

# Press Release

## Ribbon cut on countywide Stroke Rehab Centre in Evesham

A new rehabilitation centre supporting patients from across Worcestershire recovering from a stroke was officially opened at an event on Friday (Oct 12<sup>th</sup>)

The Worcestershire Stroke Rehabilitation Centre is based at Evesham Community Hospital and cares for patients from across the county who are recovering from a stroke. Typically patients will be admitted to the centre after receiving initial treatment at the Worcestershire Royal Hospital.

Despite supporting patients since April 2017 the Centre, which is run by Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust, has undergone a refurbishment to ensure the environment and facilities are upgraded and designed to provide the best short-term rehabilitation for patients before they are well enough to continue their care at home. The work, which was supported by generous donations from the hospital's League of Friends, was recently completed and the 32-bed centre was officially opened by local MP Nigel Huddleston who was joined by staff, current and past patients and Trust Chief Executive Sarah Dugan.

**Nigel Huddleston MP said:** *"It was a real honour to cut the ribbon and unveil a plaque to mark this important occasion. This stroke centre does an incredible job in helping patients find a way forward at a most vulnerable and critical time of their lives. For them and their families having this sort of help and rehabilitation is vital. The commitment of the staff and the stories I heard from patients at the opening was both impressive and heart-warming."*

The Centre is supported by the local branch of the Stroke Association and Worcestershire Association of Carers who work with the staff to help support patients and their carers in preparing them for returning home. Patients are benefiting from shorter lengths of stay which means they are likely to return home within just a few weeks. They will then likely be supported by the Community Stroke Team who provide care in the patient's home.

**Patient Earl Lambrechkt**, who is from Kidderminster and has been cared for at the centre, joined staff at the opening. **He said:** *"The care I have received from everyone has been unbelievable from the nurses, the physios right through to the cleaners everyone has been so good and so supportive. I am looking forward to continuing my recovery; I want to get walking again so I can raise money for the team here as they have made such a difference to*

*me. I also want to get back on the Golf course and working with the community stroke team I am determined to get there.”*

**Shirley Hodgetts, Matron at Evesham Community Hospital, said:** *“The team at the hospital have worked incredibly hard over the last 18 months to provide really excellent services to support patients recovering from a stroke. Before this the wards were general nursing wards so we have provided additional training for staff to ensure they deliver specialist care to stroke patients and their families. The staff have embraced this change from day one and we are delighted to see real improvements in the stroke rehabilitation service we can provide to patients right across Worcestershire.”*

Previously the 32 stroke rehabilitation beds were spread across three sites; in Evesham, Worcester and Bromsgrove but it was proving challenging securing the staff to consistently cover each site fully, all of the time. Following engagement with patients, carers and staff the decision was taken to consolidate the 32 beds on one site in Evesham.

Speaking at the official opening, **Sarah Dugan, Chief Executive at the Health and Care NHS Trust**, praised the team at Evesham Community Hospital for adapting to providing specialist stroke rehabilitation, and said the decision to open the countywide service here was further confirmation of the Trust’s commitment to a thriving local hospital in the town.

**She added:** *“A stroke is a life-changing illness but it is evident from speaking to staff here that there is a real recovery ethos on the wards, and that patients are supported to meet challenges with courage and optimism. It is great to hear so many heart-warming stories of patients making real progress during their time at the centre. Patients I speak to are also so complimentary about the care and treatment they receive and while we want their stay with us to be short, it is great that they are building up great partnerships with staff and are working side by side to support their recovery.”*

#### **Notes to Editors:**



We have produced a short video featuring **Brendan Young, Public/Patient Voice for Stroke in Worcestershire** talking about the **Worcestershire Stroke Rehabilitation Centre**. Feel free to use this on your website or social media channels -

<https://youtu.be/ObBz1VTPsc>

**-Ends-**

#### **Notes to Editors:**

Sarah Dugan, Chief Executive, joins matron Karen Young and colleagues to unveil the new x-ray machines at Evesham Community Hospital