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Media Release

Parents praise RUH's maternity care in new survey

Parents have praised the personalised care they received from maternity teams at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust in the latest national Care Quality Commission (CQC) survey.

The results of the National Maternity Survey 2021, published this week by the CQC, show the RUH as scoring better than most others in a number of aspects. These include whether parents felt they had confidence and trust in the team providing care during labour and birth, whether enough information was provided to help parents decide where to have their baby, being offered a choice about where to have their baby and whether they felt involved in decisions about antenatal care.

The RUH also scored better for doctors and midwives being aware of the woman or birthing person's medical history, and for skin to skin contact with babies shortly after birth.

The survey, which went to those who gave birth in February 2021, looked at the whole experience of maternity care, from antenatal appointments through to giving birth and postnatal care. There were no areas where the RUH scored worse than most other trusts.

Director of Midwifery & Deputy Chief Nurse Sarah Merritt said: "More than 4,400 babies are born at the RUH every year, in Bath Birthing Centre, our community units or at home, so in the midst of the pandemic our services were still very much needed.

"We are very proud of the care we provide and we are delighted to receive this positive feedback. Thank you to all the families who took the time to share their experiences in the survey.

“Safety precautions during the COVID-19 pandemic have meant, like all Trusts, we have had to make some changes to how we care for women and birthing people, their babies, and their families. This has been challenging for everyone. However, we have been working really hard to ensure we continue to provide a high standard of personalised, supportive care, and we are really pleased to see this reflected.

“Recent improvements include introducing continuity of carer teams so that women and birthing people have a named midwife with the support of a small team, who work together to provide care during pregnancy, birth and beyond.

“There is always room for improvement so we will be listening to the results, and other feedback methods, as we continue to make the care provided at the RUH and our community hubs and birthing centres exceptional.”

Like other trusts, the 2021 survey saw the RUH score much lower than the previous 2019 survey for whether birthing partners were able to stay in the hospital as much as the woman or birthing person wanted. This is due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions at the time of the survey, during the third national lockdown in February 2021. However, many of these restrictions have now been lifted.

The RUH maternity service has an exciting year ahead as work continues towards providing an alongside midwifery unit at the Combe Park site. This will provide families with even more choice on where to give birth. Plans for the year ahead also include the expansion of our continuity of carer teams, to offer this model to even more families.

Ends

Notes to Editor:

- See the full results of the [NHS Maternity Survey 2021 here](#)

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