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## Media Release

### The RUH celebrates Play in Hospital Week

Patients and staff on the Children's Ward at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust celebrated national Play in Hospital Week with an exciting programme of activities.

At the centre of the fun and games was the RUH's Artsparks programme, which offers young patients creative workshops as well as arts and crafts activities every Wednesday.

Organised by Art at the Heart, the RUH's in-house art and design team, and funded by Arts Council England and the hospital's charity, RUHX, Artsparks aims to keep little ones occupied while they are on the Children's Ward and take their minds off what can be an unsettling experience.

Artists Edwina Bridgeman and Charlotte Stowell are regular visitors to the Children's Ward where they run workshops that include painting, collage, drawing and modelling.

Charlotte said: "As one of the artists delivering these sessions, it's always a pleasure working with young people and families exploring creative materials and ideas.

"We work with a range of different techniques, so there's always something new to try. This week we've been making Halloween-themed collages, wreaths and models.

"I've been helping the Play Specialists make a background scene for a new wall display in the play room, and patients have started adding their Halloween creations."

Patient feedback about Artsparks has been overwhelmingly positive. One parent said: "My daughter, who's 4, loved the art. It helped take her mind off her upcoming operation while we waited."

Another said: ""My son, who is 7, really enjoyed playing with the clay. It was a really great distraction. The staff were really welcoming too."

The theme for this year's Play in Hospital Week was 'play for resilience and good mental health'.

RUH Play Specialist Jo Powell said: "When children and young people come to the hospital it's a very different environment for them but play can help them adjust to what can be a stressful situation.

"At the RUH we've found that play creates an environment which reduces stress and anxiety and helps our young patients cope with their illness and recover more quickly. Our artists in residence do amazing work and it's fantastic to see so many of the children and their parents with smiles on their faces."

You can find out more about Artsparks on the Art at the Heart website: <https://artatruh.org/>

## **Ends**

### **Notes to Editor:**

At the RUH we're proud to put people at the heart of what we do, striving to create an environment where everyone matters. Everyone means the people we care for, the people we work with and the people in our community.

We provide a wide range of services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.

We also provide specialist services for rheumatology, chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME via the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases which we acquired in 2015.

In 2021, we acquired Sulis Hospital Bath, an independent hospital that provides care for both private and NHS patients. This has enabled us to provide more care for NHS patients, as well as continuing to provide private care to those who choose it. Any additional income earned through private care is reinvested in services for the benefit of the people we care for at both Sulis and the RUH.

We're currently building a new Cancer Centre at the RUH. The Dyson Cancer Centre, which is set to open in autumn 2023, will help transform the care we provide for patients, families and carers.

We work closely with other health and care organisations as members of the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board. We strive to improve the health and wellbeing of the people in our community by working together build one of the healthiest places to live and work.

We are rated 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)