

Briefing for Wiltshire Local Area Boards

About Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (GWH)

Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (GWH) currently provides hospital services to approximately 340,000 people in Swindon, parts of Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire and West Berkshire.

The Trust employs 3,300 staff and has an annual turnover of £200m per annum. Each year over 400,000 people are seen or treated at the hospital and in clinics in the local community.

The services provided by GWH are commissioned primarily by NHS Swindon and NHS Wiltshire.

- NHS Swindon has a budget of £309m per annum and spends £103.5m of that with GWH.
- NHS Wiltshire has a budget of £664m per annum and spends £48.3m of that with GWH.

As a Foundation Trust the Trust is a membership organisation accountable to local people who influence the direction of the organisation through a Council of Governors. The Council of Governors also act as the link with the 10,000 plus members (including many from across Wiltshire).

Background to the merger of Wiltshire Community Health Services (WCHS) with Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (GWH)

Last summer the Government issued a White Paper making many changes to the way the NHS is organised. Amongst these changes was the abolition of PCTs (by 2013) and putting responsibility for commissioning health services with GPs through GP Consortia.

Another change was an initiative called Transforming Community Services (TCS). As part of the TCS programme, in preparation for the PCTs abolition, by 1st April 2011 PCTs will no longer be able to provide community services. Across the country this has led to PCTs to begin looking at different approaches to commissioning community health services.

Some PCTs are transferring their provider arm into a Social Enterprise (such as NHS Swindon), whilst others like NHS Wiltshire, through a managed process, invited existing NHS providers to submit proposals to run these services.

As an existing provider GWH chose to bid to run all of the services currently provided by Wiltshire Community Health Services (WCHS) – the provider arm of NHS Wiltshire.

Following a competitive process, in November 2010 the Trust was selected as the preferred bidder for the following services:

- Maternity – which includes community maternity services across Wiltshire and parts of Bath and North East Somerset plus hospital maternity services at the Royal United Hospital in Bath.
- Children's & Young Peoples services
- Adult services (which includes primary health care teams and community hospitals)

In general the contract to manage these services is for three years, after which time the newly established GP Consortia could decide to retender these services (*a more detailed list is provided in the appendix*).

The Trust felt there were real benefits to patients in providing community and acute care. It is one of the things the Council of Governors and Trust members have sought – they want patients to be able to access seamless care regardless of organisational boundaries.

The Trust was also keen to take this unique opportunity to work more closely with community colleagues, building much stronger links with GPs and colleagues in social care which is absolutely essential to the success of the changes being made in the NHS.

Subject to the outcome of the Monitor (the Independent Regulator of Foundation Trusts) assessment process which looks at the level of risk associated with this merger, work is ongoing and a decision will be taken by the GWH Trust Board later in May with a view to services then becoming the responsibility of GWH later this summer.

Following the merger:

- The partnership between GWH and WCHS will provide NHS care to 750,000 people.
- Patients and services users of the combined organisation will come from an area spreading from Somerset to Oxfordshire
- Between the acute hospital and the community the Trust will be responsible for around 9,000 births a year. 4,000 births at GWH and 5,000 births in the community and at RUH in Bath. This will make GWH NHS FT one of the largest maternity providers in the country.

Next steps

Our main focus is ensuring the safe transfer of these services and to ensure staff are transferred smoothly under the management of the GWH.

Patients will not notice changes to services when the merger takes place as there is no intention to move services or change where staff work – patients will still receive treatment in the current locations.

However, like every other public sector organisation, the Trust will need to change how services are delivered over time to keep up with changing technology, cope with rising drug costs, an ageing population and rising expectations. The national policy also is for more care to be provided outside hospital in convenient locations. In the future some of the services currently provided in acute hospitals will move into the community over time and services in the community will also need to adapt to meet changing needs.

During the summer the Trust will be talking to stakeholders about how services should look in the future so that local people continue to receive the best possible service within the funding available.

Ends

Should you require any further information on the merger please contact:
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Appendix

A contract will be agreed between NHS Wiltshire and GWH for the provision of community services with differing contract lengths depending on the services:

Three-year contract:

- Maternity services currently provided by WCHS, which includes provision of maternity care in Bath and North East Somerset, parts of Somerset, South Gloucestershire and large parts of Wiltshire. *It **does not include** maternity services which are commissioned by NHS Wiltshire from Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust.*
- Neighbourhood teams covering the whole of Wiltshire
- General medical inpatient services at Chippenham, Warminster and Savernake Community Hospitals
- Stroke Unit at Chippenham Hospital
- Minor Injury Units in Trowbridge and Chippenham
- Continence services
- Podiatry services
- Dietetics
- Tissue viability service
- Orthotics
- Musculo-skeletal physiotherapy
- Outpatient services
- Diabetes
- Respiratory Services including Post-Acute Care Enablement (PACE) and Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

Two-year contract:

- Services for Children and Young People, including Health Visitors
- Children's Continuing Health Care
- Prison health
- Wheelchair service
- Community Dental Service including Dental Access service provided across Wiltshire and Swindon
- Community Team for People with Learning Disabilities