

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

6
July 2009

MAJOR MILESTONE FOR BETTER HEALTHCARE CLOSER TO HOME

Proposals to reshape local health services in Sutton and Merton at a cost of £264 million have passed a major milestone this week, with NHS London's Capital Investment Committee giving approval for the next stage of the development of:

- St Helier Hospital Phase 1 re-development and Local Care Centre for around £219m
- The Nelson Local Care Centre, which will be built for around £21 million
- The Wilson Local Care Centre, which will be developed for around £11 million
- An "intermediate care" centre at the Wilson which will be built for an additional £13 million

Business cases for the local care centres and intermediate care centre will now proceed to the procurement stage. In addition, a £13 million local care centre at Shotfield is already being developed, and will open its doors to patients in 2011. The local care centres will provide a range of services for people who currently have to travel to hospital, including outpatient services and diagnostic tests (e.g. blood testing and X-rays).

NHS London is also recommending that the Department of Health approves the first major phase of the redevelopment of St Helier Hospital for £219 million, including the development of the St Helier Local Care Centre. The plans for the redevelopment of St Helier will now be submitted to the Department of Health for final approval, which is the usual process for capital projects of this value.

Bill Gillespie, Chief Executive of Sutton and Merton PCT, commented:

"This is great news for local people, as we know there is considerable support for the Better Healthcare Closer to Home programme. By providing more care closer to home and re-developing St Helier we can make a huge difference to how healthcare is delivered in Sutton and Merton."

Peter Coles, Chief Executive of Epsom and St Helier University NHS Trust, said:

“We are delighted NHS London is recommending the Department of Health approves our plans to redevelop St Helier. By doing so, we can make sure that the hospital continues to give local people the best possible care. Patients will be treated in a modern and welcoming environment, which is right for the 21st century.”

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For further information, contact Communications on 020 8251 0458 or 020 8251 0591, or visit our website at www.suttonandmerton.nhs.uk

Notes to editors

NHS London’s Capital Investment Committee approval has been given subject to the following issues being addressed:

- Review the strategic financial planning and affordability of the Better Healthcare Closer to Home Programme in the context of the emerging Pan-London and South West London sector affordability work;
- Resolve smoothing/transitional funding requirements;
- Further development of workforce plans for the health economy;
- Undertake further estates work on all schemes;
- Epsom St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust to clarify plans for the disposal of Sutton Hospital;
- PCT to review whether it is possible to accelerate the development of the Local Care Centres

