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## Media Release

### **RUH researchers support national stroke study**

Researchers at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust are involved in a national study to develop a tool to guide clinicians when they are assessing people suffering symptoms which could be caused by both migraines and transient ischaemic attack, also known as 'mini-stroke'.

The new assessment tool will help to predict whether a person is at risk of a stroke.

Before a stroke happens, many people have a transient ischaemic attack (TIA). A TIA and migraine can have identical symptoms but only people with TIA require treatment to prevent stroke.

Currently it can be difficult for healthcare staff to distinguish between TIA and migraine because there is no definitive diagnostic test or assessment process.

The SMART research study, funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) and led from Newcastle University, is collecting information from people who have symptoms which could be caused by both TIA and migraine.

The information will be used to create a new assessment process to standardise care. The assessment will use a patient's symptoms and other general health information to estimate their risk of stroke. This risk assessment can then be used to guide treatment and to indicate whether symptoms were more likely due to TIA or migraine.

Patients attending the RUH's TIA Clinic will be asked whether they wish to take part in the study. If they do, researchers will collect information about their symptoms, treatments received, and what happens to their health over the 90 days following the symptoms.

Hayley Stoney, RUH Stroke Research Nurse, said: “We’re delighted that the RUH has been chosen to support with such an important national study.

“We were one of the first research sites to be signed up to take part and are already recruiting patients who attend our TIA clinic.

“By helping to develop a tool for healthcare professionals to improve care for people with TIA and migraine we are making a really positive difference to the health outcomes of patients here at the RUH and around the country.”

You can find out more information about research at the RUH and how you can get involved on our website: [https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/research\\_development/index.asp](https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/research_development/index.asp)

## **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.

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](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)