.”

Jan Witt, Legacy Manager, The Forever Friends Appeal said: “We are indebted to the late Bob Angell from Chippenham and the Medlock Charitable Trust whose incredible generosity has enabled the hospital to offer this excellent level of care to its patients.

“We look forward to hearing from clinicians how the technology is being rolled out to benefit patients in other departments at the RUH.”

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

Notes to Editor:

- The full name of the scanner that was purchased thanks to the funding received from the legacy and charitable trust is Cone Beam Computed Tomography (CBCT) scanner.
- The Forever Friends Appeal is the charity for the Royal United Hospitals, Bath.
- 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
- The Forever Friends Appeal is using RUH staff stories at the forefront of its RUH Christmas Appeal which aims to raise funds to support patients and staff this festive period and beyond.

About the Royal United Hospitals Bath

- Our Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Orthodontics (OMFS) outpatient department offers a comprehensive service relating to conditions of the face, mouth and jaws, including a routine assessment and treatment service for common oral surgical conditions.
- The department has a multi-disciplinary team based approach in head and neck oncology, facial skin cancer and facial deformity and work closely with consultants in the Orthodontics, Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT), Dermatology and Clinical Oncology departments.
- 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