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PRESS RELEASE

Innovative new clinical centre on the Fylde set to revolutionise patient care

PATIENT care across the Fylde Coast is set to be revolutionised with the building of a pioneering Clinical Research Centre; the first of its size in the area.

The Centre, which is to be based at Blackpool Victoria Hospital and part of Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, is set to be built as of next week and will be completed by the end of February 2012.

Two years in the planning, the Centre will improve research facilities for the Fylde Coast and beyond and means better health outcomes for patients in the future.

Research and Development Manager, Michelle Stephens said: "We're really grateful to Blue Skies Hospitals Fund which is providing the capital element for the build. They are giving us £168,000 towards the project which is a fantastic amount of money.

"The refurbishment will begin on the old Ward 9 to convert it into our Clinical Research Centre and will include four treatment rooms, a patient waiting area and offices for the research nurses, who are currently scattered across the Trust site. The Centre will bring the research team, equipment and storage together in to one place.

"Research has expanded within the NHS over the last five years and there has been lots of investment in research staff within the Trust. Last year as a Trust we recruited 1917 patients into research studies so it's really important to us to build on this work and the new Centre will help us to do so.

"By having the Centre we can offer help to outside organisations and parties and this will be good for partnership working and to generate income. We will also be in the running to work on trials and projects which we couldn't have done previously which is tremendously exciting.

"This is the first Clinical Research Centre in Lancashire and Cumbria on this scale. The hope is to undertake more studies to help the people of the Fylde Coast and beyond and to bring new treatment to them and their families. We want to take on research in new areas which we haven't been able to do

before. Research is key to testing new treatment for patients for the future. In the last 100 years medicine has changed so much and yet there is still a lot we don't know.

"I'm so excited for the new build to be complete, it feels like it has taken a long time to make it happen. After two years it finally feels like its going to happen and the whole team is really excited. The research nurses have been involved from the beginning and they can't wait to be in one location as it will make life a lot easier and will be much better for the patients. We are also thrilled that the centre will be opened by a senior director from the Department of Health."

Michelle who has been at the Trust for three years continued: "My job is very rewarding, working behind the scenes for patient care. Research makes a huge impact on patient care and outcomes and this Centre will enhance this work and hopefully produce outcomes which will influence healthcare in the future for the better."



PIC: Research and Development Manager, Michelle Stephens looks at plans for the new unit.

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