# Press Release | 22 Jun 22

# Brand new West Dereham Ward opens at QEH, heralding one of the largest frailty units in the area

A brand new frailty ward opened at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King’s Lynn yesterday, following a complete overhaul and redesign of its West Dereham Ward. The comprehensive refurbishment will mean a second dementia-friendly ward for QEH, bringing the frailty team together in one area of the hospital – along with the existing West Newton Ward – in one of the largest specialist frailty units in the region.

The new West Dereham Ward will mean those with dementia or other cognitive impairments (for example memory loss, difficulty concentrating or being confused about time and place) will be cared for in a unit tailor-made for their needs.

As much as possible, the space has been designed so it feels less clinical than a regular hospital ward: it will have a ‘memory wall’ along the full length of its corridor, featuring photographs of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Lincolnshire, while a new day room will allow more social opportunities for patients and families.

And that’s not all. The ward will open out onto a new sensory garden, which is currently under development and has been specifically designed for those with cognitive impairments. Both the day room and garden will be invaluable spaces to provide patient care, as appropriate, away from their hospital bedside. Throughout the ward, bays will be colour-coded (rather than numbered) to make it easier for patients to find their way around.

Dr James Casson is a Consultant Geriatrician and Clinical Director for Integrated Care of the Older Person. He said: “We have a high proportion of patients with dementia in our local communities, and the new West Dereham Ward will hugely increase our capacity at QEH to care for people who need hospital care in the most appropriate setting. It will create a safe, secure and supportive environment for them to receive care and treatment, as well as spend time with family and friends.

“Having the added benefits of a day room and sensory garden – which will have rubberised paths specifically designed for those with cognitive impairments and feature reeds and tall grasses – is a fantastic opportunity to provide our patients and their families the very best possible care.

“We’ve recruited a significant number of consultant geriatricians and other colleagues in recent years, and this development is further evidence of us moving forward with one of the aims in our Clinical Strategy: to become a centre of excellence for frailty and stroke.”

**ENDS**

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