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Media Release

Father and daughter appeal to public to follow COVID rules

A father and daughter who both contracted coronavirus have spoken of their experiences and urged the public to make sure they keep following the hands, face, space rules.

Michael Wright, 71, and his daughter Becky Davies, 36, both fell ill late last year, although they had very different experiences of COVID-19.

While Becky suffered with a loss of taste and smell, as well as extreme fatigue and a shortness of breath, her father was so poorly he had to be admitted to the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, before being moved into intensive care.

Michael, a farmer who lives just outside Bath, said: "When I first became ill I thought it was just a bit of a cold. But as things progressed I started to have a constant headache and became very conscious of a metallic smell that made me feel sick. I also had no appetite and couldn't sleep as I felt so sick.

"Both my wife and I tested positive for COVID-19 but just felt we could beat this little bug, so we soldiered on hoping things would start to improve. However, I began to get worse and we called an ambulance which took me to the RUH.

"I was first admitted to a ward and then to intensive care, where I spent eight days on oxygen. My first two days were really difficult I felt so ill. I was unable to eat much and had to force liquids down. It's at this stage that you find yourself coming to terms with the possibility that you might not make it. But then something triggers your will to live, and you start to fight back.

"All the staff were amazing and treated me with care and compassion at all times. I can't thank the NHS enough.

"I am now recovering well - being a farmer with livestock to look after has helped me to keep fighting - and I now feel much better, although wet, dismal days still affect my breathing.

“For those people that don’t feel they need to follow the guidelines, let me say that this bug is very random. I was a healthy farmer that would have never expected anything to have taken me out like COVID did.

“So please follow the guidelines, and save the life of someone you love.”

Becky said: “The worst part for me and my husband was the extreme fatigue and aching all over. The symptoms lasted for 10 days, and the fatigue lasted for a good few weeks afterwards.

“I still feel a shortness of breath even now – just walking up the stairs has an effect and on the short walk to collect my children from school I am finding my breathing is affected.

“I would say please take COVID seriously - it affects everyone so differently and unfortunately you may not be the lucky one. I was very lucky and so was my husband and son.

“My dad is a farmer and walks an average 25,000 steps a day so we thought he would be able to fight it but if he hadn’t have gone into hospital when he did and get looked after so incredibly well by the ICU team at the RUH, he wouldn’t have made it.

“Please don’t take this virus lightly. Follow the guidance and stay safe.”

Ends

Notes to Editor:

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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