

**Local Opportunities from Investment in New Acute Hospital.**

The Western Health & Social Care Trust is working with the Selected Tenderer for the New Acute Hospital for the South West, Northern Ireland Health Group, to bring the maximum benefit to the local economy from the £267 million investment in the new hospital. A Working Group has been established to promote the employment and training opportunities that the project will offer when on-site works begin in the Spring 2009. The Working Group includes the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL), South West College, Invest Northern Ireland, and the Construction Industry Training Board which are working in partnership with the Trust, Northern Ireland Health Group and the Construction Joint Venture, FCC Elliott Healthcare.

The construction of the New Acute Hospital will require a workforce of approximately 850 (Full Time Equivalents) and it is expected that as many as 200 new jobs could be created. Trust's Deputy Chief Executive Joe Lusby outlined the benefits that this will bring to the South West economy. He said, 'The Western Trust is focused on working in partnership with regional development agencies to maximize this substantial investment in health infrastructure. A key part of this involves creating employment and developing the local supply chain. We are delighted that as many as 200 new construction jobs could be created and our local Job and Benefits offices will begin to advertise the first tranche of job vacancies from February 2009. This will begin a recruitment drive that will run through to the summer of 2010. With the help of our partners on the Working Group, we will also work to provide training and support to suitable local firms to prepare for the tendering process for the project.'

Main contactor, FCC Elliott Healthcare will be inviting expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced firms for a number of contracts required from 2009 to 2012. A programme is currently being finalized to promote these opportunities as widely as possible throughout the local area. Part of this programme will include an opportunity for potential suppliers to 'Meet the Buyer' and FCC Elliott will host a series of open mornings at the Enniskillen and Omagh campuses of South West College in March. These Open

Mornings shall take place from 9AM to 1PM on 13<sup>th</sup> March at the Omagh Campus and on 20<sup>th</sup> at the Enniskillen Campus.

South West College is also working with FCC Elliott Healthcare, the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and Invest Northern Ireland (INI) to develop a training programme that will help suitable local firms prepare for the sub-contractor tendering process. Head of Curriculum and Business Development at the college, Malachy McAleer said, "The South West College is delighted to be in a position to add value to this pivotal project for the South West, which is a key part of the College's drive to support local industry. We are working with the Construction Industry Board to offer assistance to companies who have the knowledge and skills to become sub-contractors to FCC Elliott, but who need help with the tendering process for a large scale project like the New Acute Hospital. We plan to roll out a training programme from the Spring 2009, corresponding with the timing of the advertisement of these contracts.'

Based on the current project timetable, the construction phase for the New Acute Hospital for the South West is planned to begin the Spring of 2009, and completed in Spring 2012. This is subject to the approval of the Full Business Case for the project by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

**ENDS**

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**NOTES:**

Following the signing of the Preferred Bidder letter on the 16<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> September.

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



**Caption**

Members of the SERP Employment and Supply Chain Working Group for the New Acute Hospital for the South West: *Front Row (L to R):* Seamus O'Neill, Department of Education & Learning (DEL), Jobs & Benefits Office; Brian Furlong, Northern Ireland Health Group (NIHG); Maria Hackett, Southwest College. *Back Row (L to R):* Brian McAleer, New Hospitals for the South West, Western Health & Social Care Trust; Therese Hogg, NIHG; Tony McCusker, NIHG; Cyril Keegan, FCC Elliott Healthcare; Darragh Elliott, FCC Elliott Healthcare; Lorna Thompson, DEL.