

UNDER STRICT EMBARGO MONDAY FEBRUARY 6, 2012 – 11.00am

Friday February 3, 2012

Hard-hitting advert highlights wrong use of A&E

An advert designed by the local NHS aims to reach the thousands of people who inappropriately use the city's emergency department.

The advert which launched on Friday February 3 shows images of a number of patients who used A&E unnecessarily. The patients appear visibly distressed to discover they have inadvertently caused the death of a child by using A&E when they could have gone to their pharmacy, GP or called NHS Direct,

The hard-hitting approach was created by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PCT Cluster in partnership with NHS Northamptonshire and will be shown after 9pm on ITV Central East Midlands channels. The clip will appear between programmes such as The Biggest Loser, Million Pound Drop, Jonathan Ross, Chris Moyles Quiz Night and 8 out of 10 cats.

It is expected more than one million people will see the advert once and 530,000 people will see it at least three times. The advert will also feature on catch up TV channels on-demand, for viewers specifically watching in Leicestershire.

Catherine Griffiths, chief executive of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PCT Cluster, said: "As part of the Choose Better campaign we have designed a deliberately hard hitting advert to help people realise the potential consequences of using A&E inappropriately. Many people do not realise the seriousness of using the emergency department for conditions that can be treated more appropriately by a pharmacist, GP or our local walk-in centres, freeing A&E staff up to look after those that are most in need of care."

Ben Teasdale, lead emergency department doctor at Leicester's Hospitals, said: "We strongly support any initiative that provides patients with more information about how to seek medical advice and treatment if they are unwell."

The advert will be launched on the internet through You Tube and targeted adverts will appear on social media sites Facebook and twitter to ensure the local target audience is hit.

The clip is supported by a Choose Better phone app available on iPhone and Smartphones. The App is free to download and means people can carry important health information with them.

There are a range of other options when deciding how to look after yourself and your family. They include the following:

- **Self Care** - This is the best choice to treat very minor illnesses, ailments and injuries. A range of common illnesses and complaints can be treated with a well-stocked medicine cabinet and plenty of rest.
- **Pharmacy** - Your local chemist can provide confidential, expert advice and treatment for a range of common illnesses and complaints, without having to wait for a GP appointment or go to your A&E.
- **NHS Direct** - NHS Direct provides expert health advice and information via a confidential telephone service, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can call 0845 46 47
- **GP services** - Your GP can help if you have an illness or injury that won't go away. Simply make an appointment.
- **Accident and Emergency** - An emergency is a critical or life-threatening situation, and A&E departments or the 999 ambulance service should only be used in these situations.

To view the advert online visit <http://youtu.be/K0dhKMqowrc>. For more information on Choose Better visit www.choosebetter.org.uk. Blackberry, iPhone and Smartphone users can also scan a special barcode available on Choose Better posters or the websites to carry the information on where to go for medical treatment with them on their phones.

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 ongoing 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.