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Media Release

New service launched to tackle age inequality in ovarian cancer outcomes

The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust and University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust (UHBW), in partnership with charity Ovarian Cancer Action, is trialling a new service to tackle inequality in ovarian cancer outcomes.

Research across the NHS shows that older patients with ovarian cancer receive less intensive treatment and are more likely to have pre-existing medical problems, which means they don't receive the same level of treatment as younger patients. The Holistic Integrated Care in Ovarian Cancer (HICO) service, which is being piloted from February 2022 until December 2022, will provide support for patients aged 55 years old and above.

The RUH and UHBW care for over 150 patients with ovarian cancer every year, a large proportion of whom are over the age of 70.

Jonathan Frost, Consultant Gynaecological Oncologist at the RUH said: "Sometimes older patients are not deemed fit enough for more intensive cancer treatments. Our HICO service looks at the patient's health as a whole. So, rather than just focussing on the cancer diagnosis, we support many aspects of their physical and mental health and the management of any other medical conditions they may have. This means people are better able to manage treatments, such as chemotherapy and surgery, better able to recover more quickly after treatment too.

"The service brings together physiotherapy, dietetic, occupational therapy, geriatric and psychological expertise to optimise the patient's overall health so they are well enough for treatment. This also reduces their likelihood of developing complications from treatment and helps them to recover more quickly."

Claire Newton, consultant gynaecological oncologist at University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust, said: "I am really privileged to be part of the

A partnership project with:

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust

With thanks for funding from:



team improving outcomes for women with ovarian cancer. We have already learnt so much and the new service has helped us to work together more effectively.

“This pilot is an opportunity for the RUH and UHBW to make a huge difference to the lives of older women diagnosed with ovarian cancer in our local area. It is also an opportunity for us to lead the way in ovarian cancer care improvements nationally as we will share our learning with other hospitals to help drive wider changes and improved health services for women across the UK.”

A key part of the Holistic Integrated Care in Ovarian Cancer service is about improving patient experience through learning from lived experiences. Helen Pett, from Clevedon, was diagnosed with cancer of the fallopian tubes in 2020 and is now part of the patient advisory group shaping the new service.

Helen said: “It quickly became apparent through my experience of cancer treatment that there were loads of amazing people providing my care, but they were all working independently of one another, looking at their specialist areas but not at me as a whole. I really struggled with my mental health and I also suffered from colitis, which was triggered by the chemotherapy.

“I would have benefited enormously from the HICO service because it ensures women have access to specialists from the get-go, before problems emerge. That’s why I’m really pleased to be part of this project playing a role in improving cancer care for older women by sharing my experiences and suggesting new ways of doing things.”

The RUH and UHBW NHS pilot is one of six across the country under Ovarian Cancer Action’s IMPROVE UK Programme. The funding comes from a £1 million investment secured by Ovarian Cancer UK from the UK Government Tampon Tax Fund.

Ends

Notes to Editor:

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust

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.

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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

University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust

University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust (UHBW) is the newly merged Trust comprising University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust and Weston Area Health NHS Trust. Bringing together a combined workforce of over 13,000 staff, the new Trust delivers over 100 different clinical services across 10 different sites serving a core population of more than 500,000 people.

With services from the neonatal intensive care unit to care of the elderly, we provide care to the people of Bristol, Weston and the south west from the very beginning of life to its later stages.

Our staff are the lifeblood of our Trust. They provide general diagnostic, medical and surgical services to the populations of central Bristol, south Bristol and North Somerset. These services are delivered from our Bristol city centre campus and Weston General Hospital with some services delivered in community settings such as South Bristol Community Hospital.

We also provide specialist services such as children's services, cardiac and cancer services, and other smaller specialist services that are nationally commissioned, to a wider population through the south west and beyond.

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ovarian
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IMPROVE UK