

## **Public views sought on Pennine Acute Trust's Foundation Trust bid**

PATIENTS, staff, local residents and community organisations are being invited to have their say on how their local hospitals will be run in the future.

The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, which runs North Manchester General Hospital, Fairfield General Hospital in Bury, Rochdale Infirmary and The Royal Oldham Hospital, has launched its 12 week formal consultation exercise as part of its proposal to become an NHS Foundation Trust.

NHS Foundation Trusts are a key part of the Government's reform programme in the NHS and are now the main type of organisation established to run NHS hospitals. There are over 100 NHS Foundation Trusts in England who are using their freedoms to benefit the development of their hospitals and involve their communities.

Almost all hospitals in Greater Manchester, including Manchester Royal Infirmary, Wythenshawe and Royal Bolton, are already NHS Foundation Trusts.

The Pennine Acute Trust's consultation document called '*Your Hospitals, Your Choice – Your Voice*', was officially launched today (Tuesday 3 November 2009) at this month's Trust Board meeting.

John Jesky, Chairman of The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, said:

"Building on our progress over the last few years, we believe the time is right for the Trust to become an NHS Foundation Trust. As an NHS Foundation Trust we will have more freedom to work with local people to better understand what you and your family want, what you need, and what you expect from your hospitals. Local patients, public and staff can become members of the Trust and also stand for election as hospital governors for the first time under these proposals. We want you to have a greater say in how your hospitals are run.

"This consultation is not about changing the patient services provided at your hospitals, but is about a change in the way your hospitals will be run and how decisions are taken in the future. We are asking how patients and local communities want to be involved in their hospitals to make sure they provide the services you need, when you need them.

"We look forward to hearing what people think about our plans, and would also encourage staff, their families, patients and the wider public to become members so that they can get involved in decisions relating to the future of your hospitals."

The scrutiny of the consultation process is being monitored by members of the Patients' Council - an independent group of patients and volunteers from the northeast sector of Greater Manchester.

Paul Mainwaring, Chair of the Patients' Council, said: "Patients, carers and local people have the opportunity to have their say and get involved by becoming members of the Foundation Trust which will also give Pennine Acute Trust greater freedom to develop our local services. It is vital that the public register to become a Trust member. It will give the public served by the Trust a greater say in decisions about Pennine's future. By becoming a foundation trust member we, the people, will ensure real representation of the decision making board ensuring local ownership."

#### **Key points about NHS Foundation Trusts:**

- More involvement from you
- A chance to have your say
- Elected hospital governors
- More financial freedom to improve services
- Less national control over your local NHS

#### **Benefits**

- Better involve the local community
- Elect local people to represent your views
- Get things done faster
- Invest in local services
- Improve care for you and your family
- Help secure the long term future of your hospitals
- Retain the high quality and access you expect from the NHS

#### **Consultation**

The Trust is keen to seek as wide range of views as possible and has arranged a series of public meetings and events to consult on its proposals.

Monday 16 November (6pm – 9pm) - Irish World Heritage Centre, Manchester

Tuesday 17 November (6pm – 9pm) - Chadderton Town Hall

Monday 30 November (6-9pm) - The Pavilion, Masonic Hall, Middleton

Wednesday 16 December (6pm-9pm) - Radcliffe Civic Suite, Radcliffe

The consultation runs until 29 January 2010. For details on meetings, to view the consultation document, to complete the consultation questionnaire, or to register to become a member, visit online at [www.pat.nhs.uk/foundationtrust](http://www.pat.nhs.uk/foundationtrust) or telephone 0161 9184283.

#### **Notes to editors**

The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust was established in April 2002 and serves a population of approximately 800,000. With an operating budget of over £500m and employing around 10,000 across five hospital sites, it is one of the largest NHS Trusts in the country. For further information, contact Andrew Lynn on 0161 604 5459.

