



Berkshire

19.1.12

# Media Release

The Board of NHS Berkshire is being recommended to approve the centralisation of inpatient services for mental health patients onto a single site.

A report to the Board concludes that bringing all Berkshire's inpatient mental health services together will lead to better outcomes and better recovery for patients. However, it also says that this should go hand-in-hand with increased investment in community mental health services and transport for relatives and carers of inpatients who face longer journeys.

Mental health professionals and local GPs support the move which would see existing mental health facilities transfer to Prospect Park Hospital, Reading, from three locations in east Berkshire: Wexham Park Hospital, Slough, Heatherwood Hospital, Ascot and St Mark's Hospital, Maidenhead.

The recommendation follows public consultation and months of research and discussions to explore all options.

The decision will be taken by the NHS Berkshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) cluster board meeting in public on Tuesday 24 January at The Centre, Farnham Road, Slough, from 10am.

Dr Katie Simpson, the GP lead for mental health in east Berkshire, said: "Having weighed up all the evidence it is clear that there is a convincing clinical case for change. Local GPs and mental health professionals strongly believe that inpatients get the best possible care and best outcomes when

they are treated in modern, purpose-built single site hospitals instead of in smaller, isolated, substandard facilities. We understand the concerns about transport and access and we are working to address these.

“It is important to remember that the vast majority of people coming into contact with mental health services get the support they need in or close to their homes and we are investing more in these areas.”

In 2011 there were approximately 280 admissions to east Berkshire wards out of a total of 5,472 working age people receiving support from mental health services (about 1 in 20 or 5%). For people over the age of 65 there were 70 admissions out of 2,489 patients (3% receiving inpatient care). These figures relate to the number of admissions not the number of individual patients.

Bev Searle, Director of Joint Commissioning at NHS Berkshire, said: “We have listened carefully over many months to the views of clinicians, patients and their families, our local authority colleagues and other stakeholders.

“Despite a great deal of additional work to look at potential alternatives to the three options on which consultation was carried out in 2010, no new clinically or financially viable options were identified.

“The clear consensus is that bringing inpatient services together in one place is the best way of ensuring good quality services both for the small number of people needing inpatient care and for those receiving treatment and support in their own homes.”

**ENDS**

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**Notes to editors:**

**1. A media briefing takes place on Friday 20 January, 2-3pm at King Edward VII Hospital, Windsor. Please confirm attendance with Martin Leaver**

2. From August-November 2010 Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, which provides mental health services in the county, held a public consultation over future options for inpatient mental health services for east Berkshire. There were three options:

Option 1 All beds to be relocated to Prospect Park Hospital in Reading

Option 2 Beds for older people to be at St Mark's Hospital in Maidenhead and for working age adults in Prospect Park

Option 3 A new £20m unit at Upton Hospital, Slough.

3. A summary of current and potential future mental health inpatient services in east Berkshire is attached, along with a summary of the work that has taken place since the conclusion of public consultation.

4. The paper on future mental health inpatient services in east Berkshire is due to be posted online at [www.berkshireeast.nhs.uk/aboutus](http://www.berkshireeast.nhs.uk/aboutus) on Thursday 19 January along with all papers for the NHS Berkshire PCT cluster board meeting in public on Tuesday 24 January at The Centre, Farnham Road, Slough, starting at 10am.

5. NHS Berkshire East and NHS Berkshire West primary care trusts are now working together as the NHS Berkshire cluster. We are working with GPs and other clinicians who have formed clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to support them to prepare to take over the commissioning role in 2013. The cluster role is to help you stay healthy or to get the care you need when you need it. We are responsible for buying (commissioning) your care from hospitals and other service providers including health services in the community and at home. The area we cover extends from Hungerford in the west to Slough in the east, and includes Bracknell, Reading, Wokingham, Newbury, Ascot, Maidenhead and Sandhurst. Together we have 107 GP practices, 120 NHS dental practices, 147 pharmacies and 84 optometry contracts. Our combined budgets total £1,227m and we serve a population of nearly a million.