University Hospitals Birmingham Charity and National Grid join forces to launch million-pound coronavirus funding appeal

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University Hospitals Birmingham (UHB) Charity has joined forces with National Grid's Ventures business to launch a special appeal to raise £1m to help patients and staff through the coronavirus pandemic.

Solihull-based National Grid Ventures has kick-started the appeal with a £100,000 donation that will be used to purchase almost 400 tablet computers for patients that will allow them to speak to their loved ones while in isolation. The tablets will be distributed to wards across the Queen Elizabeth, Heartlands, Good Hope, Solihull and Nightingale Hospital, which has recently been established at the NEC.

UHB Charity works to provide equipment, research and added extras that are 'over and above' that which the NHS provides, helping to improve the hospital experience for millions of patients each year. The UHB NHS Foundation Trust has so far discharged over 1,500 COVID-19 patients from across the West Midlands and is seeking additional funds to pay for a variety of projects from activity packs for isolated patients to reclining chairs for staff rooms, and bereavement boxes for families.

Mike Hammond, Chief Executive of University Hospitals Birmingham Charity, said: "University Hospitals Birmingham Charity supports patients, families and staff by funding equipment, facilities and research across our four hospitals. Each year, we fund over £5 million of added extras thanks to the generous support of our donors and fundraisers.

"The current COVID-19 crisis has presented us with many new challenges and requests for funding from frontline NHS staff, all of which are in addition to our normal £5 million of added extras. Working with National Grid, we have identified the need for £1 million of extra funding to support our NHS Superheroes, and we are delighted that National Grid has given the campaign a massive boost by donating £100,000 towards this target.

"We are very grateful for their support, and for everyone else supporting our NHS Superheroes. Thank you."

National Grid connects people with the energy they need and is delighted to be able to help connect people to their loved ones at such a critical time. National Grid Ventures' metering team was also proud to support the establishment of Birmingham's Nightingale Hospital, working alongside its service partner at Network Plus to prepare the site ready for opening.

Jon Butterworth, Managing Director for National Grid Ventures: "We're proud to have supported the establishment of the new field hospital and to be taking this further with this appeal, which will raise much needed funds to help local people in their care. You never quite know when you're going to need the help of the NHS, so now, more than ever, I would encourage everyone to dig deep and show your support for each and every one of the 20,000 staff members who are the lifeblood of these hospitals."

To show your support for the Trust and donate to the appeal, please go to https://justgiving.com/campaign/nhssuperheroes

ENDS

To find out more or arrange an interview, contact Emily Highmore-Talbot on Emily.highmore-talbot@nationalgrid.com or 07817 091291

Contact for media information only

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Notes for editors

University Hospitals Birmingham Charity

About University Hospitals Birmingham:

- University Hospitals Birmingham Charity is a group of four hospital charities, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham Charity, Heartlands Hospital Charity, Good Hope Hospital Charity and Solihull Hospital Charity. University Hospitals Birmingham Charity is the official charity of University Hospitals Birmingham. (www.hospitalcharity.org)
- University Hospitals Birmingham Charity funds equipment, research and training beyond the scope of the NHS and aims to make a difference to the lives of patients, visitors and staff at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHB).
- The Charity also supports the military patients treated at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham and has opened Fisher House, a '*home from home*' for military patients and their families. The charity is very grateful for the generous grants from Fisher House Foundation and Help for Heroes. SAFFA and Help for Heroes also generously provide support towards the £250,000 annual running costs of Fisher House. In total Fisher House cost in the region of £4.2m (www.fisherhouseuk.org)

About National Grid Ventures:

National Grid Ventures (NGV) is the competitive division of National Grid plc, one of the largest investor-owned energy companies in the world. NGV operates outside of National Grid's core regulated businesses in the US and UK where it develops, operates and invests in energy projects, technologies and partnerships to accelerate the development of a clean energy future. NGV's diverse portfolio of low carbon and renewable energy businesses across the UK, Europe and US includes sub-sea interconnectors, liquefied natural gas, battery storage, wind and solar power. For more information, visit www.nationalgrid.com/ventures

Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.

- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news
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