

News release

For immediate release
Tuesday 29 November, 2011

Local NHS reassures patients ahead of industrial action

Local people are being reassured that the NHS has plans in place to safeguard essential and emergency services during the public sector strike on Wednesday 30 November.

All local NHS organisations have been working together for some time to prepare for the day of industrial action with the collective aim of keeping the public safe and ensuring disruption is kept to a minimum.

NHS staff do not have to inform their employers if they intend to strike making it difficult to assess the exact numbers of people who will take part. However all local NHS Trusts continue to work with Trade Unions and staff to understand the full picture locally and to ensure robust plans are in place to help services to run as normally as possible on 30 November.

While comprehensive plans are already in place, it's clear that many of our services could be under extra pressure on the day. With this in mind, people are reminded of how important it is to make sure they choose the right NHS service, keeping the Ambulance Service and A&E free to deal with emergencies.

More information to help people choose the right NHS service for their needs can be found by visiting www.choosebetter.org.uk/.

People can also help the local NHS by ensuring they have collected their repeat prescriptions and have a well stocked first aid kit to treat minor illnesses or injuries.

Catherine Griffiths, Chief Executive of the LLR PCT Cluster, said: "We are doing all we can to ensure emergency and essential services are maintained during the day of industrial action and that disruption is kept to a minimum.

"Please be assured that we will make the best possible use of our resources to keep our patients, staff and members of the public healthy and safe.

"As on any other day, the public can help us to help them, by choosing the right service for their needs and by avoiding using the ambulance service and A&E for all but the most serious cases."

People with medical appointments planned for Wednesday 30 November will be notified on an individual basis if these have to be cancelled but if anyone is unsure, they can check by calling the number on their appointment letter. With some services we will not know until the morning of November 30, so people may be asked to call back on the day.

Members of the public and those visiting NHS sites should also be aware that peaceful pickets may be taking place outside some NHS buildings on November 30, but that these will not prevent them from accessing services.

ENDS

For interviews or more information please contact media officer Liz Thomas on 0116 295 7677 or liz.thomas@leicestercity.nhs.uk or senior media officer Caroline Higgs on 0116 295 7663 or caroline.higgs@lcr.nhs.uk.

Notes to editor:

In October 2010 NHS Leicester City and NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland joined forces to form a 'cluster', in line with the requirements of the Department of Health. Although we share one Cluster Board and our staff work across the city and county boundaries, we have not legally merged, and retain our separate statutory duties. Together we serve a population of more than a million people. Cluster formation is an interim stage in the reform of the NHS, involving on-going transfer of most local commissioning functions to GP-led clinical commissioning groups, in line with the Health and Social Care Bill, now before Parliament and the House of Lords.