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Media Release

RUH's Dr Darren Hart awarded this year's Innovation Gold Medal by the Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine

- **RUH is launching immersive VR technology to train staff in 'Back to Basics' patient safety measures**
- **Hart is currently collaborating on a palliative care VR project with Dorothy House Hospice**

Principal Clinical Scientist Darren Hart who has led or supported a number of highly successful innovation projects at the Royal United Hospitals Bath Foundation Trust, is this year's recipient of the prestigious Innovation Gold Medal by the Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine (IPEM).

The Gold Medal is awarded to those who have consistently contributed at an outstanding level to the advancement of healthcare innovation.

Darren supported the development of the RUH's Back to Basic's Virtual Reality (VR) videos, which are part of the RUH Patient Safety Programme. Developed by a small project team and funded by a grant from Health Education England, the VR videos are a different and memorable way to refresh people's knowledge of the RUH's patient safety priorities

With a cast of RUH staff volunteer actors and actresses, four overlapping patient stories have been recorded using multiple 360° cameras. Staff can virtually sit at the end of a patient's bed or accompany colleagues to see how preventable patient safety issues can arise and be avoided

Darren said: "I am delighted to be recognised as an innovator within the NHS. New ways to help address the healthcare challenges around us need to be explored, nurtured and celebrated, and I have been very

fortunate to work alongside many brilliant patients, colleagues and mentors who have helped to do this. The RUHs Back to Basics VR training is such an example; we all know how important patient safety is so having the opportunity to bring the training to life in this way that will really benefit the people we care for and we've also received fantastic feedback from our staff."

Darren has also been collaborating with Dorothy House Hospice Care to explore the use of VR and 360° cameras to create immersive recordings that virtually transport patients receiving end of life care to local outdoor surroundings to aid wellbeing. The project also aims to enable family and friends to borrow a simple 360 camera to record favourite locations or special moments personalised to the patient that they can view on a VR headset or phone or tablet.

Alongside Darren's role within the RUH Clinical Imaging and Measurement team, he is a member of the NHS Clinical Entrepreneur Programme which aims to support the healthcare workforce to develop and scale innovative ideas for the benefit of patients, staff and the wider NHS.

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