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Media Release

Investment in robotic surgery across Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire

Patients in Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire are now seeing the benefit of investment in robotic surgery across the local health system.

Major investments mean that surgical robots have been purchased by the Great Western Hospital in Swindon and Royal United Hospitals in Bath and are already in operation, while Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust will begin using their new surgical robot later in the year. This is part of the commitment that has been made across the local area to invest in the latest technology.

These machines mean that local people will be less likely to have to travel long distances for important robotic surgery.

Robotic technology has been developed over many years and is already in operation in other parts of the NHS.

It means surgeons can operate with higher levels of precision, and perform complex procedures with minimal access, while ensuring the highest levels of patient safety.

The first procedures using the new surgical robots have taken place at the Great Western Hospital and Royal United Hospitals.

One of the first people to successfully undergo surgery using the robot in Swindon was Ann Everden, who said: "I was happy to be operated on using the robot, it's the future. Everything that is happening now is going to be for the benefit of not only the NHS but for the future of everybody health wise."

The Chief Medical Officer at the Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Dr Jon Westbrook, said: "More patients will soon be seeing the benefits that come with the less invasive procedures that are made possible thanks to our new surgical robot. The robot is an important advance in our care, as it will improve

treatment for our patients and allow them to leave hospital sooner. The acquisition of this robot, and those at our partner hospitals, also means we will also be able to continue recruiting and retaining the very best surgeons here in our local area, as well as being able to share expertise between local providers.”

Cara Charles-Barks, Chief Executive of the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, said: “I’m delighted that we have launched robotic surgery at the RUH. This will not only benefit the people we care for, with less invasive procedures and faster recovery times, but it also gives us an exciting opportunity from a recruitment and retention perspective. It’s an amazing development for our community in Bath, Swindon, and Wiltshire.”

Duncan Murray, Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust Deputy Chief Medical Officer, said: “The outcome benefits to our patients of having local access to robot-assisted surgery have already been well described. Furthermore, providing this state-of-the-art technology within our hospitals will ensure we strengthen and sustain our surgical teams in the future by continuing to attract the best clinical staff across a range of surgical specialties.”

This investment is part of a local commitment to ensuring that the quality-of-care patients receive is of the highest standard, carried out using the most modern technology.

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