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Communications Department

Royal United Hospital
Combe Park
Bath
BA1 3NG

Tel: 01225 826230 / 821459
Mobile: 07557 756658 (office hours)

Ruh-tr.communicationteam@nhs.net

www.ruh.nhs.uk

<https://twitter.com/RUHBath>

Media Release

RUH seeks new COVID-19 study volunteers

More volunteers are being urged to come forward and enrol in an important COVID-19 study taking place next week, 19 April, at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust.

Researchers are looking for people aged 18 or over – particularly those over 65 – and who are waiting to have their second coronavirus vaccination, to help the study examine whether booster COVID-19 vaccines could be given at the same time as flu vaccines.

Dr Kelly Spencer, RUH Head of Research Operations, said: “This is a great opportunity for people to play a crucial role in the wider global effort to continue to protect people against both COVID-19 and flu in the future.

“This is an important study that will enable us potentially to protect more people in society against both flu and COVID-19. We’d welcome more volunteers to be a part of research that could make a real difference to our knowledge and to public health.”

While there are vaccines that have been approved to protect against COVID-19 in the UK, it is not yet known whether further booster doses may be required to give continued protection, and how giving boosters might fit in with the seasonal flu jab programme.

Research teams at the RUH have joined the ComFluCOV vaccine study, which began across the South West on 29 March, to look at the side effects and immune response when people receive their COVID-19 booster and flu vaccine at the same appointment.

The study will look to recruit 504 participants across six NHS sites: The Royal United Hospitals Bath, Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, North Bristol NHS Trust, Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust and United Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust.

For more information about the study and how to sign up, visit the vaccine trial website: <https://comfluov.blogs.bristol.ac.uk/>

[Frequently asked questions](#) about the study can be found on the UHBW website.

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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