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Media Release

Ensuring vulnerable patients get the care and support they need

A new strategy is being developed by the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust to ensure that patients who need additional care always get the care and support they need at the hospital.

The aim of the new Vulnerable People Strategy is to make sure that vulnerable patients receive care and support specific to their individual needs from the moment they arrive at the RUH until they leave, as well as any after care they may need once they have left hospital.

The development of the strategy is being led by Jo Baker, the RUH's new Associate Director for Vulnerable People. Jo said: "We are committed to doing all we can to ensure our patients receive the very best care for them in the right place and at the right time, and this includes our most vulnerable patients.

"But for the first time this new strategy will clearly set out what our patients with additional needs can expect from us and our commitment to them as individuals. We will build on the positive work already being done and recognise and act on what more can be done to continue to improve our services.

"The development of our new strategy is underpinned by our Trust vision 'The RUH, where you matter', and that means doing everything we can to make sure the Trust is an inclusive, welcoming and supportive environment for everyone."

A key part of developing the strategy will be a survey, which patients, local people, RUH partner organisations and local community and volunteer groups, are all being encouraged to complete.

Jo said: "We want to hear views, experiences and ideas. We want to learn more about what is working well and where we need to improve so that we capture the right ambitions and the most important priority areas in the strategy.

“The feedback from this survey will play a key role in shaping our new strategy. We recognise that there are a wide range of people who could be considered ‘vulnerable’ because of circumstances. I believe language is very important. One of the key questions will be around what people understand when they hear, read or see the word ‘vulnerable’. Does this clearly explain the people who need to be supported through our strategy, or should we look at using a different word?”

“Please do take just a few moments to complete the survey and let us know your views – it really is important in making sure patients and vulnerabilities are at the heart of our service development and we have person-centred care and support in place.”

You can complete the survey here: <https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/VulnerablePeopleVision>

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