

PRESS RELEASE

Date of Issue: 4 November 2009

PR206

For immediate release

Public encouraged to help shape Hinchingsbrooke hospital's future

The first edition of 'Next Steps News' is being launched today (4 November) to encourage the public to get involved in shaping the future of Hinchingsbrooke hospital. NHS East of England, NHS Cambridgeshire and Hinchingsbrooke Health Care NHS Trust are working together to find a franchise partner to manage the hospital, and want members of the public to comment on proposals and feed their own ideas into the process. ⁽¹⁾

The first edition of 'Next Steps News' gives a thorough background on why changes are needed at the hospital and answers some frequently asked questions, confirming, for example, that staff and assets will remain within the NHS. The newsletter also poses a number of specific questions which the public are encouraged feed back on. These include: "What innovations to healthcare services would you like to see at Hinchingsbrooke hospital?" and "What would good performance or innovation by the franchisee look like for patients?"

David Monks is Chief Executive of Huntingdonshire District Council and Chairman of the Hinchingsbrooke Next Steps stakeholder panel. He said: "The role of the public in helping shape Hinchingsbrooke hospital's future cannot be under-estimated and I am openly and genuinely inviting people to get in touch and feed in their ideas and suggestions. So do get a copy of Next Steps News, and perhaps come along to the stakeholder panel meetings, observe the proceedings and raise questions there."

This public involvement opportunity is being widely promoted across Huntingdonshire and into surrounding areas through advertisements in local newspapers, flyers delivered to homes and posters in libraries and other public places. There will also be a display in Hinchingsbrooke hospital's main reception area.

The 12 page newsletter is available to download online at www.eoe.nhs.uk/strategicprojects, or by calling freephone number 0800 923 3001.

⁽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 from the NHS, independent or third sectors. 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.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- Hinchingsbrooke 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 Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire and the surrounding areas.
- 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.
- Further information about the Hinchingsbrooke Next Steps project can be found at www.eoe.nhs.uk/strategicprojects

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

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