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Media Release

RUH introduces at-home feeding for premature babies

Premature babies being cared for at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust's neonatal care unit are now getting to go home earlier thanks to the introduction of at-home tube feeding.

The RUH's Dyson Centre for Neonatal Care is one of only four units in the south west that have introduced the new initiative, which means parents can feed their babies through tubes at home, supported by the hospital's outreach nurses.

Katy Lamin and Jake Eades from Keynsham are the first parents supported by the RUH to provide their baby Hallie with nasogastric feeding.

Katy said: "Being able to go home had a really positive impact on my mental health, after spending a few weeks in hospital.

"Going home made the transition from nasogastric feeding to breastfeeding much easier because we were able to feel comfortable in our own environment and welcome Hallie into her new home earlier.

"The support we've received from everyone at the RUH's neonatal unit and the outreach nurses has been fantastic and so helpful."

Mary Spence, Neonatal Outreach Nurse at the RUH's Dyson Centre for Neonatal Care, said: "I'm delighted that we were able to get Hallie and her parents back home as soon as possible.

"Not all of the babies we care for will be able to have at-home tube feeding, but for those that can, it means we can reduce their length of stay at the RUH and get them back to the comforts of their own home as soon as possible.

“I know how pleased Katy and Jake were to get Hallie home and this will be the first of many families we can support in this way.”

Nasogastric feeding is for babies who are unable to take in enough milk on their own. In these situations, babies are given milk through a small tube, which passes through the baby’s nose, down the back of their throat and directly into their stomach. The tube is taped to the side of their face, near to their nose. The milk is carefully transferred into the feeding tube by a syringe.

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.

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