

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2014

**Think twice before coming to Russells Hall Hospital's A&E**

Patients are asked to think twice before turning up at the Accident and Emergency Department at Russells Hall Hospital unless they are facing a life threatening condition.

Today, Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2014, the hospital is experiencing unprecedented pressure on its emergency services: unless patients have a genuine emergency or have a life threatening condition, they are asked to go to their walk in centre, GP or visit their local pharmacist.

"We are at level four capacity which means we have extreme pressure on our services, and so patients who come to our A&E department will have a very long wait," said chief executive Paula Clark. "We would urge patients to think twice before using the emergency services at Russells Hall Hospital."

\*\*\*ENDS\*\*\*

**For more information, please call Jackie Dietrich, Communications Manager for The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust on (01384) 244403**

**UPDATE**

COMMENT FROM PAULA CLARK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE FOR THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

The Trust has declared a major internal incident which means we are seeking the help of our partners to manage the situation. This is the first time in almost four years that the Trust has declared a major internal incident because of our capacity to manage emergency patients.

We do not have staffing issues at the hospital. We have been experiencing high levels of emergency admissions since the middle of December 2013 and the capacity issues have come to a head today.

As well as asking patients to only come to A&E if they are facing life threatening conditions, to help us manage the situation, we have asked West Midlands Ambulance Service to divert ambulances away from Russells Hall Hospital.

We have asked the local authority to help us discharge additional patients to nursing homes and care homes, more than they would ordinarily do.

We have cancelled outpatient clinics and postponed planned operating lists to get as many medical staff as possible to wards to manage the safe discharge of patients.

Emergency patients may have to wait many hours to be admitted to hospital. We are managing the situation from minute to minute and will keep patients informed.

\*\*\*ENDS\*\*\*

## **UPDATE**

COMMENT FROM PAULA CLARK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE FOR THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

We would like to thank our patients and partners across the health economy for helping us manage the pressures placed upon our Accident and Emergency Department today.

The capacity situation at Russells Hall Hospital remains fragile but we have been able to de-escalate the situation.

\*\*\*ENDS\*\*\*