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Media Release

New fundraising campaign to help bring cancer care to Frome

Bath Cancer Unit Support Group (BCUSG) has launched a fundraising campaign to support a new Royal United Hospitals Bath (RUH) cancer treatment centre, which will be based in Frome. The new facility will ensure more patients can receive cancer care closer to home.

The RUH is planning to open a Systemic Anti-Cancer Treatment (SACT) Centre in Frome Medical Centre. SACT is the use of drugs to treat or control cancer, which includes chemotherapy, immunotherapy, hormonal therapy and targeted therapy.

The centre will not just benefit patients living in Frome, but also those from neighbouring towns and villages such as Shepton Mallet, Warminster and Westbury.

Michael Taylor, Chairman of the BCUSG, said: "We are delighted to support a project which will make the patients' treatments easier for them in travel terms and also increase the availability of treatments for patients undergoing chemotherapy.

"Our fundraising committee in the Frome area is a relatively new group and they are very keen to involve our existing supporters and new ones in the task of raising this target in a fairly short time frame so we can get this centre open as quickly as possible."

The BCUSG aims to raise £64,000 by the end of March 2025 to support with renovations and set-up costs such as reclining chairs, infusion pumps and a drugs fridge. The Group has gratefully received a generous grant of £50,000 from a local charitable trust, the Richard Oatley Foundation, towards this target and is now fundraising for the remaining £14,000. Once £7,000 is raised, then the Rotary Shop in Frome will kindly match this amount.

The new treatment centre is scheduled to open later this year and will care for up to five patients at a time. Once open, all patients will still receive their initial treatment at the Medlock Unit at the

Dyson Cancer Centre, which is based at the RUH's Combe Park site just outside of Bath city centre. Suitable patients can then continue their therapy in Frome, where they will still receive treatment from the Medlock Unit's team of nurses. This will enable patients to receive the same high standard of care from a familiar team, but in a more convenient location. It will also free up space in the RUH's Dyson Cancer Centre for patients requiring more complex treatments, meaning many will begin their cancer care more quickly.

Caroline Gilleece, RUH Matron for Haematology and Oncology, said: "We have a long-standing relationship with the BCUSG, who have supported with a wide range of projects over the years, to the value of £6million.

"We are thrilled that they are supporting this new project, which will enable us to provide this service much sooner than we would have otherwise. It's an important step in our ambition to bring cancer care to the local community."

Anyone who is interested in getting involved with the project is asked to get in touch with the Chairman of the BCUSG Trustees on 07714 087102 or chairman@bcusg.org, or the Frome fundraising Chairman David Lane at info.frome@bcusg.org.

Ends



**Bath Cancer Unit
Support Group**

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.

Our new Dyson Cancer Centre brings together many of the RUH's cancer services under one roof to provide a cancer services hub for over 500,000 people in the South West. The centre includes the RUH's oncology, chemotherapy and radiotherapy services, a 22-bed inpatient ward, a dedicated pharmacy, research team and nuclear medicine and physics teams.

A key feature of the new centre is the Macmillan Wellbeing Hub. The three-storey hub provides a welcoming, non-clinical space designed around the needs of patients and their families. It also includes comfortable accommodation where relatives and loved ones can stay overnight.

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