

MEDIA RELEASE

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2 pages

Work starts on new mental health ward for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland

During Mental Health Awareness Week, work is to get underway with a sod cutting ceremony which marks the start of construction work on a brand new £5 million mental health ward in Leicester.

Staff from the Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, along with service users and local partners, joined with construction company Interserve Construction Ltd to cut the first turf at the development, which is based at Bradgate Mental Health Unit, Glenfield Hospital.

The new 20 bed adult ward is being created as part of the Trust's centre of excellence development programme, which incorporates substantial improvements to the care environment and the development and redesign of acute adult mental health care.

LPT's Chief Executive Officer, John Short said;

"We're absolutely thrilled that building work is now getting underway to create this new adult ward, which we expect to open in March 2013. We've undergone extensive ward refurbishments and redevelopment at this site already, but this is the first construction of a completely new ward, which is very exciting and marks a further step in our programme to improve adult mental health care.

"People who use mental health services and our own staff have helped to develop the design of the ward, which will enhance the patient experience, by providing a better therapeutic environment and improved privacy and dignity.

"We've carefully managed our finances within the Trust to ensure there are surplus funds available to enable us to afford to invest in capital projects like this. It's really important to us that we deliver quality care in appropriate therapeutic surroundings to help people recover quickly."

The new mixed ward – which has yet to be named - will provide each patient with their own single room and en-suite bathroom – an improvement on the shared dormitory and bay style wards previously available. Patients will also have access to comfortable lounge areas, therapeutic activity spaces, private gardens and internet facilities.

All adult acute wards are now co-located at the Bradgate Unit site, alongside other specialist mental health services.

Only two wards now remain at the Brandon Unit (Leicester General Hospital) – one for older adults and one for people with eating disorders. They will both move in to newly refurbished accommodation at the Bennion Centre (adjacent to the Bradgate Unit) in early spring 2013. These moves will eventually allow the older, more out-dated Brandon Unit to close.

The cost of the new ward and the centre of excellence programme is being met by the sale of surplus and out-dated Trust buildings, including the old Towers Hospital – which was formerly the Trust HQ.

Notes to Editors

- **The sod cutting ceremony is taking place on Thursday 24th May at 12.30pm at the Bradgate Mental Health Unit. There will be photo and interview opportunities and members of the media are invited to attend.**
 - Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) provides a range of health and wellbeing services mainly for people living in the city of Leicester and the neighbouring counties of Leicestershire and Rutland. We serve a population of one million and have a budget in excess of £250 million and employ almost 6,000 staff.
 - Our mission is to advance the health and well-being for you and your community
 - Our vision is to become an integrated Foundation Trust with a passion for quality and excellence.
 - For more information on Mental Health Awareness week go to:
<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/mentalhealthawarenessweek/>

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