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Media Release

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Sanah heads to Africa to help support vital education projects

A healthcare assistant from the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust is to travel to Tanzania to help support new female-led community enterprises.

Sanah Richards, from Bath, will be taking a three-month break from her work at the RUH to take up a volunteering placement in Iringa, where she will help to set up and support community enterprises that aim to increase female empowerment and improve the livelihoods of women.

Sanah said: "In Iringa women face a lot of barriers if they want to set up a business. Female enterprises in this region have a lack of resources, a lack of employees and women face many other challenges, such as poverty, childcare commitments and male domestic dominance, with many men believing women shouldn't be involved with business at all.

"The community asked for help from Voluntary Service Overseas and the International Citizen Service, who have a joint vision to end poverty, and who have arranged for a number of volunteer placements.

"I'll be working with a team of about five people and will be helping with things like finance, business plans and digital marketing. We'll also be holding a number of community action days to raise the profile of community enterprises in Iringa and will be visiting schools to engage with young people."

Sanah said she was looking forward to the volunteer placement, though it would bring one major challenge – the language barrier.

"I'm not expecting many people to be able to speak English, especially the host family I'll be staying with, so I'm trying my best to learn some Swahili – with mixed results! Sanah added that she would miss her colleagues and the patients at the RUH while she's away.

“I’m so passionate about working at the RUH. I work with a great team and find looking after the patients so rewarding,” she said. “I support the nurses and help patients with their daily care, such as monitoring their vital signs and physical observations, help keep them mobile and offer emotional support too. Often patients just want to chat, so I’ll take some time to sit and talk about whatever they want.

“I’m looking forward to the next few months, but it’ll be good to return to the RUH and carry on working on the wards.”

As part of her placement, Sanah has to raise £800, which goes towards supporting the work of the International Citizen Service.

She is already making good progress, taking part in several successful sponsorship events, including cycling from Bath to Stonehenge and back, busking in the city centre and organising music events at local pubs.

“If anyone could make a donation, however small, to my JustGiving page, I’d be so grateful,” she said. “You will be making a real difference to the lives of people living in some of the world’s most disadvantaged areas.”

To donate to Sanah’s JustGiving page go to: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/sanah-richards

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 759 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 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, cancer related fatigue and fatigue linked to other long term conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

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 building a purpose-built RNHRD and Therapies Centre and working towards 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

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