

Thursday 27 January 2022

New temporary ward and care hotel opened in Bath to help free up beds in local hospitals

In order to relieve pressures that are being experienced across the NHS and care services this winter, a collaboration between health and care providers in Bath and North East Somerset and Wiltshire has enabled a new community ward and temporary care hotel to be set up.

A new ward has opened at St Martin's Hospital in Bath to provide beds for patients who no longer require urgent care at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH), but who need a few extra days of therapeutic or nursing support or who are waiting to receive a care package or reablement assistance before they can return home.

At the same time patients are also being accommodated in a new temporary care facility at a hotel in Bath.

The initiatives have been put in place by the RUH, HCRG Care (formerly Virgin Care), Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Wiltshire Health and Care and other partners including the third sector to tackle the current high demand for hospital beds across the area.

The new ward at St Martin's is being led by Senior Sister Niki Hartley (pictured, front right) from the RUH.

The temporary care hotel in Bath will also help to free up hospital beds as well as provide an appropriate environment for patients to stay while they wait to return home.

Care Quality Commission registered staffing agency Abicare has been contracted by Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group to supply live-in staff to provide 24/7 to support up to 17 individuals at the hotel.

RUH Chief Operating Officer Simon Sethi said:

“Opening the ward at St Martin's Hospital is a great development, helping the RUH to continue to care for patients needing urgent hospital care and we're thankful to all our community partners in making it happen.

“There’s a lot more we can do with our partners across health and social care to help patients get home when they no longer need medical care and this is just one step in our joint approach to improve flow and patient experience through the wider health and care system.”

RUH Chief Executive Cara Charles-Barks said:

“We really don’t want patients who are well enough to leave hospital to stay with us for any longer than they need to.

“Opening the new ward and the care hotel are positive steps to support people’s ongoing recovery in a more appropriate environment and ensure hospital beds are there for people with acute medical needs.”

Val Scrase Managing Director, B&NES, Devon and Wiltshire Community Services HCRG Care Group, which provides a range of services from St Martin’s Hospital said:

“Opening the ward at St Martin’s has been a real system approach with colleagues from different organisations working closely together to co-ordinate everything from the necessary building work and equipment, through to the staffing and clinical support.

“Our priority has been to make sure we support our acute trust to move patients to the right environment to meet their health and care needs.

“We will be admitting patients from both Bath and North East Somerset and Wiltshire and working with both local authorities to support discharge”.

Anne-Marie Perry, Managing Director for homecare company Abicare, said:

“We provide a caring and therapeutic environment for the people discharged to us – all of whom have low levels of care need and may require additional rehabilitation or other support before they can return home.

“We are looking forward to welcoming people to the Bath service for their ongoing recovery.”