

PRESS STATEMENT
17 JANUARY 2012

UHMBT STATEMENT ON CQC INVESTIGATION

Tony Halsall, Chief Executive, University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust, said: “The CQC has an important role to play in giving people reassurance that high standards of quality and care are maintained throughout the NHS. We are committed to providing the best possible patient care in our hospitals and we will work openly with the CQC to help them carry out their investigation and implement any actions they identify.

“The Trust is dealing with a number of important issues at the moment, so it is not surprising that we are coming under additional scrutiny. We hope this investigation will help to reassure anyone with concerns about emergency services in our hospitals.

“This is a particularly busy time of year for our Emergency Departments and our staff work hard to ensure delays are kept to a minimum. After a recent visit to the Emergency Department at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary (RLI), the Chief Executive of the Royal College of Nursing said he believed the standard of nursing in the department is very good despite the challenges facing the Trust.

“Nevertheless, patients do sometimes have to wait longer than we would like. There have been particular pressures at the RLI and we are currently investing £1.5 million in the extension and refurbishment of the Emergency Department. This will put us in a stronger position to deliver emergency and urgent care services and reduce waiting times for patients.

“We are also working with other parts of the NHS to alleviate the pressure on the Emergency Department.

“Any recommendations made by the CQC, as a result of its investigation, will also be implemented to ensure patients can have further confidence in these services in the longer term.”

Preparatory work on the new developments at RLI is already underway with the completion of ground clearance works and site security. Construction work for the main scheme is due to start in February 2012 and the unit is due to be operational by September 2012.

In addition to the new extension, work will commence in September 2012 to provide an additional resuscitation bay and a refurbishment of the existing resuscitation area. The final phase is expected to be ready by the end of October 2012.

Tony Halsall added: "We are concerned that we have had to deal with a number of issues recently but everyone in the Trust has been working hard to ensure they are resolved as quickly as possible.

"We know that the vast majority of our patients receive good care and the CQC has made it clear that they do not think that any of our services are unsafe. However, I would like to sincerely apologise to those patients who have been affected by any of the issues we have faced.

"Our focus is on dealing with any shortcomings or weaknesses that exist whilst also making further improvements to our services to ensure that we provide safe, high quality care for all our patients not just now but in the longer term."

Anyone who has any questions about the investigation should contact the CQC on 03000 616161 or via their website www.cqc.org.uk.

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