

PRESS RELEASE

Date of Issue: 16 February 2010
PR 237

For Immediate Release

Five organisations go to next stage in search for new partner at Hinchingsbrooke hospital

Five organisations have progressed to the next stage in the search to find a new operating partner for Huntingdonshire's Hinchingsbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust. Hinchingsbrooke hospital is making history as the first NHS Trust to invite potential partners, from within and outside the NHS, to apply for a unique franchise to operate the hospital.

The tendering process to find the right partner comprises six key phases. Formal submissions were received yesterday (Monday 15th February) following phase three, the first round of Invitation to Participate in Dialogue (ITPD) meetings. The following organisations made submissions:

- Care UK (Partnership Health Group Limited)
- Circle Health
- Interhealth Canada (UK) Ltd
- Ramsay Health Care UK
- Serco Health

The ITPD is a two stage process where organisations, shortlisted through a rigorous assessment process in December, are being individually invited to discuss and propose possible solutions to the management of Hinchingsbrooke hospital.

Dr Stephen Dunn, Director of Strategy at NHS East of England, said:

“Over the last two months, we’ve held meetings with the potential partners, and they’ve had tours of the hospital and met with medical staff and local GPs. From their submissions we are getting a really good feel for what they think they can bring to Hinchingsbrooke and their visions for how they plan to make the hospital sustainable in the long term. This is exactly the quality of ideas and innovation we were looking for with this franchise process.”

Mark Millar, Chief Executive at Hinchingsbrooke hospital, said:

“This process brings a huge opportunity for the hospital, patients and staff alike. Through discussions with interested parties we’re seeing exactly the added benefits that these proposals might bring. And we are still absolutely clear that whatever happens, the staff and buildings will remain protected within the NHS.”

Maureen Donnelly, Chair of NHS Cambridgeshire, said:

“As the main commissioner of services at Hinchingsbrooke hospital, good quality of service and value for money for the taxpayer and the NHS are central. The offers that these organisations are making look like they are shaping up and their ideas are now on the table.”

The five organisations’ submissions will now be assessed by a broad panel of stakeholders led by NHS East of England’s Strategic Projects Team and includes Hinchingsbrooke hospital, local commissioners, patient and staff representatives. Only the organisations which make the very best submissions will be invited to ITPD2, the second stage of the Invitation to Participate in Dialogue. This begins on 12 April.

ENDS

Notes for editors

1. This unique process proposes that the clinical and non-clinical services at Hinchingsbrooke hospital - other than where identified below - will be provided via an operating franchise agreement with an experienced healthcare provider. This proposal will ensure that a full range of high quality acute hospital services - including accident and emergency and maternity services - will continue to be provided for local people at Hinchingsbrooke, as agreed at the end of the public consultation process on Hinchingsbrooke in 2007. Services on the Hinchingsbrooke hospital site provided by other organisations, such as Cambridgeshire Community Services through contractual arrangements with NHS Cambridgeshire, are unaffected by this franchise offer.
2. Forthcoming key phases are:

Phase 4 – ITPD2 (invitation to participate in dialogue 2)	
ITPD2 issued	12/04/10
ITPD2 submission deadline	24/05/10
ITPD2 evaluation	25/05/10 – 21/06/10
Confirmation of bidders recommended to proceed to ITT	12/07/10
Phase 5 – ITT (invitation to tender)	
ITT issued	12/07/10
ITT submission deadline	26/07/10
ITT evaluation	27/07/10 – 31/08/10
Preferred franchisee appointed	30/09/10
Phase 6 – Approvals (subject to confirmation of approval & public involvement process)	
Full business case / approvals	30/09/10 – 30/11/10
Contract award & signature	01/12/10
Service commencement	01/04/11
Staff and public involvement	Ongoing

3. Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has decided to withdraw from the competitive bid process to operate the Hinchingbrooke franchise.
4. Hinchingbrooke hospital, which opened in 1983, is modern and purpose-built, with 369 beds providing quality up-to-date healthcare - including accident and emergency and maternity services - for approximately 161,000 people in Huntingdon and the surrounding areas.
5. The Hinchingbrooke Next Steps project is being managed by NHS East of England's Strategic Projects Team led by Andrew MacPherson, Director of Strategic Projects. This team of experts works in partnership to develop and deliver positive change for NHS services in the east of England. Working closely with the healthcare marketplace and the stakeholders, it develops, supports and delivers transactions that drive up the quality of patient experience, safety and care, clinical excellence, public service and value for money.
6. Further information about the Hinchingbrooke Next Steps project and how members of the public can have their say can be found at www.eoe.nhs.uk/strategicprojects or by calling freephone 0800 923 3001.

For more information please contact the NHS East of England Press Office:

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