



Leicester City Leicestershire County and Rutland

For immediate release

Co-Chairs of City Commissioning Consortia announced

FAMILY doctors have elected two of Leicester's most respected GPs to lead the new organisation which will eventually be responsible for planning and buying many of the health services needed by patients in the city.

Prof Azhar Farooqi, from the East Leicester Medical Practice, and Dr Avinashi Prasad, from the Clarendon Park Medical Centre, become co-chairs of Leicester's new shadow Commissioning Consortium after more than 78% of the 64 eligible practices in the city took part in a vote.

The appointments follow an announcement earlier this month that the consortium had been successful in its bid to become a part of the national 'pathfinder' programme, which encourages pioneering groups of GPs to press ahead quickly with the Government's NHS reforms.

Those reforms, announced as part of the Coalition Government's Health and Social Care Bill, will see GPs and other clinicians take over responsibility for running the local NHS from primary care trusts (PCTs). Instead GP practices will work together in groups called commissioning consortia to manage local health budgets.

Commenting on the announcement, Prof Farooqi said: "I'm proud to have been selected to co-chair the consortium and I'm looking forward to working with other members of the Board in developing a new way forward for healthcare in our city. These changes will give doctors and other clinicians more responsibility and accountability than ever before to deliver better, more cost effective care for patients."

Dr Prasad added: "The Board is keen to identify a small number of early priorities that we can focus on to really deliver benefit to people in Leicester as quickly as possible. The NHS nationally is facing a number of critical challenges, not least the need to save more than £20billion a year over the next four years while still driving up quality for patients. I'm convinced that doctors, nurses and hospital consultants are best placed to make that happen and we will do our part to make that a reality locally."

Over the course of the next two years NHS Leicester City will hand over responsibility and budgets to the consortium as it becomes established. Eventually the consortium will have full responsibility for planning and buying most health services needed in the city including hospital, community and mental health services.

Catherine Griffiths, chief executive of NHS Leicester City and NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland, concluded: "I've been really impressed with the way in which all three of the shadow consortia in the city and county have embraced the challenges that lie ahead. I'm now looking forward to working with each to help them become fully established over the next year or so ahead of them becoming statutory NHS organisations in April 2013."

The full shadow consortium Board of GPs for Leicester is: Dr Bentley, Dr Danaher, Prof Farooqi, Dr Jawahar, Dr Joshi, Dr Kapur, Dr Khong, Dr Prasad, Dr Roy and Dr Singh.

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Notes to Editors

NHS Leicester City is the operating name for Leicester Primary Care Trust.

NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland is the operating name for Leicestershire County and Rutland Primary Care Trust (PCT).

These changes have been implemented by the PCT as part of the service re-design; and has no relations to the management or contract of George Eliot Hospital.