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Media Release

Bad weather is snow obstacle for RUH and local community

As the snow melts from the region, we'd like to say a massive thank you to our staff, volunteers and the local community, who pulled out all the stops to ensure patients could continue to get the care they needed during this challenging time.

Staff battled the elements to keep things running as smoothly as possible at our sites - walking miles in the snow, digging out their vehicles and staying in overnight accommodation.

James Scott, Chief Executive said: "A huge thank you to our staff and members of the community, who despite the freezing conditions went above and beyond to ensure that we could maintain a safe and professional service to our patients."

The dedication shown by our staff was outstanding with one staff member leaving at 3am to walk from Bristol to Bath to make sure she could be in the Cardiology department on time. After Avon & Somerset Police warned people not to travel unless absolutely necessary, some nurses and consultants slept on-site accommodation after their late shift, to cover any staff that couldn't reach the hospital due to travel advice.

RUH teams also came together to support each other to provide accommodation, food and transport. Along with F.A.S.T Ambulance, a medical and ambulance service, they drove several vulnerable patients from their homes to the Bath Satellite Dialysis Unit at the RUH and back again to ensure they could receive treatment.

Staff from across the organisation stepped in to provide support in a range of ways, whether helping our Estates and Facilities team to clear and grit the paths around the hospital, or manning the phones to arrange transport and accommodation. A Friends of the RUH volunteer made it in to keep the shop open and provide drinks, snacks and toiletries for patients, staff and visitors.

We also provided rooms for staff nearby at the Francis Hotel and Holiday Inn. Special thanks to the Apex City of Bath Hotel, which was able to accommodate a group of our



nurses at short notice. Despite arriving late at night, our staff received a really warm welcome. Apex staff opened the kitchen so everyone could have something to eat and our nurses were well looked after.

The generosity of the community was overwhelming – our call for 4x4 drivers to help staff get to and from work went viral. The phone didn't stop ringing after we put the post out with drivers offering to help. Natural Spa Factory husband and wife team Emma Webber and Jeremy Smith were some of the volunteers, who saw our social media posts and wanted to give something back to the community. Emma and Jeremy organised a fleet of 4x4's to help with those needing transport. People from the area also came to the RUH with their shovels in hand to help clear snow from the main entrance and Emergency Department.

Mr Scott added: "I also want to thank all those who volunteered to bring our staff to work and then take them home again. We had lots of offers and we're so grateful to them. This week staff have really lived our values and the community spirit has been amazing to see, which I've been so impressed with. Thank you."

Ends

Notes to Editor:

- The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust provides acute treatment and care for a catchment population of around 500,000 people in Bath, and the surrounding towns and villages in North East Somerset and Western Wiltshire. The hospital provides healthcare to the population served by four Clinical Commissioning Groups: Bath & North East Somerset CCG, Wiltshire CCG, Somerset CCG and South Gloucestershire CCG.
- The Trust provides 565 beds and a comprehensive range of acute services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.
- In 2015 The Royal United Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was acquired the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) NHS Foundation Trust. The RNHRD treats patients from across the country offering services in rheumatology, chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME.
- The RUH is changing - we have an exciting programme of redevelopment underway transforming our site and further improving the services we provide. The Trust is now working towards building a purpose built RNHRD and Therapies Centre and a new Dyson Cancer Centre. For more details visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk/about/fit_for_the_future



- For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk

Chairman:
Brian Stables

Chief Executive:
James Scott

