

Press statement for immediate release

Monday 1st October

Healthwatch Rutland fully supports local Councillors' recommendation that University Hospitals of Leicester Trust and local Clinical Commissioning Groups pause their plans to reconfigure Intensive Care Units (ICU) and offer full public consultation on the plans.

University Hospitals of Leicester Trust (UHL) has plans to relocate Level 3 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds out of Leicester General Hospital.

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, at their meeting on Friday 28 September, heard representations from the local NHS to the effect that these plans were too advanced to consult with the public at this late stage.

Strong challenges to this were offered by Healthwatch Rutland Board Member Dr Janet Underwood, voicing public concern that people's views had not been properly sought or heard.

Following representations from both sides of the debate, the Joint Scrutiny Committee decided to recommend;

- a) a pause in the NHS plans to take top level ICU beds out of Leicester General Hospital and,
- b) a full public consultation on plans to reconfigure the University of Leicester Hospitals ICUs.

These recommendations are welcomed by Healthwatch Rutland.

The Interim Chair of Healthwatch Rutland, Professor William Pope said:

“The clinical arguments for the ICU reconfiguration are broadly recognised by all sides of the debate including by Healthwatch Rutland. We have a duty, however, to ensure that the public are consulted on substantial changes to the health services they receive and are allowed to give their views and make suggestions on the plans. We are optimistic that the pause recommended will allow the Clinical Commissioning Groups the opportunity to rebuild patient trust in the local NHS, by coming to the public with a focussed and effective consultation programme on the proposed changes. We are keen to help with this, and therefore welcome the Joint Scrutiny Committee's recommendations”.

ENDS

For further information on the above please contact Kate Holt, CEO Connected Together CIC. Tel 0300 002 0010 or email kate.holt@connectedtogether.co.uk

Editors Notes:

About Local Healthwatch

Healthwatch Rutland is the independent consumer champion for health and social care, representing the patient and public's voice in Rutland. It helps to shape and improve local health and social care for local people and their communities. Healthwatch Rutland is part of the Healthwatch national network, established by the Government to ensure local patients and users have a greater input to shaping and designing local services. To find out more and to join our mailing list go to www.healthwatchrutland.co.uk

About Connected Together

Connected Together Community Interest Company is a social enterprise and a partnership between the University of Northampton and Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire. It holds the Healthwatch contracts for Rutland and Northamptonshire. To find out more go to www.connectedtogether.co.uk