



PRESS RELEASE

11 April 2010

CROSS BORDER HOSPITAL SERVICE TACKLING WAITING LISTS

The Western Trust's Erne Hospital in Co. Fermanagh is the centre for an innovative cross border service which is treating patients from both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The service began in 2010 with funding from the European Union's INTERREG IVA programme which was secured by Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT), the cross border health and social care partnership. Already 156 patients requiring treatment for blood vessel or 'Vascular' conditions have attended clinics and received surgery in the Erne Hospital. This includes patients from the Western, Northern and Southern Trusts areas in Northern Ireland, in addition to patients from the HSE West counties of Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim.

Joe Lusby, Deputy Chief Executive for the Western Trust commented on the service expansion said: "This cross border partnership has allowed us to expand and enhance our Vascular service and has brought benefits to both Northern Ireland patients in the Western Trust area and to people living in the HSE West counties adjoining the Trust. We now have a larger and more sustainable service. We have demonstrated that by working together on a cross border basis we can provide better access to high quality Vascular services for patients living in the more rural border area here in the West."

Sean Murphy, General Manager, Letterkenny General Hospital welcomed the benefits this new service is bringing to patients in the HSE West area. He said "we are delighted to be working in close partnership with our near neighbours in the Western Trust so that we can offer our patients access to high quality services. We have been able to use this welcome additional EU INTERREG IVA investment to reduce our Vascular waiting lists and to collaborate with well established services, next door to us, in the Western Trust hospital in Fermanagh. We have received very positive feedback from patients to date."

Speaking on behalf of the EU funder, Eimear Murphy, Programme Manager with the SEUPB said: "I recently had the opportunity to see at first hand this cross border hospital service in action and have been greatly impressed by the work developed by all those involved in the Vascular service in the Erne Hospital. I was also delighted to meet patients from both sides of the border and hear about the difference this project is making to their lives. The project brings to life the principles of the EU's INTERREG IVA Programme which aims to support better access to services in order to improve the



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quality of life of those living in the eligible area, namely through the promotion of enhanced co-operation between public bodies and other partners on a cross-border basis."

Mr Mark Grannell is the Consultant Vascular Surgeon at the Erne Hospital in Co. Fermanagh. The cross border Vascular service will be reviewed in 2013 after the EU funding period ends with a view to continuing the service in the longer term.

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Notes to Editor:

INTERREG IVA

The Special EU Programmes Body is a North/South Implementation Body sponsored by the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland and the Department of Finance in Ireland. It is responsible for managing two EU structural funds Programmes PEACE III and INTERREG IV designed to enhance cross-border co-operation, promote reconciliation and create a more peaceful and prosperous society. The Programmes operate within a clearly defined area including Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland.

The INTERREG IVA 2007-2013 Programme, funded through the European Regional Development Fund, is worth €256 million and aims to address the economic and social problems which result from the existence of borders. It has two distinct priority measures to create co-operation for a more prosperous and sustainable cross-border region.

For more information on the SEUPB please visit www.seupb.eu