**Media Release**

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**NHS continues public discussion on urgent and hospital care in Gloucestershire**

NHS leaders in the county say they want Gloucestershire to be ‘at the leading edge of healthcare’ as they resume a public discussion on ideas for how community urgent care and specialist hospital services could be provided in the future.

The period of **engagement** through the summer and autumn is an open dialogue, with a range of ideas to discuss and an opportunity to involve staff and the public in developing potential solutions to meet health and care needs.

Through sharing information and exchanging views, the engagement period will provide a wealth of feedback to inform future planning. The public and staff will be **consulted** on any significant changes that follow on from this engagement programme.

 Under the headline, *‘Fit for the Future,’* the NHS is continuing a conversation with the public on:

* ideas to support easier, faster and more convenient ways to get urgent same day advice and care wherever people live in Gloucestershire
* what’s important to local people in getting urgent (not life threatening) same day advice and care across our communities in Gloucestershire, including illness and injury services
* ideas for a *Centres of Excellence* approach to providing specialist services at the two large hospital sites in the county
* a range of ideas for the next few years, including A&E services, General Surgery and Image guided surgery.

Clinical lead for urgent care at NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group, Dr Jeremy Welch said:

“The county’s NHS staff are ambitious and we want local people to benefit from simpler ways to get urgent advice and experience care that is better co-ordinated from the moment they first make contact with the NHS. This includes booking appointments into the right services to reduce uncertainty and worry.

Also healthcare is changing, with more people now able to access illness services from pharmacies and GP surgeries in the day time, evening and the weekends. Together with local people, we need to look at what other same day illness and injury services are provided across our communities to meet local needs.”

Joint Medical Director for Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust and 2gether NHS Foundation Trust, Dr Amjad Uppal said:

“The NHS in Gloucestershire wants to continue to provide urgent same day community illness and injury services as close to people’s homes as possible, but when looking at services in GP surgeries and hospitals, there is much to think about, including local circumstances, needs and the desire to provide outstanding care.

What works in the centre of Gloucester will be very different to what works in the more rural areas of the Cotswolds, for example.

Together, we also need to look at the best way of providing services, like x-ray. To ensure patients get a great service every time, we need to look at how we balance local access with access to specialist staff and the very best equipment and facilities.”

There is also a real ambition in the county to deliver truly outstanding specialist services at the county’s two large hospital sites and the engagement is an opportunity to share ideas about how best to achieve this.

Professor Mark Pietroni, Director of Safety and Medical Director at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust said:

“In Gloucestershire we are aiming high. We want local people and their families to have access to the very best healthcare.

We are very fortunate in Gloucestershire. We have two large hospital sites that offer us a fantastic opportunity to provide leading edge specialist hospital services in the future, comparable to the best in England.

We are excited to hear what people think of our ideas for the long term, including a *Centres of Excellence* vision for providing care and also ideas for the next few years.

This period of engagement is about discussing ideas and involving people in developing potential solutions. This means that contrary to some reports, no decisions have been made about the future range of urgent and emergency care services in the county, including those at Cheltenham General Hospital.”

There are a number of innovative ways the NHS will be involving local people, from a survey and ‘drop in’ events to workshops, an engagement hearing and a Citizens’ Jury.

**-END-**

**Notes to editors**

Gloucestershire residents can:

* Read the booklet and complete the *‘Fit for the Future’* survey at [www.onegloucestershire.net](http://www.onegloucestershire.net) The booklet will also be available later this week from a range of public places across the county, including pharmacies, GP surgeries, hospitals and libraries
* Come to an Information Bus Public ‘drop in’ Event at local venues - see [www.onegloucestershire.net](http://www.onegloucestershire.net) for details
* Find out about local workshops, the public hearing and the Citizens’ Jury - check the booklet or [www.onegloucestershire.net](http://www.onegloucestershire.net) for details
* Get updates on Twitter: @One\_Glos

**For more information or to arrange interviews, please call the communication teams on 0300 421 1508 (NHS Gloucestershire CCG) or 0300 422 4724 (Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust).**