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Media Release

Volunteering at the RUH inspires the next generation of nurses

The Royal United Hospitals (RUH) Bath NHS Foundation Trust has partnered with Bath College to help health and social care students gain valuable experience through volunteering at the hospital.

Student volunteers are not involved with any medical care but provide a valuable support service to patients and staff, which includes light cleaning, serving drinks to patients and providing a listening ear.

Isabelle Redmond, 17, from Corsham is studying health and social care at Bath College and has been volunteering in the Emergency Department at the RUH since December 2021.

Isabelle said: "I'm really enjoying volunteering so far. It's been really rewarding to support patients by making drinks and just being there for people to chat to. It also feels good to know that you're doing your bit to support the busy Emergency Department team.

"I've been able to speak to a wide variety of staff from nurses to porters, which has helped me learn things about how hospitals work that you wouldn't necessarily find in a text book.

"I'm going to university in September to study nursing. I'm so glad I've been able to gain this experience through volunteering as I now feel confident for what's ahead.

"I'd love to come back and work in the Emergency Department when I'm a fully qualified nurse, watch this space!"

Rebecca Spreadbury, 18 from Melksham, is also a health and social care student at Bath College and has been volunteering in the Oncology department.

Rebecca said: "I've been able to take my experience in the hospital back into the classroom and apply it to my studies. It's really brought my learning to life.

“I’ve learnt how to speak to patients and how to interact with colleagues. It’s given me such a confidence boost ahead of starting my nurse training in September and I’d really recommend it to anyone thinking about starting on a career in healthcare.”

There are more than 400 volunteers in total at the RUH in a variety of roles across the hospital, not just on the wards. These include volunteers for the Friends of the RUH shop and café as well as in spiritual care, welcoming patients and visitors and our gardening volunteers.

Pippa Weaver, Volunteering Manager at Friends of the RUH, said: “We’re so pleased to have built this relationship with Bath College which enables students to get a real feel for what it is like working in a hospital setting.

“We’re really grateful to Isabelle and Rebecca, and all our volunteers, who provide a much valued service for patients and volunteers across the hospital.”

If you are interested in volunteering at the RUH, you can find out more on the Friends of the RUH website - <https://friendsoftheruh.org.uk> – call 01225 824046 or email ruh-tr.volunteers@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

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