# Press Release | Monday 19 August

**New area to help support patients leaving hospital opens at The QEH**

A new dedicated area designed to support patients waiting to go from hospital has been opened today at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH).

The doors to the new Discharge Lounge opened this morning (Monday 19 August), welcoming patients who are ready to leave hospital as they wait to go home, or on to receive further care in the community.

This new spacious unit has been thoughtfully designed to create a larger area for patients waiting to leave hospital. The unit, which is being relocated from another area at The QEH, is staffed by registered nurses and health care assistants and is able to deliver the same level of care as a hospital ward if needed.

Currently around 100 patients a week use the QEH Discharge Lounge and this new area will increase have increased capacity of 50%. This allows teams to safely plan a patient discharge and frees beds on the Trusts wards for those who need immediate hospital care.

Wendy Askew, 76, from Castle Acre was one of the first patients to use the Discharge Lounge.

Wendy, who had been cared for at The QEH for more than a month, was going to a community care home. She said: “I have used the old discharge lounge when I was here before and this new one is excellent. It is very modern, is much bigger and more comfortable. I have been looked after as well here as if I were still on the ward.”

Paula Fuller, Matron for the Complex Discharge Planning Team, said; “We are really pleased to have moved into this new space today which has been designed to ensure patients have a safe and comfortable space to receive care whilst they wait to go onto their next destination outside the acute setting. This new unit will make a real difference to both patients and the staff that work there.

“This unit is not about discharging patients before they are ready to go home, it’s about moving patients who no longer need acute hospital care to a more appropriate setting, whether that’s home or into the community.”

Located in a new modular building, the new unit is easily accessible for transportation used to take patients to where they need to be.

Simon Illingworth, Chief Operating Officer, said: “This area will have a positive impact on flow through our hospital. Every patient who is ready to be discharged that we can get home or into community has a positive impact on other patients waiting for treatment and frees up beds on our wards for people who need acute medical care.”

**Ends. Notes to editors;** For media enquiries only, please contact Communications Team, [media.enquiries@qehkl.nhs.uk](mailto:media.enquiries@qehkl.nhs.uk) or 01553 613216. For all other enquiries, please contact QEH Switchboard on 01553 613613.