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Media Release

‘Topping out’ Ceremony at the RUH marks a high point in Dyson Cancer Centre construction

A ‘topping out’ ceremony has taken place at the new Dyson Cancer Centre at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH) to mark completion of the frame of the new building. The new centre is scheduled to open for patients in Autumn 2023 and will provide a cancer services hub for half a million people in the South West.

Cara Charles-Barks, Chief Executive of the RUH said: “This is a wonderful milestone in our journey towards a new cancer centre for our community. After all the years of planning and preparation and the generous support of the people of the South West and beyond it has been amazing to see this new building start to take shape on site. Since we broke ground in July 2021 the new centre has gradually emerged from behind the hoardings until we have now reached the highest point.

“We’re really excited about the way our Dyson Cancer Centre will help us transform the care we can provide for patients and families, and the outstanding environment it will provide for our dedicated staff. It will be a nurturing and therapeutic environment where patients and their loved ones can receive all the support they need in one purpose built Centre.”

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said: “This new cancer centre will help us treat hundreds of thousands of patients in the South West and improve our care capacity.

“As part of our 10-Year Cancer Plan, we will focus on rapid diagnosis and innovative treatments to benefit millions of patients across the country and save more lives.”

RUH representatives were joined on the day by colleagues from NHS England and NHS Improvement and the Department of Health and Social Care, as well as key donors and fundraisers including Jacky Medlock of the Medlock Charitable Trust, and representatives

from The James Dyson Foundation, The Forever Friends Appeal and Macmillan Cancer Care as well as construction partner Kier.

RUH Chair Alison Ryan and RUH Oncology and Haematology Matron Caroline Gilleece travelled to the top of the new three storey Centre by crane, for a ceremonial laying of the final piece of concrete on the roof.

All attendees were invited to make their mark on one of the new interior walls of the centre, which will now be covered over for future generations to discover.

Thanks to the support of our local community, The Forever Friends Appeal raised £10m towards the new centre, including a generous donation of £4m from The James Dyson Foundation and £1m from The Medlock Charitable Trust.

Rhyannon Boyd, The Forever Friends Appeal Head of Fundraising said: “It’s been fantastic to see the building works progressing, as we edge closer to the completion of the Dyson Cancer Centre, and we are extremely appreciative to all of our 8,500 supporters who have helped to raise an incredible amount of funds – it’s an extraordinary achievement.”

A specially designed Macmillan Wellbeing Hub will be one of the key features of the new centre. Richard Pugh, Macmillan Head of Partnerships Wales and South West said: “The Hub will be a non-clinical, calming space, offering practical and emotional support to people living with cancer. It will be there for everyone – from people with cancer to their carers and their families. It will help them every step of the way through cancer from diagnosis, during treatment, in recovery, and at the end of life.”

Despite the recent best efforts of Storm Eunice, construction partner Kier have continued to keep the Dyson Cancer Centre on schedule. David Snell, Strategic Healthcare Director at Kier Regional Building Western & Wales said: “The Dyson Cancer Centre ‘topping out’ is an important milestone as it means we are one step closer to delivering this vital new healthcare facility that will serve people in the South West.

“We are using our extensive skill and experience, as well as working with local supply chain partners to realise the collective ambitions of all which is to provide first-class amenities to patients.

“This project means a lot to everyone involved, and alongside constructing the new building we will continue to support the hospital’s charity, The Forever Friends Appeal. We’ll be taking part in the Appeal’s Walk of Life this May for our ninth consecutive year.”

Located next to the main entrance, the new centre will bring the majority of the RUH's cancer services, including research teams, under one roof.

More information about the Dyson Cancer Centre can be found here www.ruh.nhs.uk/dysoncancercentre

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