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Media Release

RUH leads the way in vital medical research

Researchers across the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust are celebrating International Clinical Trials Day (20 May) to highlight the contribution their studies have made to research into COVID-19, as well as many other illnesses.

Over the past year, thousands of people across the UK have volunteered to help with research to fight back against COVID-19. The life-saving vaccines, treatments and tests that have turned the tide against the pandemic have only been possible thanks to the people who volunteered to be part of research at the RUH and other hospitals up and down the country.

The RUH has played a key role in these national COVID-19 studies, but research at the Trust goes far beyond COVID-19. The RUH has a strong reputation for participating in national and worldwide research, with a portfolio of nearly 200 individual research studies that thousands of people take part in each year.

We offer research opportunities to patients across our hospital, in areas including cancer care, maternity, stroke, rheumatology, ageing and many more.

We also support different types of research at the RUH, including trials of new medicines and treatments, studies that help us to better understand disease progression and even the use of artificial intelligence to analyse scans and images.

Dr Kelly Spencer, Head of Research Operations, said: "The past year has shown what a real difference clinical research can make in treating and preventing disease. Participating in clinical research can benefit patients directly, indirectly and also help others in the UK and around the world.

“It also helps to attract and retain high calibre staff and enhances the Trust's reputation.

“We’re very proud of the wide range of studies we run at the RUH and the impact they have on some of the world’s most dangerous diseases, including COVID-19.

“These trials really make a difference to quality of life for so many people and we’re pleased that we can play our part.”

There are a huge number of studies currently underway at the Trust, examples of just a few include:

- **PARROT 2** - a study that will determine whether using markers in blood samples from pregnant women with suspected pre-eclampsia can reduce adverse outcomes.
- **DROPLET** - a study to understand the progression of type 1 diabetes following initial diagnosis in adults.
- **BADBIR** - a study looking at treatment choices for adults with psoriasis.
- **BSR-PsA** – British Society for Rheumatology Psoriatic Arthritis Register: a long-term study, which has been set up to investigate the impact of psoriatic arthritis (PsA) on quality of life, and to monitor the effectiveness and safety of treatments.

International Clinical Trials Day marks the anniversary of the first clinical trial by James Lind in 1747 into the causes of scurvy on board HMS Salisbury.

Ends.

Notes to Editors:

The RUH runs a diverse research portfolio which includes both commercial and NHS/academic trials. Many of the trials are looking at the causes, the treatment and the prevention of diseases across a variety of specialties including diabetes, stroke, gynaecology, maternity, rheumatology, surgery and many more. Overall, we have 25 specialties involved in research.

Some trials are randomised so that the patient either receives the new medicine/treatment or a placebo. Some trials are compared to standard care so that we can see if there is a new and better way of treating patients.

We also run non-interventional trials looking at quality of life. We would always advise our patients to ask a member of their care team to see if there is a suitable trial that they may be eligible to be involved in.

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