Introduction
Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust is proposing to reorganise its older people mental health inpatient services.

Over the past few years, the use of our inpatient beds has reduced considerably as more people are cared for in their own homes, supported by an increased level of resource in our community older people mental health services. This has meant that our older people inpatient wards frequently have empty beds – we calculate that the average occupancy rate is now only around 70% and, on any day, we have the equivalent of a ward of empty beds across the trust.

This gives us an opportunity both to improve the quality of care we offer and to make more effective use of resources.

The proposal
We are proposing to reorganise our services to create a centre of excellence in the care of people with dementia at the Woodlands Unit, Queen Mary’s Hospital, Sidcup, and two further specialist wards for older people with other mental health problems at Green Parks House, Princess Royal University Hospital, Bromley and at Oxleas House, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Greenwich. In this process, the overall number of beds will be reduced to meet the lower level of demand.

Benefits
The changes will mean that some patients and carers will have to travel further to receive inpatient care but a voluntary driver scheme to enable carers who are unable to easily make the journey is being launched. There will also be the following benefits:

- Inpatient services will be more specialised and deliver better outcomes and patient satisfaction;
- Men and women will be cared for in separate accommodation to ensure safety, privacy and dignity;
- The staff skill mix will be enhanced to ensure full input from team members with different professional backgrounds;
- We will improve the provision of therapeutic groups and activities on the wards
- A new post will take responsibility for ensuring a smooth pathway for patients from admission through to discharge;
- All patients will have a private bedroom, many with ensuite facilities.
Involving people in our plans

We will be working with patients and their families, our governors, members and partner organisations to ensure that this development takes place smoothly and that the changes deliver inpatient services in the way patients want.

We would like feedback on how inpatient services can be improved and what people would like to have in the new wards. We will be holding discussions on the wards and with patient and carer groups.

For further information, please contact Estelle Frost, Director Older People Mental Health, on: 020 8301 9430.