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Media Release

RUH midwife scoops £10k national research leadership prize

A Royal United Hospitals Bath (RUH) NHS Foundation Trust midwife has been recognised as one of the UK's most promising research leaders with a prestigious national award.

Lead Research Midwife Catherine Bressington has been awarded one of the NIHR20 Research Delivery Leaders Prizes, in recognition of the 20th anniversary of the National Institute for Health and Care Research.

The award celebrates Catherine's work in expanding opportunities for women, babies, children and families, helping more patients take part in studies that shape the future of healthcare.

Among the projects she has helped bring to the RUH is the Generation Study, a landmark national research programme that uses whole genome sequencing to screen newborn babies for more than 200 rare but treatable genetic conditions.

Catherine, who qualified as a midwife at the RUH in 2013, said the £10,000 development fund prize would enable her to learn from examples of excellence and bring new ideas and best practice back to Bath.

She said: "As a midwife, I wanted to make sure we were providing the best possible care for the families we look after. I realised that a career in research is a way of doing that not only for the people who come through our doors today, but for future generations of families too.

"I'm incredibly proud to lead a team that shares that vision. Research can sometimes be seen as happening behind the scenes, but we are all really motivated to improve frontline care.

"This award gives me a fantastic opportunity to learn from other organisations, visit centres of excellence and attend conferences where new ideas are being developed. If there are better ways of doing things elsewhere, I want to bring that learning back to the RUH so that the people we care for can benefit."

The RUH has a strong commitment to research and innovation, with nearly 5,000 people joining studies last year across a wide range of specialties.

These studies help develop new treatments, improve services and increase understanding of health conditions, giving patients opportunities to contribute to, and benefit from, advances in healthcare.

RUH Head of Research Jane Carter said: "This prestigious award is a testament to Catherine's exceptional leadership, strategic thinking and her dedication to expanding research opportunities for patients and staff.

"She has thought through and sought resources to expand into areas the team has traditionally not conducted research, and this work has played an important role in strengthening the RUH's reputation as a centre for research and innovation.

"Through her vision and determination, research within maternity, neonatal and paediatric services at the RUH has grown significantly. More patients are now able to take part in groundbreaking studies and clinical trials that have the potential to improve care for future generations.

"We're committed to seeing research continue to grow at the RUH, offering even more opportunities to the people we care for and supporting staff to engage too."

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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.



Royal United Hospitals Bath
NHS Foundation Trust

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