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Media Release

RUH Trust buys independent Circle Bath hospital

The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust has announced that it has bought Circle Bath – an independent hospital on the outskirts of the city at Peasedown St John that provides care for both private and NHS patients.

The acquisition of Circle Bath – now renamed the Sulis Hospital Bath– will secure capacity for NHS patients at a critical time of recovery for NHS waiting lists nationally as well as seeking to increase capacity at the facility for the benefit of all patients – both NHS and private.

The Trust says that patients don't need to do anything different as a result of this acquisition and can be assured that they will receive the same excellent care in a wellbeing-focussed environment in the knowledge that their care is backed by experts at the RUH.

RUH Chief Executive Cara Charles-Barks said: "We have a long-standing positive relationship with Sulis Hospital Bath, which provided significant support in caring for elective and cancer patients early in the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a really positive next step for us to take together and we're really pleased to welcome Sulis staff to our RUH family.

"With our local health partners, we are absolutely committed to minimising the amount of time our patients have to wait for planned operations.

"Acquiring Sulis Hospital Bath will allow us to increase the number of NHS patients we treat, whilst maintaining high quality care for both private and NHS patients. We'll be investing in the future of Sulis Hospital Bath for the benefit of our community."

Lesley Lock, Sulis Hospital Bath, Hospital Director, said: "The launch of Sulis Hospital Bath will be the second chapter to what has been an incredible first decade for our hospital. We are still a leading private healthcare facility offering outstanding care to

patients in Bath and the surrounding areas and this will not change. With our new partner, we can grow and develop our services and expand our region's healthcare offering for all patients."

The Trust is also planning to increase diagnostic capacity using the facilities at Sulis Hospital Bath, providing quicker and easier access to a range of tests on the same day and supporting earlier diagnosis.

While the acquisition means that the Trust now owns 100% shares in Sulis Hospital Bath and that it is a subsidiary organisation of the RUH. The facility will continue to be directly managed by the same team.

Under the new ownership, any additional income earned from private healthcare will be reinvested in high quality services for all patients at the two hospital sites.

For more information please see the Trust's website <https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/>

The new website for Sulis Hospital Bath is www.sulishospital.com

Ends

Q&A

Q: How much has it cost and who is paying?

A: Circle Bath (now known as Sulis Hospital Bath) has been purchased using NHS funds. The amount paid is confidential due to being commercially sensitive.

Q: Why was Circle Bath up for sale?

A: Following the successful merger of BMI Healthcare Limited ("BMI") and Circle Health Holdings Limited ("Circle Health") Circle Health, was required by the Competition and Markets Authority to divest Circle Bath Hospital.

Q: What kind of elective work will take place at the Sulis Hospital Bath in the future?

A: The types of care provided will remain the same for all patients. This includes outpatient, diagnostic, surgical and rehabilitation services. Patients can find more detailed information on the treatments offered on the Sulis Hospital Bath website.

Q: Will there still be private work at Sulis Hospital Bath?

A: Yes. We are keen to maintain the private patient service at Sulis Hospital Bath, offering choice for patients and providing income to support patient care. This means continuing the high quality private patient service already in place at Sulis Hospital Bath

Q: If patients already have operations scheduled at Sulis Hospital Bath, will they still go ahead?

A: Yes. You will be treated by the same great team, in the same purpose-built wellbeing-focused environment.

Q: Why are the RUH buying Sulis Hospital Bath?

A: Circle Bath already provide care for NHS patients. Buying Circle Bath means we can safeguard this relationship and secure capacity for NHS patients at a critical time of recovery for NHS waiting list nationally while also seeking to increase capacity at the facility for the benefit of all patients

Q: What does this mean for staff?

As well as the increase in clinical opportunities, access to training and positively building on established relationships, we will also be focussing on expanding our staff base via a recruitment drive

Q: Are there any conflicts of interest or concerns about reducing choice?

A: No. Patient choice will remain as is. This acquisition has been overseen by the Competition and Markets Authority.

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