

**Western Trust welcomes Minister's announcement on investment
Wednesday 10th December 2008**

The Chairman of the Western Health and Social Care Trust Gerard Guckian has welcomed the announcement of investment in health and social care for the West by Health Minister Michael McGimpsey when he visited Omagh and Enniskillen on Wednesday, December 10.

Mr Guckian said: "The Western Trust will work in partnership with the Department of Health to provide the best possible health and social care for the population of the West.

"The Department's planned investment will allow for the commencement of the New Local Enhanced hospital in Omagh, the commencement of the New Acute hospital in Enniskillen and the continued development of the Tower Block at Altnagelvin Area Hospital and the Radiotherapy Centre as well as developments for community-based facilities, for example, the Lisnaskea Health and Care Centre."

Mr Guckian then welcomed the Health Minister to launch the designs of the New Acute Hospital for the South West to be built on the outskirts of Enniskillen. The launch provided a showcase of the architect's plans of images revealing what the new state-of-the-art facility will look like when it opens in 2012. The new hospital, which will be the first in Northern Ireland with 100% single en-suite rooms, has been designed by selected tenderer, Northern Ireland Health Group in close consultation with hospital staff and local community representatives.

Inviting the Minister to examine the new design, Trust Chairman Gerard Guckian explained, 'The Western Trust is delighted to reveal the design of our New Acute Hospital to the Health Minister. The design is the result of two years detailed planning during which we examined in detail what would be required from a 21st century healthcare facility to offer the best possible care to our patients. As today's launch demonstrates this has been time well spent. By considering the needs of the patient on each visit through the new hospital, we have designed a truly patient focused facility, with the very latest treatment and diagnostic services. The New Acute Hospital for the South West is raising the benchmark and providing a leap forward in addressing key areas such as infection control and maintaining patient privacy, dignity and choice. This learning has

also been transferred to the design of the new Omagh Hospital Complex which is progressing with pace to exemplar standards. Staff here in the Western Trust are very much looking forward to looking after patients in these new facilities that they have helped to design.'

The next stage for the New Acute Hospital project involves the beginning of the construction period. Full planning permission is expected early in the New Year, with construction starting in the early summer.

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NOTES:

Following the signing of the Preferred Bidder letter on the 16th September 2008, Northern Ireland Health Group (NIHG) was appointed Preferred Bidder for the New Acute Hospital for the South West. The Minister announced the Preferred Bidder on 18th September.

The Northern Ireland Health Group consortium has 4 stakeholders: FCC Construction SA, Allied Irish Bank, Interserve Investments & P Elliott & Co.