

NEW FACILITY ON HOSPITAL SITE WILL HOUSE £5M OF EQUIPMENT



Work starts on new medical testing centre

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WORK has started on creating a state-of-the-art medical testing centre at Colchester General Hospital.

The multi-million pound two-storey facility will include new equipment for three specialised diagnostic services - with a key part being cancer testing.

It is expected its first patients will be seen in spring next year.

Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust is working on the development in partnership with Alliance Medical Ltd.

A ground breaking ceremony took place. Hospital trust chairman David White said: "Modern diagnostic imaging services are critical for the trust to deliver timely, high-quality care to our patients."

"This development will significantly improve facilities in Colchester for the three key services."

The diagnostic imaging centre, which will be located near the emergency department will provide:

■ Magnetic Resonance Imaging - MRI scanning - used in the diagnosis of a range of conditions.

The new building will have capacity for three MRI scanners, replacing the current single fixed scanner and a mobile scanner.

■ Positron Emission Tomography - PET scanning - used mainly in the diagnosis of cancer. A PET-CT scanner

■ Spade work - David White, of Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust, and Russell Trent from Alliance Medical Partnership



will be available throughout the week in the new centre, replacing the mobile unit which currently visits the hospital for one to two days a week.

■ Nuclear Medicine services, which use gamma ray technologies to investigate a range of medical conditions including cancer and heart disease. The new nuclear medicine department will have two main scanning rooms, containing a Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography (SPECT) scanner and a gamma camera, which will replace the current services at Essex County Hospital and Colchester General Hospital.

The trust will hire the scanning equipment for patient use while Alliance Medical will pay for the construction costs and equipment.

It won't disclose a total cost for the centre, but the equipment costs alone are in the region of £5million.

The PET-CT scanner will also be used by patients from the Ipswich and Chelmsford areas.

One of the new MRI scanners will be a wide-bore scanner, which will mean that larger patients and patients with claustrophobia will for the first time be able to have scans in Colchester.

■ New era in tests for patients - the groundbreaking ceremony for the new diagnostics centre

Modern diagnostic imaging services are critical for the trust to deliver timely high quality care to our patients

Half term hols fun

CLACTON'S Coastal Community Centre is staging fun activities for youngsters over the half-term holidays.

Free events at the Pathfields Road centre include cooking, crafts and prize bingo.

The centre is open on weekdays from 9am to 5pm. Places are limited so should be booked on 01255 420707.

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