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Media Release

Women urged to check for symptoms of ovarian cancer

A woman treated for ovarian cancer at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust is calling on others to be aware of the signs and symptoms of the disease.

Christine Grant, 68, from Trowbridge, went to her GP after she found she was having to get up a lot during the night to urinate. Initially, it was thought this was down to her age and an oversensitive bladder.

However, Christine then began struggling to go the toilet. She thought it was cystitis but her GP recommended she go for an ultrasound.

The scan showed a mass in her pelvis and the biopsy that followed confirmed it was ovarian cancer.

Speaking during Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, Christine said: "The news that it was cancer was devastating, but I already had a bad feeling that was what it would be. My daughter is a medic and she had done her best to prepare me for the news.

"I got the diagnosis in the summer and really thought I might not make it to Christmas. But once I met with the consultant at the RUH I felt much more positive. She was fantastic – she spoke very honestly with me but gave me a lot of hope too."

Christine began chemotherapy straight away, followed by surgery for a full hysterectomy. She then signed up to a research trial at the RUH which saw her receive immunotherapy treatment, which involved an infusion every three weeks.

Christine said: "It has been very tough at times, but I'm in remission now which is just fantastic.

"The care and support I received at the RUH was excellent – everyone has been so caring.

“My message to women is to make sure you get checked as soon as something doesn’t feel right. It might be nothing, but it’s always better to know and finding a problem early means it’s more treatable.”

Each year 7,400 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer in the UK. Ovarian cancer affects the ovaries. It mostly affects women over the age of 50 but can affect anyone who has ovaries.

The main symptoms of ovarian cancer are frequently having:

- a swollen tummy or feeling bloated
- pain or tenderness in your tummy or the area between your hips
- no appetite or feeling full quickly after eating
- an urgent need to pee or needing to pee more often

You can find lots more information and advice, as well as where to go for help and support, on the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/ovarian-cancer/>

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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