



**BRIEFING** – *March 2011*

## Update on proposals to integrate Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust and the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre NHS Trust

### Trust Boards agree to unite hospitals in a combined NHS Trust

On Monday, 28 February 2011, the Trust Boards of the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC) and the Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals (ORH) agreed at public Board meetings to integrate their services and create a combined NHS Trust with a new name.

The two Trusts announced in September 2010 that they planned to explore the possibility of integration and since then a great deal of work has taken place to identify the benefits to patients and to begin the formal processes which would enable integration to happen.

A new name for the Trust has not been finally decided upon but it is expected the name will reflect both organisations' world class clinical and research expertise. The four hospital sites will retain their current names and identities in the overarching NHS Trust.

The NOC will continue to provide the range of services from its current site in Headington; and the John Radcliffe, Churchill and Horton General Hospitals will retain their separate identities and the existing range of general and specialist services.

There are still a number of stages to go through before the Trusts can finally integrate. The NOC - ORH Integration Business Case is the main document detailing the way in which integration will happen and identifies the main benefits of taking this forward.

The main purpose of merger is to deliver better patient care. By joining forces, the NOC and ORH will be better placed to improve care pathways and ensure patients receive access to the best treatments available. Both Trusts already have strong research partnerships and integration will strengthen the links between academic research, teaching and training and clinical service delivery.

Five main areas have been identified in which integration will benefit the populations served by the new Trust:

**Patient outcomes and experience** – Integration will enable improvements to pathways that currently cross Trust boundaries, identify the best treatment options more quickly and help overcome some of the barriers that exist when organisations are working separately. Clinicians and managers from both Trusts will be working with GPs and with patients in the coming months to ensure that their views are harnessed to make the changes that will benefit patients.

**Patient safety** – An ageing population means that often patients have complex needs which require treatment in a number of service areas. Continuity of care will be easier to deliver in a merged organisation where joint working across service boundaries is the norm.

**Education and research** – Integration will maximise the opportunity of delivering innovation through translational research with our University partners. Clinical research, that delivers rapid benefits to patients through clinical trials and advances in new treatments, is of major importance.

**Specialist services** – Both the ORH and the NOC currently offer a range of specialist services that are not widely available in the UK and attract patients from beyond Oxfordshire. The integration offers a potential to grow these services so that more patients can benefit from the expertise Oxford's hospitals have to offer.

**Staff development** – Integration will enable more opportunities for career development, shared training programmes and a broader range of experience across different specialties. It will ensure Oxford continues to attract the best candidates for clinical posts and support staff retention.





## Making the case for merger

A key aim is to create a Trust that is able to achieve enhanced patient care and also provide the financial and operational stability which is necessary to achieve Foundation Trust status. It is believed that the combination of the two Trusts would enhance the ability to achieve Foundation Trust status by 2014 in line with Government requirements.

Reducing overlap and duplication of support functions and activities will help the merged organisation meet the challenge of continuing to deliver world-class, high quality care as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible, in an environment in which resources are increasingly constrained.

Subject to an approval process, which includes the South Central Strategic Health Authority and the Secretary of State for Health, it is hoped integration will become effective from July 2011.

The NOC - ORH Integration Business Case is available from both Trust websites in the 'About us' section that contains Trust Board papers.

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