

## PRESS RELEASE

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### A FANTASTIC YEAR FOR A SERVICE WHICH HELPS PEOPLE GET CARE CLOSER TO HOME

A service to give GPs advice from hospital specialists across the Morecambe Bay area has resulted in more than 1500 people being cared for closer to home over the past year.

The service 'Advice and Guidance' offers the opportunity for GPs across Morecambe Bay to hold a secure electronic 'conversation' with a hospital specialist to obtain real time advice about a patient's condition. This can often enable a patient to be managed under the care of their local GP.

From the 1st December 2015 there were a total of 4548 conversations using Advice and Guidance which resulted in 1590 outpatient appointments avoided. Previously these patients would have been referred to hospital for an outpatient appointment.

Dr George Dingle, a GP in the Morecambe Bay area said:

"It has been a very productive and exciting year for Advice and Guidance which has seen the service being introduced within more and more specialities including piloting the system within dermatology. This pilot allows GPs in Garstang practices to obtain remote specialist advice about our patient's skin rashes and lesions, and with patient consent we can securely send images to specialists so that our patients can receive even more specialised advice without the need to travel to hospital."

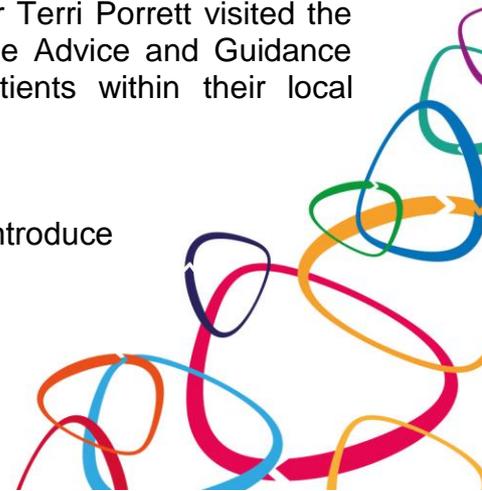
Throughout the year Advice and Guidance has been showcased nationally at a variety of different events including:

- An NHS Digital E-referral forum
- The national Patient First conference
- A national Kings Fund event in London

Additionally, when NHS Writer and Commentator Roy Lilley, and Dr Terri Porrett visited the Morecambe Bay area they experienced a live demonstration of the Advice and Guidance service and learnt how it is helping GPs to care for their patients within their local communities.

Dr George Dingle said:

"The year ahead promises to be just as busy as 2016 as we plan to introduce



Advice and Guidance into even more specialties. We are also looking to extend the service to link up nurses in primary care with those in secondary care specialties to improve communication around our patients' with chronic illnesses.

“During 2017 we hope to be able to share the system across other parts of Lancashire and possibly beyond!”

The Advice and Guidance service was introduced as a pilot in North Lancashire in 2014 and has now expanded to cover 18 health specialties across the Morecambe Bay area.

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#### **Notes to editors:**

1. For further information about Better Care Together, please contact the communications team on 01524 518638 or by email as indicated above.
2. Better Care Together is a partnership of eleven organisations, including Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust, University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust, Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, the North West Ambulance Service, Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Lancashire North Clinical Commissioning Group and the two Local Authorities: Cumbria County Council and Lancashire County Council and two GP Provider Federations: North Lancashire Medical Group and South Cumbria Primary Care Collaborative working together in partnership.
3. Clinical leaders from across all organisations have designed a new clinical model of care for Morecambe Bay, through a series of design workshops and clinical. The new care models have been strongly influenced by the wide ranging engagement with stakeholders which has taken place over the past two years.

