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## Media Release

### **Births begin again at Chippenham Birthing Centre**

New parents have spoken of their delight after Chippenham Birthing Centre, part of the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, returned to supporting births again.

The RUH had previously made the difficult decision to suspend births in the centre due to staff shortages and the need to prioritise the safety of women and birthing people and their babies. The birth centre has now reopened for births and the maternity team are delighted to be back facilitating births, as well as providing antenatal and postnatal care

The first baby born at the centre was Phoebe, daughter of first time parents Amy and Sean Hooper, who live in Calne.

Amy said: "We chose Chippenham for the birth so we could be close to home and in a nice, relaxed atmosphere. The care from midwives Louise and Lucy was excellent and we couldn't have asked for anything more."

Sarah Woodward, the RUH's Deputy Director of Midwifery, said: "I would like to again offer our sincere apologies to anyone who was affected by the temporary pause on births at the centre and for not being able to offer as wide a choice of place of birth to families over the past year.

"We have continued to provide antenatal and postnatal services during this time but I'm delighted that the centre is fully open once again. Despite a national shortage, we've been really successful in recruiting midwives and maternity support assistants to join our team, it means we can also return to supporting home births in our community.

"We know how important choice is for our local families and our midwives are really pleased to be back facilitating community births in Wiltshire."

Wherever you are considering having your baby, please discuss this with your midwife at your next appointment. You can discuss your choice of place of birth with your midwife at any stage of your pregnancy. You will also be provided with a QR code to access information on your choices to help with your decision making.

## **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)