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## Media Release

### Green light for RNHRD acquisition

The proposed acquisition of the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS Foundation Trust (RNHRD) by the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH) has now been approved, health sector regulator Monitor announced today.

Joining with the RUH will secure the future of the renowned specialist services of the RNHRD and allow patients in the area and beyond to continue to access world class care and expertise. The acquisition will officially take place on the 1 February 2015.

The RNHRD endoscopy service is the only clinical service to move to the RUH site on day one. Combining the RNHRD and RUH endoscopy services will give patients access to a greater choice of appointments and the assurance of nationally accredited standards of care. Patients, GPs and other relevant partners have already been engaged with and informed of this change.

All other RNHRD clinical services will continue to be provided from the RNHRD hospital site and patients will be seen and treated by the same team of staff.

**James Scott, Chief Executive of the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, said:**

“I’m very pleased to announce that the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases will be part of the RUH as of the 1 February. We remain committed to providing the highest quality healthcare and to continuing to offer these specialist services to patients.”

“I wish to thank all the staff from both organisations who have worked so well together to ensure a smooth transition for our patients and I look forward to welcoming our new colleagues to the RUH.”

**Kirsty Matthews, Chief Executive of the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS Foundation Trust, said:**

“Securing the future of our high quality services has been at the heart of planning for the acquisition and together we have achieved this objective as a result of the hard work and dedication of our teams. On behalf of the RNHRD Trust Board I would like to thank all our employees for their continued professionalism and commitment to maintaining high standards of care throughout and beyond this process.”

**Dr Ellie Korendowych, RNHRD Medical Director said:**

“Joining with the RUH provides a real opportunity for our services to thrive. We are looking forward to working more closely with our colleagues at the RUH to share expertise for the continued benefit of our patients.”

Continuation of high quality services is at the heart of the three-year transition programme that will see a phased approach to integrating services. Careful planning, engagement and consultation will take place with patients and relevant partners over any future changes.

**Ends**

## Notes to the Editor:

- The RNHRD offers general and specialist services in a wide range of areas from rheumatology to chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME.
- **Continuity:** All services will continue to run as normal. Patients should notice very little difference in terms of their experience.
- **The aim of the acquisition** is to continue and enhance the provision of the highest quality clinical services for patients with long term conditions, optimizing research and innovation, access to specialist expertise and patient experience.
- **Benefits of the acquisition:**
  - Continuation of services that are important to patients with long term rheumatic, pain and fatigue conditions.
  - Opportunities to design services around patient need. Patients and clinicians will have access to wider clinical skillsets, modern facilities and ongoing investment in innovation and quality.
  - Opportunity to create a leading centre for clinical excellence and innovation in the city of Bath, by combining the research and development portfolio of the two hospitals, allowing patients to access the very latest treatments through clinical trials.
- **Endoscopy** is the only service that will be relocated from day one. Patients and relevant partners have been engaged with and informed of this relocation.
- **Approvals:** Respective Councils of Governors and Trust Boards approved plans for the acquisition in November and December 2014. The health regulator Monitor approved the acquisition on 28 January 2015.