

## **PRESS RELEASE**

Date of Issue: 30 September 2010  
PR 284

Embargoed until 00:01 on 30 September 2010

# **Two organisations progress to Invitation to Tender stage of Hinchingsbrooke hospital franchise**

A new milestone was hit yesterday in the search for an operating partner for Hinchingsbrooke hospital as the two remaining bidders, Circle and Serco Health, both progressed to the Invitation to Tender (ITT) stage of the procurement. The operating franchise being offered is the first of its kind for an NHS acute hospital in England.

The Hinchingsbrooke Next Steps project board made the recommendation to ITT following extensive evaluation of the two organisations' ITPD2 submissions (invitation to participate in dialogue, stage 2). During the two dialogue stages the bidders had to demonstrate their ability to provide innovative delivery and economic plans, ensure sustainable services, and recognise the need for quality and robust clinical governance at the hospital.

Dr Stephen Dunn, Director of Strategy at NHS East of England, said:

“The evaluation to date has been considerable. Fifty four expert stakeholders have taken part, representing staff, the hospital, patients, commissioners, GPs and others with an interest in Hinchingsbrooke's future. Bidders have not only had to submit considerable written evidence, but have taken part in interviews with the stakeholder panel sub group, GPs and the project board. The sheer level of involvement shows the bidders' commitment and those of the hospital's stakeholders, in finding the very best solution for Hinchingsbrooke.”

Circle and Serco Health will be formally issued with the Invitation to Tender on 6 October and will have until 20 October to make their responses.

The preferred franchisee will be announced at the end of November, once the project board recommendation has been noted by Hinchingsbrooke and NHS Cambridgeshire's boards, and approved by NHS East of England's board. This will be followed by an extensive approval period with the Department of Health, HM Treasury and other regulators. During this period the preferred bidder will start to work with the hospital in discussing future plans for their involvement.

An information sheet summarising the Hinchingsbrooke Next Steps process, to date, can be found at [http://www.strategicprojectseoe.co.uk/index.php?id\\_sec=92](http://www.strategicprojectseoe.co.uk/index.php?id_sec=92)

ENDS

**For more information please contact the NHS East of England Press Office**

Tel. 01223 597545

Email [pressoffice@eoe.nhs.uk](mailto:pressoffice@eoe.nhs.uk)

Pager 07699 727 918

Website [www.eoe.nhs.uk/strategicprojects](http://www.eoe.nhs.uk/strategicprojects)

**Notes for editors**

- Hinchingsbrooke Health Care NHS Trust, NHS Cambridgeshire and NHS East of England are working together to find a new partner to operate Huntingdonshire's Hinchingsbrooke hospital, via a unique operating franchise. This unique process proposes that the clinical and non-clinical services at Hinchingsbrooke hospital - other than where identified below - will be provided via an operating franchise agreement with an experienced healthcare provider from the NHS, independent or third sectors. The franchise is likely to last between seven to ten years. This proposal will ensure that a full range of high quality acute hospital services - including accident and emergency and maternity services - will continue to be provided for local people at Hinchingsbrooke, as agreed at the end of the public consultation process on Hinchingsbrooke in 2007. The agreement is subject to approvals.

- Hinchingsbrooke hospital, which opened in 1983, is modern and purpose-built, with 369 beds providing quality up-to-date healthcare - including accident and emergency and maternity services - for approximately 161,000 people in Huntingdon and the surrounding areas.
- The Hinchingsbrooke Next Steps project is being managed by NHS East of England's Strategic Projects Team led by Andrew MacPherson, Director of Strategic Projects. This team of experts works in partnership to develop and deliver positive change for NHS services in the east of England. Working closely with the healthcare marketplace and the stakeholders, it develops, supports and delivers transactions that drive up the quality of patient experience, safety and care, clinical excellence, public service and value for money.
- Services on the Hinchingsbrooke hospital site provided by other organisations, such as Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust, through contractual arrangements with NHS Cambridgeshire, are unaffected by this franchise offer.
- Further information about the Hinchingsbrooke Next Steps project can be found at [www.eoe.nhs.uk/strategicprojects](http://www.eoe.nhs.uk/strategicprojects) or by calling 0800 923 3001.