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Media Release

RUH recruits more patients for Parkinson's disease trials

This Parkinson's disease awareness week (10 - 16 April), researchers at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust and the University of Bristol are looking to recruit more patients to take part in a number of studies they run in the field of Parkinson's disease.

The Proactive and Integrated Management and Empowerment in Parkinson's Disease (PRIME-UK) programme of research is seeking to improve the way in which care is provided for people living with Parkinson's disease and associated conditions. It is funded by The Gatsby Foundation.

All patients living in the Bath area with Parkinson's-like diseases are being invited to take part in a study that seeks to accurately capture the experience and symptoms of people with the condition. The Principal Investigator, Dr Emma Tenison, said: "This is a study that will provide really vital information on all aspects of the condition. Critically, we will include people who have difficulties with memory and thinking so we can learn vital information about some of the problems they face and how we can better help them."

The study, called the Cholinesterase Inhibitor to Prevent Falls in Parkinson's Disease (CHIEF-PD) trial will recruit 600 patients in 26 hospitals across the UK. It will determine whether a drug, known as a cholinesterase inhibitor (ChEi) will help people with Parkinson's who experience falls. The RUH Trust recruited the first patient to this trial in January 2020.

RUH Research Lead Nurse Ruth Hamlin said: "We are getting on really well with the studies and are very grateful to all those people taking part. While there is no cure for Parkinson's, our hope is that this research and its eventual findings will help to improve patients' quality of life."

Dr Emily Henderson, an Honorary Consultant Geriatrician at the RUH and Senior Lecturer at the University of Bristol, oversees both programmes of work.

She said: "Parkinson's is a condition that can profoundly affect people's enjoyment of life with symptoms affecting not only movement but other body systems. We are determined to ensure that the research studies we run tackle the most debilitating aspects and that we ensure everyone is given an opportunity to take part."

“If the CHIEF-PD trial results are successful, then a drug treatment to help us minimise the risk of falls occurring in Parkinson’s would be a really exciting and important development. The very in-depth and detailed information about the way in which Parkinson’s affects people of all ages and at every stage of the condition that we are obtaining from the PRIME-UK programme will be vital to inform further studies of new treatments in future. I would urge people we approach to please consider whether they could take part to help us drive forward improvements in care for people with Parkinson’s both now and in the future.”

Further information about both studies can be obtained from the websites for CHIEF-PD <https://chiefpd.blogs.bristol.ac.uk/> and PRIME-PD <https://primeparkinson.blogs.bristol.ac.uk/>. Anyone interested in participating can contact the RUH Trust directly via email on ruh-tr.researchchopu@nhs.net

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