

Thursday 25th January 2001

PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCES £35 MILLION FOR FURTHER MODERNISATION OF A&E DEPARTMENTS

The Prime Minister today announced an additional £35 million investment into the A&E modernisation programme which began in 1998. The money will fund 47 schemes in 45 casualty departments completing large programmes of work already underway and enable further modernisation.

Secretary of State for Health, Alan Milburn said:

"The extra £35 million announced by the Prime Minister today will ensure that this, the biggest expansion and modernisation of A&E the NHS has ever seen, is fully rounded off. A total of £150 million will now have been invested into these vital services meaning better services for patients, safer working environments for staff and new ways of working within the NHS."

The £115 million invested so far into A&E modernisation has led to improvements across the service such as new assessment and observation wards, improved resuscitation facilities, specific areas for children, better links between A&E and primary care, faster access to diagnostic facilities, all benefiting staff and patients. The extra £35 million announced today will fund new schemes including:

- £348,000 to improve security and the patient environment at Lister Hospital, East & North Herts NHS Trust through additional/upgraded medical equipment, a training area, bereavement room, improved fracture clinic, digital radiology workstations and improved security for patients and staff.
- A total of £1,350,000 to develop separate adult and children's A&E facilities at Southport & Ormskirk NHS Trust. Approval has recently been given to merge and reconfigure the two Trusts resulting in a ground floor children's A&E at Ormskirk and an extension to an existing A&E department at Southport to meet additional "blue light traffic" stemming from the reconfiguration of A&E departments on two sites.
- £2,400,000 to provide better access for GP patients and allow for fewer delays in A&E at Ashford Hospital, Ashford St Peter's NHS Trust. This will be achieved by establishing a medical assessment unit as part of the Ashford "emergency treatment centre".
- £500,000 to eliminate long waits, create additional cubicles, improve general waiting and facilitate better patient flows at Bromley Hospital, Bromley NHS Trust by re-engineering the A&E department.

- £527,000 to develop modern approaches, focusing upon easier patient access to care with the aim of driving down A&E wait times at Gloucestershire Royal NHS Trust, through establishing an ambulatory care centre, increasing emergency surgical capacity, purchasing equipment to support emergency care and providing a dedicated A&E lift to theatres.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. Work is well underway in the existing 242 schemes with approximately 80% of schemes completed at the end of December. This figure is expected to rise to over 90% by the end of March.

2. Investment has led to greater use of telemedicine to link up community hospitals in rural areas with larger city centre hospitals to ensure wider access to expert medical opinion; general redesign, refurbishment and expansion, together with improvements to security and safety for hospital staff and patients. At the completion of the Modernisation Programme, every A&E department will have some form of admissions/observation/assessment unit.

3. Regional Allocations from £35 million

Northern & Yorkshire £3,011m

North West £4,853m

Trent £1,993m

West Midlands £3,928m

Eastern £3,492m

London £7,227m

South East £7,225m

South West £3,271m

In total 47 schemes will be funded at 42 Trusts.

4. Admission/Observation Unit

By the end of the programme all A&E Departments will have an admission or observation unit.

5. Numbers of Schemes:

• Total number of schemes receiving funding: 47

• By region:

Total

Northern & Yorkshire 6

North West 5

Trent 3

West Midlands 4

Eastern 11

London 8

South East 5

South West 5

6. Numbers of Trusts to receive funding

- Total numbers of Trusts to receive funding under the £35m : 42
- By region:

Total

NYRO 6
NWRO 4
TRO 3
WMRO 4
ERO 9
LRO 7
SERO 5
SWRO 4

7. Categories of Schemes:

The schemes under the third tranche break down into the following categories: (*Note: The numbers listed below exceed the total number of schemes listed above. This is because many have elements which fall into more than one category and so are listed in each:*

General Refurbishment (re-decoration/redesign) 26 schemes
Telemedicine 2 schemes
Improved Security 8 schemes
Medical Assessment Units 14 schemes
Diagnostic and other equipment 21 schemes
Improved Facilities for children 14 schemes
Primary care linked emergency facilities 4 schemes
Resuscitation Facilities 5 schemes
Expansion/Redevelopment 26 schemes

8. For more information please call Department of Health Media Centre on 020 5724.