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Communications Department

Royal United Hospital
Combe Park
Bath
BA1 3NG

Tel: 01225 826230 / 821459
Mobile: 07557 756658 (office hours)

ruh-tr.communicationteam@nhs.net
www.ruh.nhs.uk
www.twitter.com/RUHBath

Media Release

Appeal for women to check for symptoms of cervical cancer

A mother of two who was successfully treated for cervical cancer at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust is appealing to women to check themselves for symptoms.

Becky Curtis, who had a tumour removed during surgery at the RUH, made the appeal during Cervical Cancer Prevention Week, which takes place this week, from 21 – 28 January.

“My message to other women would be: if something doesn’t feel right, get it checked,” said Becky.

“Don’t ignore it – get an appointment with your GP. It really could save your life.

“I think some people don’t realise that cervical cancer can be a deadly killer, but it really can be. Please make sure you attend your cervical screening appointments and look out for symptoms.”

Becky, 42, from Wiltshire, was first diagnosed in 2020, during lockdown.

“I’d been bleeding intermittently and it was worse when I went walking,” she said. “I mentioned it to a couple of friends who told me to get it checked out, to make sure it was nothing serious.

“I spoke to my GP who got me straight in to the RUH and within 24hrs I was having examinations and scans – the support from the hospital was just incredible. They could see there was a tumour, but fortunately the cancer hadn’t spread.

“It was a very scary time for me personally, and with it all taking place in lockdown it was quite overwhelming. I also had the operation on my son’s 14th birthday, which just added to the emotion of it all!

“I had a very anxious wait after the operation but it was good news and the surgery had been a success. I was also very lucky that I didn’t need to have chemotherapy or radiotherapy.”

Becky has now been in remission for five years and remains cancer free.

“I’m definitely one of the lucky ones. I know for many women the outcomes can be very different.

“I can’t speak highly enough of the care I received at the RUH. All of the staff were so caring and supportive, particularly the gynaecology oncology clinical nurse specialists who were always there for me and were wonderful.”

Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women globally. In the UK, around 3,200 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer every year.

Cervical cancer can be cured if diagnosed at an early stage and treated promptly. The earlier the cancer is found, the easier it is to treat.

While not everyone diagnosed with cervical cancer will have symptoms, things to look out for include unusual vaginal bleeding, pain during sex, vaginal discharge or pain in the area between the hip bones (pelvis).

There’s more information and support available on the Cancer Research UK website - <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cervical-cancer>

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.

Our new Dyson Cancer Centre brings together many of the RUH’s cancer services under one roof to provide a cancer services hub for over 500,000 people in the South West. The centre includes the RUH’s oncology, chemotherapy and radiotherapy services, a 22-bed inpatient ward, a dedicated pharmacy, research team and nuclear medicine and physics teams.

A key feature of the new centre is the Macmillan Wellbeing Hub. The three-storey hub provides a welcoming, non-clinical space designed around the needs of patients and their families. It also includes comfortable accommodation where relatives and loved ones can stay overnight.



Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust

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