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## Media Release

### NHS volunteers praised for making a difference

Volunteers at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust have been praised for their selfless commitment to making a difference for patients and staff.

June 1 – 7 is Volunteers' Week, a chance to thank volunteers for all their time and dedication.

There are more than 400 volunteers at the RUH, some of who have been donating their time for more than 20 years. Together, they provide more than 40,000 hours of volunteering each year.

Roles involve welcoming patients and visitors into the hospital and providing directions, maintaining the hospital's many garden areas, broadcasting on the hospital's radio station Bath Radio, running the Friends of the RUH shop and café, and much more.

Alison Ryan, RUH Chair, said: "Volunteers are an essential part of our team. They play a vital role in supporting our patients, carers, visitors and staff. We are so grateful for all the time they selflessly donate to us – they really make a difference.

"COVID-19 has meant that we have been unable to welcome lots of our regular volunteers, however we're really looking forward to reintroducing more volunteer roles as soon as it is safe to do so."

Away from the hospital, volunteers have also been supporting the Bath Racecourse COVID-19 vaccination centre, ensuring a smooth process for the 1,000-plus people who are vaccinated there each day.

The vaccination centre was recently hailed as a 'centre of excellence' by Sir David Hempleman-Adams, the renowned explorer and Trustee of St John Ambulance.

Sir David, who lives in Bath and is famous for his expeditions to Mount Everest as well as his gruelling hot air balloon challenges, recently visited the vaccination centre to feedback to the charity about areas of good practice and how St John's volunteers were being supported on site.

He described the site as a 'centre of excellence' and praised St John Ambulance volunteers and NHS staff working there.

Sir David, a volunteer vaccinator himself, said: "Every NHS vaccination centre, running with NHS and St John volunteers, is a fantastic advert for mutual cooperation, giving the general public a life-changing service. The fact that this location was turned from a blank sheet of paper to a slick vaccination centre in such a short period of time is truly humbling and inspirational."

Vaccine Centre Operations Director Heather Cooper said: "We were delighted to receive such great feedback from Sir David. Everyone involved in the vaccination centre, whether they are staff or volunteers, is doing all they can to make the process straightforward and hassle-free for visitors and to have this effort recognised is very rewarding."

More information about the local vaccination programme can be found here: <https://bit.ly/37M6gF8>

**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](http://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](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

**Chair:**  
Alison Ryan

**Chief Executive:**  
Cara Charles-Barks

