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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Friday, January 27, 2012**

**Worcestershire NHS to embark on a review of health services**

The NHS in Worcestershire is embarking on a review of health services to secure the best possible healthcare for county residents that is sustainable for the future and, though the main focus of the review will be on acute hospital services, it will also look at the wider health and care system, particularly in relation to specific pathways of care between the acute hospitals and community and primary care.

Worcestershire health services are facing the same challenges as the wider NHS, with services needing to change as society changes and public resources come under pressure.

The county’s NHS organisations – NHS Worcestershire, the three Clinical Commissioning Groups, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust – are at the very start of the process and there are no predetermined answers. However, there is agreement that ‘no change’ is not an option. The approach will be to look for improvement and ensure sustainability, and the commitment is that the process will be carried out with integrity - open, honest, inclusive and timely.

Local clinicians will lead the ‘Joint Services Review’ (JSR) and propose options for service configuration, and the review process will involve patients, professionals, public and partners throughout. The JSR aims to identify, assess and then consult on options for improvement over the next 11 months.

**Eamonn Kelly**, Chief Executive of NHS Worcestershire, said: “The work that is going to be done over the next 11 months will be led by clinicians with full involvement of patients and the public. This is critically important to ensure we have the best possible health services for Worcestershire residents that are sustainable for the future.”

**Penny Venables**, Chief Executive of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, said: “The Trust is focussed on providing the safest and best patient care for the people of Worcestershire. We know that we need to transform the way we currently provide health services to leave a lasting legacy for the benefit of present and future generations. Working alongside clinicians, patients and local communities we are committed to agreeing a clear picture of what we want future health services to look like in Worcestershire, before embarking on the journey to develop them in partnership.”

**Sarah Dugan**, Chief Executive of Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust, said: “Our Trust is supportive of this review being undertaken and recognises the role that we can play locally in providing alternatives to people being treated in a hospital setting. The review is focused on how acute hospital services are organised in the county but it is really important that the work considers how other local organisations can complement these services more effectively. Key treatment pathways such as urgent care and rehabilitation are excellent examples of where we can look to work differently to provide a higher quality service for local people.”

**Dr Anthony Kelly**, Chair of Worcestershire Clinical Senate which will make the clinical recommendations for the JSR, said: “Clinicians from the acute and community sector and general practice are working together to lead this review. We intend to meet directly with patients and the public throughout the process to seek their views and opinions on the future of health services in the county. As clinicians we will demonstrate, in consultation with our population, that we can deliver safe high quality health services which are sustainable.”

It is anticipated that the review will be completed by November 2012, including a three-month period of formal public consultation.

A series of public meetings are currently being arranged throughout February to give patients and the public the opportunity to find out more about the review and how they can have their say. Dates will be confirmed as soon as possible.

More information is available at [www.worcestershirehealth.nhs.uk/joint-services-review.aspx](http://www.worcestershirehealth.nhs.uk/joint-services-review.aspx)

**Ends**

**Picture caption:**

**Back row, left to right:** Dr Anthony Kelly, Chair of Worcestershire Clinical Senate; Dr Bryan Smith, Chair of the Joint Services Review Board; Chris Burdon, Chair of Worcestershire Health and Care Trust; andHarry Turner, Chair of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

**Front row left to right:** Trish Haines, Chief Executive of Worcestershire County Council; Eamonn Kelly, Chief Executive of NHS Worcestershire and West Mercia Cluster of PCTs; Sarah Dugan, Chief Executive of Worcestershire Health and Care Trust; and Penny Venables, Chief Executive of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

Please direct all media enquiries on the Joint Services Review to Rebecca Bourne. Rebecca.bourne@worcsacute.nhs.uk or 01905 760453 / 07789 176193.

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**Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust is applying to become a Foundation Trust (FT). We are actively recruiting Members from the local population.  Membership is free and Members can choose their level of engagement.  Members are also eligible to vote – or stand – in elections to our new Council of Governors.**

**For more information, see our website at** [**www.worcsacute.nhs.uk**](http://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/) **and follow the Foundation Trust link.**

