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Media Release

RUH film celebrates Windrush generation

A short film celebrating the contribution of the Windrush generation and their descendants to the establishment of the NHS has been created by the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, working with its partners in the local community.

Windrush Day takes place today (Thursday 22 June) and this year marks 75 years since the ship HMT Empire Windrush arrived at Tilbury Docks in Essex, carrying the first Caribbean migrants to help rebuild Britain after the Second World War

Many of the Windrush's passengers – as well as their descendants – played a vital role in supporting the establishment of the NHS, which launched just two weeks after the ship arrived in England.

The short film includes interviews with members of the Bath Ethnic Minority Senior Citizens Association (BEMSCA), who talk about the memories of arriving in England, as well as interviews with RUH staff.

Speaking in the film, BEMSCA member Mrs Spalding said: "I came to England in 1956, when I was 16 years old. It was June when I arrived and I found it was quite cold – so I was a bit disappointed in the weather! It was lovely though to be here with my mother and father. But when winter came, no, I didn't like that and I wanted to go home, back to Jamaica!

"I went to St Martin's hospital to do my nursing training and then stayed there on the gynaecology ward for about seven years. Later I joined the RUH and the new Maternity unit."

RUH Radiology Porter Paul Grant said: "My dad came over to England in the early '60s. His first job was shovelling coal, and he'd say 'why did I leave a hot country to come here and shovel this black stuff – what am I doing?' but he kept doing it to better himself.

“I’ve wanted to work as a Porter for a long time. It started with my mum who worked at the Mineral Hospital as a domestic and then my sister decided she wanted to be a nurse.

“My mum would have been very proud of me, working at the hospital, and my dad too – both of them would be so proud.”

Alfredo Thompson, RUH Director for People and Culture, said: “I want to say to the Windrush generation that you matter; everyone at the RUH is thankful for all you have done to care for the people in our community and we are proud to work alongside you.”

Locally, Windrush Day is being marked by a high-profile event at Bath’s Fairfield House, the home of BEMSCA.

The celebration will include the opening of the Bath Windrush – Past, Present and Future exhibition as well as the unveiling of bespoke artwork celebrating Bath Caribbean migration.

There will also be stories of migration from BEMSCA elders, as well as music, poetry, Caribbean food and performances from the Rainbow Steel Band.

You can watch the RUH film here: <https://youtu.be/4FXq0SWyvZU>

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 are 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



Royal United Hospitals Bath
NHS Foundation Trust