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Diabetes patients receive support and reassurance from RUH staff

Diabetes teams at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust have reassured patients they continue to be there to offer support and advice throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Staff have been advising patients on the steps they can take to stay safe, as well as reassuring them about the coronavirus risks.

Gaynor Kebbell, Diabetes Facilitator for Bath 3-D Integrated Diabetes Care, based at the RUH, said: "Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we have been there for our patients, offering advice and support and carrying out over 90% of our consultations remotely.

"One of the key messages we have been giving our patients, to reassure them at this understandably worrying time, is that having diabetes does not increase your risk of catching coronavirus.

"However, diabetes can reduce your immunity, so if someone with diabetes does catch the virus, it could potentially cause them to become more ill than someone who does not have diabetes.

"We have been advising patients to keep a close eye on their blood glucose levels. If you have diabetes and catch coronavirus, it's important to keep your blood glucose level below 14mmol/mol. If it rises above this, contact your healthcare professional or NHS 111 urgently for advice.

"The good news is that the majority of people with diabetes who contract the virus experience only mild to moderate symptoms and make a full recovery."

Chair:
Alison Ryan

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Libby Walters



Taking daily exercise, eating a balanced diet and keeping a healthy weight can reduce the risk factors for people with diabetes. Being obese (having a BMI of more than 30) has been found to increase risk. This is because it makes the body think it is 'inflamed' and it reduces how well the lungs work, making it harder to fight the virus and the respiratory infection in the lungs.

The Paediatric Diabetes team have also been working hard to keep in touch with their patients, making sure they know where to go for information and advice and have also changed their ways of working to run virtual clinics via video link.

Claire Vass, Paediatric Diabetes Specialist Nurse, said: "This National Diabetes Week we would like to thank all of our patients and their families for all the kind words we have received as we strive to give them the highest standard of care.

"Our young people are inspirational in their determination to continue with a 'normal' lifestyle and achieve their ambitions and goals. We have young people who play sport to county and national levels and many have gone on to universities around the country, including the likes of Oxford and Cambridge.

"We would also like to say a big thank you to our GP colleagues who are referring more young people to be diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes before these youngsters are significantly unwell, which leads to a far better health outcome for them."

You can find more support and advice on the [RUH website](#)

Ends

Notes to Editor:

The World Health Organization has designated 2020 as 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 are 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.

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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

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