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Media Release

Digital appointment letters launched at the RUH

The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust has launched digital outpatient appointment letters to support patients to access information quickly and easily.

This comes after the successful launch of text and email appointment reminders earlier this year.

Chief Medical Officer Andrew Hollowood said: “We’ve had some great feedback since introducing digital appointment reminders, and we’ve seen a reduction in the amount of people who do not attend their appointment.

“Now we are moving onto the next phase of our work to improve the way we connect with patients. We are providing digital letters so that the people we care for can quickly and easily access their outpatient appointment information and don’t need to wait for the postman.

“It’s a safe and secure way to enable faster communication, whilst also reducing paper use and postage costs. Letters are stored for future reference, so it’s also great for keeping track of your information over time.”

When a new digital letter is available, patients will receive a notification via text and/or email.

- Text messages will come from the number **07860 039092**
- Emails will come from noreply@drdoctor.co.uk

Patients can still receive paper letters either by choosing to opt out of digital, or automatically by not accessing the digital copy after three days.

Andrew Hollowood added: “We know some of the people we care for would still prefer a letter through the post, so that remains an option, and we have safeguards in place in case people don’t open their digital letter.”

Patients will automatically start to receive outpatient appointment letters digitally from this month.

Whilst the majority of outpatient letters will be offered digitally to all patients, there are some exceptions for the time being, including letters where a form needs to be completed and post-appointment clinic letters.

More information is available here, <https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/DigitalLetters> including details on how to access and view your letter, how to opt out and how we are keeping your information safe.

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 spring 2024, 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