



## **Coventry Local Involvement Network (LINK) Consultation response:**

### **1 Introduction**

Coventry local Involvement Network is an independent network of local people and voluntary and community groups working for the improvement of NHS and adult social care services.

Coventry LINK's Hospital Services Working group have developed this consultation response and this has been agreed by the LINK's Steering Group.

Coventry LINK knows that hospital car parking arrangements in Coventry are a very significant issue for local people. This came out strongly through 6 months of community outreach and consultation carried out by LINK project officers last year. It is also an issue which is regularly raised via NHS Coventry engagement sessions for members of the public.

Therefore Coventry LINK was keen to respond to this consultation.

### **2 Comments on the consultation**

2.1 In Coventry there is a PFI funded hospital on the outskirts of the City. The location of the hospital impacts on accessibility and on car use. Car parking charges are perceived to be too high and the way they are operated to be unhelpful and rigid.

For any change to take place to benefit local people in Coventry there would need to be a renegotiation of local contracts related to the Private Finance Initiative.

We therefore request that as part of Department of Health work to address car parking charges that the issues of PFI hospital such as ours are explicitly addressed through direction to the necessary parties that contracts must be varied.

2.2 Coventry LINK disagrees with the starting point for the proposals for mitigating charges. We feel that the best approach would be for hospitals to identify how much it costs to run their car parks and to set charges in order to raise the money needed to cover these costs rather than for hospitals or PFI companies to raise a profit.

### **2.3 Preferences on the provision of free or concessionary parking on NHS premises**

Of the available options we would support the options of

- Providing free car parking for visitors to inpatients who have hospital stays of greater than (for example) 3 or more nights;

and

- Providing free car parking for outpatients with, for example, more than 3 appointments in a single course of treatment;

However, we are concerned about the workability of the administration of these approaches and the costs which will be associated with administration. We think that concerns about this will hinder the implementation by Trusts, cause confusion for patients and could actually push up charges for others.

Car parking should be not for profit and should never be subsidised for some if it is then a detriment to the care given.

In addition we would like to see the for half an hour free parking for all so that those making quick trips to hospital sites (for example to pick up equipment) do not have to pay a heavy charge.

### **2.4 If free parking for patients/visitors, was to be offered after a minimum stay, what number of days is a fair and affordable threshold after which parking should be free?**

5 Days

### **2.5 If free parking for regular outpatients, was to be offered what number of appointments per episode of care is a fair and affordable threshold after which parking should be free?**

5 appointments that have been attended. These may have been for a variety of different services.

### **2.6 Other comments**

We feel that the best approach would be for hospital to identify how much it cost to run their car parks and to set charges in order to raise the money needed to cover costs rather than for hospital of PFI companies to raise a profit.

All parking should be consistent and fair for all. This should not be for profit, and it would be unfair for staff/ some patients to subsidise others' parking

The issues of car parking costs at PFI Hospitals being governed by contract arrangements must be pro-actively addressed by the Department of health so that a two tier system does not operate between hospitals with patients in Coventry being potentially some of the losers.

Staff should be guaranteed a space but still have a fee to pay.

Public transport needs to be run on a 24 hourly basis 7 days a week

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On behalf of Coventry LINK

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