MEDIA RELEASE

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Better Care Fund social workers to provide vital link between hospital wards and home

Two social care workers have been recruited to help patients with mental health needs as they are discharged from hospital.

The Leicester City Council posts are being supported by the Leicester City Better Care Fund (BCF), a pooled budget being used to integrate health and social care.

Dedicated to work with people on hospital wards, the social care workers will be based at Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust’s (LPT) sites at the Bennion Centre, the Evington Centre and the Bradgate Unit.

Working with patients and carers, they will assess the levels of support needed by individuals and ensure NHS, Leicester City Council teams and other partner organisations are providing co-ordinated care.

Interim deputy head of Mental Health Services for Older People, Lyn Williams, welcomed the move as part of an important shift in health and social care.

"Putting the patient at the centre of everything we do means we have to integrate effectively and efficiently with other organisations, including local authority social care, to provide a seamless service.

"These appointments are an important step as we work to embed a real team approach," she said.

Assistant city mayor, councillor Rita Patel, the council’s lead for adult social care said: "These social workers are based on the mental health wards, rather than in offices elsewhere, which means they can work much more closely with the wider multi-agency team.

"They are already reducing the length of time patients are spending on the ward, by doing whatever is needed to help them leave hospital as soon as they are well, and ensuring they continue to get the right care and support when they leave."

These social care workers will create a link between the consultants and nursing staff on the wards and adult social services in the community. They will support individuals who are eligible for social care support following discharge from hospital, this may be through a Direct Payment to purchase care, residential care or other services that can support them and help them to remain at home independently.
The Bennion Centre and Evington Centre provide specialist diagnosis and care to people of all ages with probable dementia and people over 65 years of age with depression, anxiety and psychotic illnesses. Many will also have physical health needs.

The Bradgate Unit provides acute adult in-patient assessment and treatment of mental health.

The Leicester City Better Care Fund is a joint fund between Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group and Leicester City Council, supported by local health and social care partners including Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, East Midlands Ambulance Services, University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust, SSAFA Care and Leicester City GP practices.

The Better Care Fund contributes to the Better Care Together programme, a five-year strategy that is being developed across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to transform health and social care services. More information can be found at www.bettercareleicester.nhs.uk

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Notes to editors

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) provides a range of health and wellbeing services mainly for people living Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The Trust serves a population of one million, has a budget in excess of £267 million and employs approximately 5,400 staff. For more information visit www.leicspart.nhs.uk

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