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RUH's Optometry team sets its sights on top award

The Optometry team at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust has made it to the finals of a national competition – and now needs help from patients and the public to scoop the top prize.

The team is on the shortlist in the Hospital Optometry Team of the Year category in the Association of Optometrists (AOP) Awards 2020, which recognise the highest levels of achievement in UK optics.

Voting is now open and members of the public can cast their votes on who they think should take the top accolade. The 2019 AOP Awards attracted more than 20,000 votes from both optical professionals and patients.

Head of Optometry Helen Broadbent said: "Making the shortlist in such a prestigious competition is a real honour. I hadn't told the team that I'd submitted a nomination so when they found out we were one of the finalists it was a complete surprise for them, they couldn't believe it.

"I'm so proud of all the team and how we've pulled together with a joint vision of delivering excellent patient care, while looking at innovative ways we can improve the service we offer our patients.

"In our awards category we are up against some really excellent teams like Moorfields Eye Hospital and Sheffield Children's Hospital, so we're trying to stay realistic about our chances – but if the public get behind us, you never know!"

Among the reasons for being shortlisted was the team's introduction of a new virtual clinic for patients, which has helped to free up clinical space, streamline the service and cope with an ever-increasing number of patients – ophthalmology now sees the most outpatients of any specialty in the NHS.

AOP Chief Executive Henrietta Alderman said: “Many of our members will view providing high-quality eye care simply as the norm but the AOP Awards is great way to show that optometry, even the day-to-day, incorporates exceptional performance and tremendous passion.”

Members of the public can cast their vote, and find out more about the awards, by visiting www.aop.org.uk/awards before 5pm on Wednesday 18 December. Results will be announced at a black-tie dinner on Sunday 26 January 2020.

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