

# NHS Lothian launch a consultation on future healthcare plans

✘ NHS Lothian has today launched the public consultation into its groundbreaking vision for the future of healthcare.

The health board is asking for feedback on its major new proposals, called “Our Health, Our Care, Our Future” which have been designed to transform the current system.

Patients, staff and public from all backgrounds are being urged to have their say on the future of healthcare in Lothian and the chance to influence the services that matter most to them.

The proposals have been drafted to ensure the health board can meet the challenges ahead and continue to deliver safe, person-centred, effective and sustainable care for years to come.

Tim Davison, Chief Executive, NHS Lothian, said: “This is without doubt one of the most important projects that we will undertake and we need the opinions and feedback from the people we serve to help shape these services.

“This is an exciting time because it has given us the chance to really look at the services we provide and then make them better.

“The changes are intended to span the next decade and it is crucial that people who already use services or those who might, should all get involved in this consultation process.”

Primary care, community services and home care will be developed and a greater emphasis will be placed on early intervention and self-care under the plans.

The replacement for the Royal Hospital for Sick Children will be built, and the re-development of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital will commence, while community mental health services will be restructured. Dedicated care villages are also proposed, alongside a new community hospital for East Lothian and changes to the way Midlothian Hospital is used to provide care for older people to help prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital.

The document is due to be finalised in the autumn, but only after the views and comments from the extensive consultation process have been channelled back into the plans.

The proposals also show how extra capacity will be delivered to meet increasing demand and boost access to services, while preparing NHS Lothian for Health and Social Care integration in 2015.

And it also details the outcomes if no action was taken over the next 10 years and maps out the impact on services, beds, patient waiting times and finances.

Mr Davison said the health board must evolve in line with patients' need and demands if it is to keep pace with a soaring population, increasing rates of multiple health problems and harsher economic climates as well as grasping the opportunities around integration of health and social care.

He added: "We are proposing some bold steps to transform the way services are currently delivered to ensure they can keep up with modern-day demands and provide safe and effective care.

"There is an increasing risk that unless we fundamentally change the way we currently work that the quality of patient care will deteriorate and we will fall short of meeting the needs and expectations of the population that we are here to serve."

A summary of the main document is being distributed to interested groups and will be available across Lothian, while the full unabridged version can be accessed on the [NHS Lothian website](#).