

06.07.2026

Communications Department

Royal United Hospital  
Combe Park  
Bath  
BA1 3NG

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

[ruh-tr.communicationteam@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.communicationteam@nhs.net)  
[www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)  
[www.twitter.com/RUHBath](https://www.twitter.com/RUHBath)

## Media Release

### Sack the sock! RUH takes major step to reduce unnecessary use of compression socks

The Royal United Hospitals (RUH) Bath NHS Foundation Trust is improving patient comfort, reducing waste and saving millions of single-use compression socks from landfill after updating guidance on the use of anti-embolic, or compression, stockings.

Compression socks, have long been used in healthcare settings to help prevent blood clots (venous thromboembolism) in patients following surgery or during periods of reduced mobility.

However, the latest evidence shows that for many patients who are already receiving blood-thinning medication, compression stockings do not provide any additional benefit. Research has also found no benefit from their routine use for patients undergoing day-case procedures.

In response, the RUH's Haematology team has swiftly updated guidance to ensure compression stockings are only used where they are clinically needed.

This has improved the comfort of patients, reduced risks associated with sock use, such as skin irritation, and is expected to save around 270 metrics tons of CO2 a year. The change in guidance is also expected to save the RUH a total of £2.5million over the next five years.

Sophie Millington, Lead Nurse for Thrombosis and Anticoagulation at the RUH said:

"Our priority is always to provide safe, evidence-based care for our patients. The latest research shows that these socks do not provide additional benefits for many patients when appropriate medication is already being used to prevent blood clots.

"By updating our guidance, we can continue to protect patients from blood clots while reducing unnecessary treatment, improving comfort and supporting our sustainability goals. It's a great

example of how small changes can make a big difference for our patients, for the wider NHS and for the planet."

The initiative supports the RUH's wider ambition to reduce waste, improve value and contribute to the NHS net zero agenda.

## **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](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)