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Fun and games on the Children's Ward as the RUH celebrates National Play in Hospital Week

Singing, music, art and lots of laughter was just the medicine for youngsters on the Children's Ward at the Royal United Hospital's Bath NHS Foundation Trust as patients and staff joined together to celebrate National Play in Hospital Week 2019.

Held each year, the week aims to raise awareness of the benefits of play and activity in the treatment of sick children and young people.

This year's theme was 'play for all', which celebrated the variety of different types of play available for young people in hospital.

Events on the ward included singing and music-making with the RUH's 'musician in residence' Frankie Simpkins, laughs and jokes with a visit from the Giggle Doctor, arts and crafts with artist Edwina Bridgeman and even a visit from Pets as Therapy dog Fudge, with his owner Martin Fricker.

RUH Play Specialist Lyn Gardiner said: "When children and young people are admitted to hospital they are often at their most vulnerable and play can help them adjust to what can be a stressful situation.

"At the RUH we've found that play creates an environment which reduces stress and anxiety and helps our young patients cope with their illness and recover more quickly.

"It's been a great week and it's fantastic to see the children and their patients with smiles on their faces."

Paediatric Matron Beverley Boyd said: "We always have lots happening on the ward to keep patients occupied, but Play in Hospital Week gives us a great opportunity to showcase all the different types of play activities we provide. Our play specialists are valuable and essential members of the paediatric team."

National Play in Hospital Week is organised by the National Association of Health Play Specialists (NAHPS) and supported by Starlight Children's Foundation, a national charity which provides play and distraction services in hospitals and hospices across the UK.

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 has opened the purpose-built RNHRD and Brownsword Therapies Centre and is now working towards the 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