

News Release



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**
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20 May 2009 - Major milestone for new South West acute hospital

Plans for the new acute hospital outside Enniskillen costing approximately £270million took a major step forward today with the formal signing of the contract with consortium, Northern Ireland Health Group.

Construction work is now beginning on site to ensure the hospital is completed as planned by 2012.

At least 180 new jobs will be created and a further 670 jobs will be sustained as part of this major construction project. In addition, there will be 32 trade apprenticeships and seven university placements. A social and economic regeneration plan has been put in place which will help maximise opportunities for the local workforce.

Welcoming the signing of the contracts between the Western Health and Social Care Trust and the Northern Ireland Health Group, Health Minister, Michael McGimpsey said: "This is a major step in the process of bringing a new state of the art hospital to the people of the South West.

"We are now entering the phase where the designs will become a reality and we will begin to see the new hospital take shape over the coming months with work beginning on site immediately."

A range of acute services will be provided at the new hospital for the people of the south west which will be integral to the Western Trust's network of Acute Services. These will include 24/7 Accident and Emergency services; critical care services; inpatient medicine; major and emergency surgery; consultant-led maternity services; paediatric services; day case surgery; a comprehensive range of diagnostics, including radiology and laboratory tests and a comprehensive range of outpatient services.

The Minister continued: "Considering the complexities associated with this process and the ongoing economic difficulties, it is extremely satisfying to see the efforts of everyone involved coming to this key stage.

"With the current economic climate and the downturn in the construction industry, it is important to note that this project will provide 850 jobs, of which 180 will be new jobs, during the construction of the hospital. The creation of new jobs is a significant boost for the local economy particularly when so many people are losing their jobs."

Enabling works on the site were completed in August 2008 and included the provision of an access road for the NI Fire and Rescue Service, re-shaping the ground for the new buildings and works at the entrance for a new access roundabout.

The Western Trust Chairman, Gerard Guckian said: "This is a momentous day for both the Western Trust and the people that it serves. We have reached the end of long and complex

process and now look forward, with great anticipation, to seeing the new hospital take shape.

He added: "I must thank all of those involved in getting to this stage. I am well aware of the time and effort put in by staff and all of the key stakeholders, without whom this day may not have been possible. Their work does not stop here. Indeed, we must now carefully manage the construction phase of the development, deliver it on time and to the high quality standards that we have set for our New Acute Hospital."

Notes to Editors:

Northern Ireland Health Group consortium has four stakeholders: FCC Construction SA, Allied Irish Bank Plc., Interserve Investments & P Elliott & Co.

Northern Ireland Health Group has put in place the following funding arrangements for the New Acute Hospital. The European Investment Bank shall provide 50% of the funding with the NordLB, Bank of Ireland and Barclays combining to provide the remaining 50%.

Full Planning Approval for the scheme was received in December 2008.

The New Acute Hospital for the South West is part of the Investment Strategy which is being delivered in Northern Ireland. It is led by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS), and supported by the Strategic Investment Board Ltd (SIB). For more information on SIB visit the [SIB website](#).

DHSSPS press enquiries to the DHSSPS press office on 029 9052 0575. Out of office hours contact the Duty Press Officer via pager number 076 9971 5440 and your call will be returned.

Western HSC Trust press enquiries to Western Health and Social Care Trust Communications Office on 028 7161 1188 / 028 7161 1429 or to Anita McConnell on 07841 469476.