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## Media Release

### Digital appointment reminders launched at the RUH

A new digital appointment service has been launched at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust to help hospital teams keep in touch with patients.

In response to feedback, patients now receive automated text message and/or email reminders before their appointments, conveniently letting them know the time, date and location.

Last year, over 35,000 appointments were missed at the RUH – around 6.4%. Reducing this will ensure that staff can use their time most efficiently, ultimately helping patients to be seen more quickly.

Chief Medical Officer Andrew Hollowood said: “The NHS has ambitions to empower people to manage their own experience of health and care, and we’re committed to that at the RUH.

“We’ve had lots of feedback from the people we care for that having more digital options matters to them – as technology develops elsewhere in our lives, it’s what people have come to expect.

“It has taken time for us to move the thousands of clinics we run onto the new platform but it has been well worth it already.

“If you’re coming to hospital please check that we hold your most up-to-date contact details, so that you can benefit from the full range of improvements we have made.”

In addition to the appointment reminders, some telephone appointments have been moved to easy-to-use video consultations using the new service, offering an improved experience for patients. This is already getting really positive feedback from both patients and staff.

The next phase of the project will see letters being sent digitally and securely, with appropriate safeguards in place for people who are unable to receive a digital version. This will enable faster communication between the RUH and patients, while also reducing paper use and postage costs.

Later, patients will be able to request for appointments to be cancelled or rescheduled in just a few clicks on their mobile phone or computer, and fill in pre-clinic assessments to ensure time spent in appointments is as effective as possible.

More details about future improvements will be shared with patients later this year.

Consultant Respiratory Physician Professor Jay Suntharalingam said: "It's been great to be involved in this project which makes the most of recent technological advances to bring care closer to patients. The video functionality is straightforward and the quality is very good."

Text messages message reminders will come from the number 07860 039092 and emails will come from [no-reply@drdoctor.co.uk](mailto:no-reply@drdoctor.co.uk). More information is available [on the RUH website](#).

## 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)