

**PRIMARY CARE TRUST CONSULTATION**  
**PROPOSALS IN LEICESTER**

**RESPONSE OF LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL**

The City Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Primary Care Trust (PCT) proposals for Leicester. "Better Health for All" is one of the core priorities for the City's Community Plan. As such, health is of key importance to many aspects of the City Council's agenda and it is essential to identify the right strategic framework for developing effective partnerships to improve health throughout the City for all service users. It is of particular importance to the Council's social justice commitment to reduce health inequalities across the City and to support the most deprived areas.

After careful consideration of the consultation papers and discussions with the Leicestershire Health Authority, the City Council has concluded that the best interests of the City in the long term would be served by establishing one PCT for the following reasons:-

1. The City's Unitary Council and its Health Action Zone take a coherent view of the City's strategic needs and opportunities. A single PCT should give further impetus to this approach to developing patient-focused services.
2. There are latent divisions which need to be reconciled in the City between white and ethnic minority populations, between more prosperous and more deprived areas and between well-established major surgeries and single GP operations. Separate PCTs in the East and West may not be best placed to address these issues.
3. The National Plan for the NHS, published since the launch of the PCT consultation documents, proposes introducing Care Trusts which combine primary health care and social care services for older people. The reversion to former County Council Social Services divisions in the City along East/West lines and the complications for the current Social Services Authority in splitting City services would be a retrogressive step. The National Plan gives us an important opportunity to modernise the health and social care interface across the whole City.
4. Economies of scale in establishing one set of governance, management and administrative arrangements permit the maximum investment of scarce resources in front line health care. The strength of arguments in favour of a single PCT means that there will inevitably be pressure to review the position at the time when Care Trusts were being launched if two PCTs had been established. Additional costs and instability at that time would be avoided by setting up one PCT from the outset.

5. Leicester intends to play a major role in regional and national debates on health and social services, and this would best be facilitated by a single PCT speaking with one voice for City health needs.

The City Council strongly commends these considerations and believes a major step forward would be achieved for patients and partners alike by establishing a single PCT for the City for the next decade and beyond. If one PCT was to be approved, careful attention would be needed to develop sensitive local arrangements in support of GPs.

The City Council believes it is vital that a clear decision is made as soon as possible to provide direction and to generate early synergies with the Health Action Zone. If the decision was taken to establish two PCTs, careful attention would be needed to develop, wherever possible, single City-wide management arrangements to minimise polarisation and diseconomies. Furthermore, it should be acknowledged that a review of the two PCTs would become necessary in the event of Care Trust proposals emerging.

The City Council remains committed to active support and collaboration with all Health partners and will play a full part in establishing dynamic PCT arrangements and better health care for the people of Leicester.

CX/RG  
07.09.00.