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## **RUH raises awareness of organ donation law change**

With national Organ Donation Week taking place from 7-13 September, the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust is doing its bit to raise awareness of changes to the law around organ donation.

Every day across the UK someone dies waiting for a transplant. In a bid to save more lives, the law around organ donation in England has now changed to an opt-out system.

All adults in England are considered to have agreed to be an organ and tissue donor when they die, unless they have recorded a decision not to donate or are in one of the excluded groups.

All adults covered by the change still have a choice whether they want to be an organ donor and their families will still be involved before organ donation goes ahead.

Joanne Pattemore, Specialist Nurse in Organ Donation for the South West, including the RUH, said: "We want to make sure people are aware of this really important change to the law around organ donation.

"It's important you not only register your decision on the NHS Organ Donor Register but share it with your family or closest friends too, to give them the certainty to support your decision at a difficult time.

"You could save or transform up to nine people's lives by donating your organs when you die and help even more people by donating tissue.

"Just visit [www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk) to find out more and register your decision – it's a simple process that takes just a couple of minutes."

Chair:  
Alison Ryan

Interim Chief Executive:  
Libby Walters



RUH Trust Chair Alison Ryan has personal experience of the importance of organ donation.

She said: “Promoting organ donation is very important to me. In 1996 my husband Ian was dying from Hepatitis C, caught from infected blood, and for six months he was on the urgent list for a liver transplant.

“When the call came it was both terrifying and wonderful. All through the 10-hour operation I thought about the widow of the donor and what she was going through – and that it might have been my turn too.

“Ian made a remarkable recovery from the operation and lived a full and happy life for the next 18 years. We never forgot our donor and his family and the gift they gave us and it is very heartening to think that we might be enabling others to receive that gift too through our organ donation work.”

To mark Organ Donation Week 2020 the RUH will be lighting up the front of the hospital in pink.

In July the RUH was thanked for supporting vital organ transplants for 14 patients during 2019/20.

Transplant operations do not take place at the RUH, but the hospital has a team of specialist nurses in organ donation who provide information, answer questions and discuss the wishes of the patient with their family.

In a letter to the Trust, Anthony Clarkson, Director of Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation at NHS Blood and Transplant, said: “The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on organ donation and transplantation across the UK.

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your organisation for your on-going support throughout the year and especially during these unprecedented times.”

Find out more about organ donation by visiting [www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk)

**Ends**

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## Notes to Editor:

### The excluded groups are:

- Those under the age of 18
- People who lack the mental capacity to understand the new arrangements and take the necessary action
- Visitors to England, and those not living here voluntarily
- People who have lived in England for less than 12 months before their death.

The World Health Organization has designated 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and Midwife to commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> 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.

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](http://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](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

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