

## South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group

16 May 2016

### Media release



Pictured: Ken Bremner, CEO City Hospitals Sunderland NHSFT (left) and Steve Williamson, CEO South Tyneside NHSFT

### Trusts sign partnership agreement

Board members from two of the region's Foundation Trusts have now officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding which formally secures a commitment for closer working.

City Hospitals Sunderland and South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trusts announced in late February their intention to form an alliance to ensure that the local communities they serve will continue to receive high quality and sustainable hospital and community health services in the future. The formal signing of this Memorandum of Understanding by the Chief Executives of both Foundation Trusts provides the framework for the programme of reconfiguration being considered under the partnership working of the South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group<sup>1</sup>.

The demand and financial pressures facing the NHS are unprecedented and whilst the South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group appreciates the importance and value of having a local hospital providing a range of emergency and planned services, it recognises the urgent need to rebalance services across South Tyneside and Sunderland as it is no longer sustainable for either Foundation Trust to duplicate the provision of services in each location.

Ken Bremner, Chief Executive of City Hospitals Sunderland and the South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group said "NHS organisations across the whole country are undertaking some form of transformation, many working in new partnerships to secure the sustainability of services. The signing of this document signals the formal start of our commitment to transform the way services are delivered in South Tyneside and Sunderland with our shared vision of delivering nationally recognised high quality, safe, cost effective, sustainable healthcare."



In the first twelve months, South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group will work together using the collective expertise available to transform stroke, trauma, emergency surgical and obstetric and gynaecological services. By looking at how things can be done differently it aims to bring about improvements in quality, safety, experience and efficiency. The work will take into account any national reviews which may be underway in any of these specialties

Steve Williamson, Chief Executive of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust said: "I believe that our alliance is an innovative and very positive approach as both of our Foundation Trusts work together in collaboration to respond to the unprecedented demand and financial challenge facing our health services."

[ENDS]

**Contact:** Andrea Hetherington ([andrea.hetherington@chsft.nhs.uk](mailto:andrea.hetherington@chsft.nhs.uk))  
0191 569 9110

### Notes to Editors

<sup>1</sup> South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group – The Group was referred to as South of Tyne Healthcare Group in its original press release. The former name was a 'working title' and following engagement with stakeholders the name has been confirmed as South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group to clearly reflect the geographical locations of the two Foundation Trusts.

Both Trusts will continue to function as statutory NHS Foundation Trusts, accountable to their local communities through their Governors. Sitting aside the two FTs, the South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group Board and Executive Team comprising, Non-Executives, Executives and leading clinicians from both Trusts, will govern the transformation and partnership working.