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## Media Release

### **New resources help RUH staff to support autistic people**

Autism awareness cards are being used across the Royal United Hospitals Bath (RUH) NHS Foundation Trust to help staff better understand and support autistic people and their loved ones.

The cards, which have been introduced in response to patient feedback, provide autistic people with a different way to alert staff of their autism diagnosis so adjustments can be made for them, to improve their experience while at the RUH.

Departments display a poster asking patients if they are autistic, and beside the poster are cards that can be then passed to staff by patients if they wish to let them know that they are autistic.

On the back of the cards are a series of suggestions for staff about what adjustments they can make to improve the support for that patient.

In addition to the cards, a series of guides have also been produced for staff on how to support autistic people.

The cards have been well received by patients. One piece of recent patient feedback said: "I was delighted to see an autism awareness poster in reception at the Breast Clinic. It was very eye-catching and it asked if the viewer had autism and to let staff know if they needed any assistance. It was really good to see."

Jo Baker, Associate Director for Vulnerable People, said: "We have received really positive feedback about the cards, which provide autistic people with a different way to let staff know they are autistic. We can then proactively make reasonable adjustments to help.

“We are always happy to make adjustments for our patients, to give them the best possible experience.

“The autism cards underline our commitment to ensuring the RUH is a place where everyone matters and is a friendly, welcoming environment for the people we care for.”

**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 spring 2024, 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)