

# News Release

27 January 2012

## Cancer Ward plans move forward

Plans to create a dedicated ward for cancer inpatients at Dorset County Hospital are a step closer with the start of a further project to reconfigure beds.

A series of changes made over the past year aimed at making more efficient use of hospital beds and ensuring patients are treated in the most appropriate specialty area have already brought improvements. Now the second stage of that initiative will lead to the creation of a new Cancer Ward and an Integrated Assessment Unit (IAU).

Proposals currently being finalised through consultation with staff include the creation of a 14-bedded Cancer Ward to ensure patients are treated in an appropriate environment with suitably trained staff.

Other changes will see the establishment of an Integrated Assessment Unit. This will ensure emergency patients receive a rapid diagnosis and are prepared for theatre more quickly, leading to swifter treatment and reducing the time they have to stay in hospital.

As part of the project, there will be an overall reduction of 22 beds throughout the hospital, bringing efficiency savings for the organisation – but there will be no job losses as part of the changes. Some staff may be redeployed to other areas.

Staff are being consulted about the proposals through a series of meetings with a view to implementing the changes in April 2012.

The hospital's Director of Operations Patricia Miller said: "We have developed several initiatives over the last few months to reduce the length of stay for patients. This has now created the opportunity to use the vacated capacity to improve services for patients even further.

"The creation of a cancer ward will enable us to offer patients with acute oncology and haematological conditions a high quality of care in a dedicated facility.

"The expansion of our emergency medical unit will also offer patients presenting as emergencies access to rapid diagnostics. We are extremely pleased to be in a position to move forward with these fantastic developments."

**ENDS**

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