

Press Release

Tuesday 19th August 2008

Wiltshire PCT secures future for Chippenham Hospital beds

The long-term future of general medical inpatient beds at Chippenham Community Hospital has been secured with Wiltshire Primary Care Trust confirming that there will be 20 beds.

The decision was announced at the PCT Board Meeting on Tuesday 19th August.

It follows the unanimous decision of local GPs to back the PCT's recommendation for 20 beds after full review of clinical and financial viability.

The decision means that Chippenham Community Hospital has:

- 20 general medical beds
- 20 stroke beds
- and 14 maternity beds.

The general medical beds provide care mainly for elderly patients with pre-existing conditions whose symptoms worsen, meaning that they require short-term support in a community hospital inpatient unit, but do not need admitting to an acute hospital bed.

The review involved input from:

- the North Wiltshire Practice Based Commissioning (NWPBC) group made up of local GPs
- medical staff and managers at the Royal United Hospital Bath
- Wiltshire Community Health Services and Wiltshire PCT

The Board has also approved £370,000 refurbishment on the general medical ward.

Chief Executive of Wiltshire PCT Jeff James said: "Today's Board decision provides some certainty for local people and staff working at the hospital. It is a clear sign of the vital role Chippenham Community Hospital will continue to play.

"This decision underlines our ongoing commitment to work with GPs and other local clinicians to ensure the right care is provided in the right place. Inpatient

beds are a key part of the package of effective care closer to home that we are developing in line with local and national priorities.”

Dr Simon Burrell, a GP at the Porch Surgery, Corsham, who chairs the NWPBC group, said: “The practices in the consortium were unanimous in their support for the report presented to the Board today by myself and Dr Paul Harris. We also welcome the opportunity to work with the executive team to take this forward”

-ENDS-

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