# Press Release | 3 Dec 21

**£3m investment for new eye centre at QEH**

Today, 3 December 2021, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King’s Lynn has been awarded £3m for a new eye centre at the hospital.

The national funding allows QEH to create a new unit, called the West Norfolk Eye Centre, a dedicated Ophthalmology outpatient facility in the vacant space within the Emerson Unit (previously known as Churchill Ward) in the Fermoy building, relocating the services from their current location in the main Outpatient department.

The increased capacity that will be created with this important development and effective design of the facility, combined with more efficient ways of working – such as developing ‘One Stop’ clinics - will mean that more patients will be able to receive care and treatment more quickly. Furthermore, the new bigger facility will be able to respond to the increasing numbers of patients requiring ophthalmology services – something that is set to rise over the coming years.

Opening in Spring 2022, the facility will enable us to offer an additional 2,000 appointments and undertake 2,000 more intravitreal (IVT) injection procedures (a procedure to place medication directly in the back of the eye) each year.

Caroline Shaw CBE, Chief Executive of QEH said: “This is great news for QEH. It is another example of how we are significantly investing in modernising our hospital and in turn further improving the experience of our patients, their families and staff.”

Dr Sam Bass, Consultant Anaesthetist and Divisional Director Surgery, added: “We are looking forward to moving into the West Norfolk Eye Centre this Spring. This new facility will allow staff to work more smartly and more efficiently in new facilities, enabling more patients to be seen more quickly.”

**--ENDS—**

**Notes to editors:**

* The increased capacity that the new centre will provide will allow the expansion needed to meet future service demand
* The Ophthalmology service at QEH provides assessment, diagnosis and treatment for eye and vision related conditions including speciality services Vitreo-retinal, Medical retina, Paediatrics, Oculoplastic, Glaucoma and Cataracts
* Ophthalmology is both nationally and locally the busiest outpatient specialty, seeing nearly 10% of all outpatient appointments and performing 6% of the surgery in the UK. Nationally, it is predicted that an increase of 5-10% year on year over the next 10 years will occur in ophthalmic outpatient attendances (Royal College of Ophthalmologists, 2018)
* 24.3% of Norfolk’s population is aged 65 and over compared to a regional average of 19.7% and national average of 18.2%. This number is set to rise by 2026 to 26%
* A common cause of eyesight problems or loss is Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD). With the ageing population, the number of patients presenting to Ophthalmology with AMD will subsequently rise
* Intravitreal (IVT) injections are the fastest growing procedure in ophthalmology and their expanding use represents one of the most dynamic areas of innovation over the past decade in the treatment of eye disease.

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