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RUH thanks local universities for their expertise and support

The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust has thanked the city's two universities for boosting its supply of vital personal protective equipment (PPE) for frontline workers.

The equipment, including gowns and face shields, is being used daily by staff caring for patients with COVID-19.

A team based at the University of Bath's Faculty of Engineering and Design have so far provided more than 30,000 pieces of PPE to the RUH and GPs, and with the help of B&NES Council, to care homes and pharmacies. Equipment has also been shared with Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Trust to allow staff there to continue to work safely.

Meanwhile the University of Bath and Bath Spa University have teamed up with local volunteers to make medical gowns for RUH staff.

Using a pattern created by engineers from the University of Bath, in conjunction with the RUH, local sewists from the Scrubs For The NHS Bath group have started stitching together gowns at Bath Spa University's Sion Hill campus.

The RUH has supplied them with the specific material that gowns must be made from to effectively protect medical staff. The team, who have already begun work from their homes, currently have enough material to create around 4,000 gowns.

Lisa Cheek, Director of Nursing and Midwifery at the RUH, said: "We are receiving PPE supplies through the national NHS supply chain, but we are very lucky here in Bath to also have the support of our wider community, to help boost our supplies of key items.

"In particular, we have been working closely with our local universities, the University of Bath and Bath Spa University. They have been using their skills and expertise to provide us with disposable visors and fluid resistant gowns, as well as providing innovative solutions to making PPE more comfortable for our staff to wear.

“We are really grateful for their support during this challenging time.”

The RUH has stringent specifications and processes that need to be followed to ensure that any donations of PPE are of the necessary quality for staff. Please contact us before you make any donations - email ruh-tr.ruhresilience@nhs.net, or call 01225 82 4850 with your name and email address.

Watch our video here: <https://youtu.be/FjVf8ae3sm4>

Ends

Notes to Editor:

The World Health Organization has announced that 2020 will be the Year of the Nurse and Midwife to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale. Our nurses and midwives are a big part of the RUH family and throughout the year we will be celebrating the work they do, going above and beyond every day to give our patients compassionate care.

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