

# News release

7 December 2009

## New GP walk-in centre opens in Hereford

From next Monday, people in Hereford will be able to walk into a new health centre, without an appointment, to see a GP or nurse, seven days a week between 8am and 8pm. NHS Herefordshire, the leader for healthcare in the county, launches the new service at the ASDA Health Centre in the city on Monday 14 December.

It will be an interim arrangement until a permanent walk-in health centre is built next year, with government funding of £1.5 million.

The ASDA Health Centre will be open over the festive holidays and will give local people more choice, convenience, peace of mind and increased access to health services.

Patients will be able to use the new services whilst remaining registered with their own GP and it is anticipated that it will reduce the high workload of Hereford County Hospital's accident and emergency department. The phone number for the new service will be the same as the current number to call a GP out of hours - 0330 1239309.

The permanent new GP-led, walk in health centre will replace the temporary service at ASDA, which will run until the new facility is opened. Discussions between NHS Herefordshire and Herefordshire Hospitals NHS Trust to site permanently the new health centre at the hospital have been progressing strongly.

“When we consulted the public, there was strong support for a new, walk in health centre, which will supplement the excellent service already provided by our GPs in the county”, said Chris Bull, chief executive of NHS Herefordshire and Herefordshire Council.

The walk in health centre, which is being run by Primecare who also run Herefordshire's GP out of hours service, is likely to be used by the 20,000 people who commute to Hereford to work each day, or people who would normally go to accident and emergency for ailments that can be treated at the new centre. The extended opening hours increases access to a GP for everyone.

“We are working to make sure that people have more choice, greater convenience and responsive services that fit in with today's busy lifestyles and needs”, added Chris Bull.

If successful, the new hospital site will supersede a planning application to place the centre within the grounds of the Stonebow Unit, which is situated very close to the county hospital.

**Ends**