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Media Release

RUH reinstates limited visiting with safety precautions

Limited visiting has been reinstated from Monday 14 February at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust.

Most visiting was suspended in December 2021 to help protect patients and staff as the Omicron variant spread and both community and hospital COVID-19 case rates rose.

Now, with COVID-19 case rates stabilising, some visiting has been reinstated. However, visitors are asked to help safeguard the new arrangements by ensuring they take a lateral flow test before they come and are free from any COVID-19 symptoms.

Deputy Chief Nurse Sarah Merritt said: "We know how important contact with loved ones is for our patients, so we are really pleased that we are able to support in-person visiting for our patients once again.

"We have remained committed to keeping people in touch with virtual visiting and our in-house messaging service. However, we understand how difficult it has been.

"Now, in order for us to support visiting safely, we are calling on visitors to help us.

"Even if you feel well, it only takes a few minutes to do a lateral flow test before heading to the hospital. It's a fast and simple way to check that you're not spreading COVID-19 despite having no symptoms.

"And, please do not come in to visit if you have any COVID-19 symptoms, regardless of the results of your lateral flow test."

From Monday 14 February visiting will be allowed in the hospital, with each patient able to have one visitor a day for a maximum of one hour. In most cases the visitor will be limited to a close family contact or someone important to the patient.

Visits must be booked in advance with ward staff to avoid overcrowding. All visitors must wear a face mask or covering at all times and will be expected to follow social distancing and infection prevention and control measures.

It is really important that visitors take a lateral flow test before they come. Kits can be ordered online or picked up from many local pharmacies and community collection points. There are more details on the [Government website](#).

Exceptions to the general one visitor only rule include for visiting children, vulnerable adults and patients nearing the end of their life. Visiting will not be possible in areas that are closed due to infection, other than in exceptional circumstances.

More details about all visiting can be found on the RUH website www.ruh.nhs.uk

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