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## Media Release

### Hospital pays tribute to priceless volunteers

Volunteers have been thanked for their fantastic contribution to the Royal United Hospital (RUH) Bath NHS Foundation Trust, totalling nearly 14,000 donated hours in the last year.

There are more than 130 hospital volunteers in a wide variety of roles including welcoming and directing visitors, gardening, serving hot drinks to patients on the wards, providing breastfeeding support to new parents, and helping in the hospital's Friends of the RUH shop and café.

In addition to this, there are many more people who selflessly give their time in the community to fundraise.

The RUH held a tea party on Monday (21 November) to say thank you and pay tribute to the vital role that volunteers play.

Chief Nurse Toni Lynch said: "We simply couldn't do what we do without our amazing volunteers. They touch every facet of hospital life, and every single one of them makes a phenomenal difference to our patients, their loved ones, and our teams.

"It's humbling and inspiring to hear the stories of the people who support us. We are here for our local community, and they are here for us too. I'm particularly proud of the relationship we're building with Bath College, which has led to some of our younger volunteers choosing further education or careers in care."

Christine and Stephen Brook, from Weston in Bath, have volunteered in the hospital's eight-strong gardening team for more than ten years. They look after many of the green spaces on the RUH site, including 20 courtyard gardens. Earlier this year the hospital was ranked as "outstanding" in the It's Your Neighbourhood gardening award scheme, run by the Royal Horticultural Society.

Christine, 64, said: "We meet every Wednesday nearly all year round, and it's so enjoyable to see the gardens evolve throughout the year.

“It’s a pleasure to realise what a difference the gardens make to so many staff and patients. For example, we meet pregnant ladies out on a walk to help their labour, and they always say it’s so much nicer than walking in the corridors. For patients and families going through a really difficult time, the gardens are like ‘green therapy’.”

Vivien Hynes, 69, from Bath, volunteers with her four-year-old whippet Daisy, via national charity Pets as Therapy. Together they visit two of the hospital’s wards for older people, plus the Children’s Ward.

Vivien said: “The thing I love the most about volunteering is seeing people’s faces light up when Daisy walks into the room. It’s not just the patients who benefit, it offers staff a real boost too.

“When people see Daisy they often tell you stories about their own pets and so it’s a great talking point and way to take people’s minds off being in hospital.

“I take great pleasure knowing that Daisy and I can provide great comfort to people, especially when they’re away from home in hospital.”

If you would be interested in volunteering at the RUH, you can find out more on the Friends of the RUH website - [friendsoftheruh.org.uk](http://friendsoftheruh.org.uk) – or by calling 01225 824046 or emailing [ruh-tr.volunteers@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.volunteers@nhs.net)

## Ends

### Notes to Editor:

At the RUH we're proud to put people at the heart of what we do, striving to create an environment where everyone matters. Everyone means the people we care for, the people we work with and the people in our community.

We provide a wide range of services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.

We also provide specialist services for rheumatology, chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME via the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases which we acquired in 2015.

In 2021, we acquired Sulis Hospital Bath, an independent hospital that provides care for both private and NHS patients. This has enabled us to provide more care for NHS patients, as well as continuing to provide private care to those who choose it. Any additional income earned through private care is reinvested in services for the benefit of the people we care for at both Sulis and the RUH.

We're currently building a new Cancer Centre at the RUH. The Dyson Cancer Centre, which is set to open in autumn 2023, will help transform the care we provide for patients, families and carers.

We work closely with other health and care organisations as members of the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board. We strive to improve the health and wellbeing of the people in our community by working together build one of the healthiest places to live and work.

We are rated 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)