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## Media Release

Friday, 25 August 2017

# HIGHBRIDGE MEDICAL CENTRE MAKES SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS TO HEALTHCARE SERVICES

A recent inspection from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) at Highbridge Medical Centre has recognised the huge improvements made to the healthcare services provided for Highbridge and the surrounding community.

Highbridge Medical Centre had previously been in 'Special Measures' after receiving two 'Inadequate' ratings during 2015 and 2016 under a previous provider. In April 2017 Highbridge Medical Centre integrated with Symphony Healthcare Services (SHS), a new NHS primary healthcare organisation.

The inspection report identified that the practice was 'good' in three out of five areas delivering a well-led, caring and responsive healthcare service, but required more improvement under the 'safe and effective service' areas.

The centre's medical team were praised for their commitment and enthusiasm in making positive improvements to patient services. Inspection teams also noted the positive feedback received from patients and a dramatic change in leadership from the central support team from Symphony Healthcare Services.

Stan Howlett, Chair of the Patient Participation Group at the medical centre said today "I have read the full report a couple of times and I am really delighted that the improvements made have been recognised.

As a patient, I am already impressed with the way everyone at the practice has been embracing a different way of working and delivering a better experience to the patients; from initial contact with the reception staff to the care received by doctors and healthcare teams. I really think it's a much happier place to visit, with a cleaner, smarter, looking environment"

Dr Harvey Sampson, Associate Medical Director and Clinical Lead at the medical centre agreed with the report findings; "We are delighted that the recent inspection has highlighted the huge progress that has already been made at the practice; through the hard work and enthusiasm of the teams here in Highbridge and with the support of our central team. However, we also recognise that there is continuing hard work to be done in order to develop and sustain the services for the future.

I would also like to thank the community, our patients and our Patient Participation Group for their ongoing support and feedback, helping us to develop and make improvements to our services."

Over the past few months there have also been some very positive changes to Highbridge Medical Centre building, after a Minor Improvement Grant provided by NHS England was approved. This grant has enabled much needed improvements to be made to the facilities at the centre including the refurbishment of toilets, entrance hall and waiting area - with new flooring and seating being installed.

Dr Berge Balian, Medical Director for Symphony Healthcare Services said “We are happy with the outcome of the CQC report and whilst the overall rating is ‘requires improvement’ we are very pleased that three out of five areas have been rated as ‘good’ showing the significant progress that has been made in only a few months. We are very proud of our team at Highbridge who have worked extremely hard to make essential improvements to our service for patients and we will continue to develop our healthcare teams along with new ways of delivering healthcare services for patients”

If you would like to know more about Highbridge Medical Centre, arrange a visit, or to register as a new patient please call 01278 783220, or visit: [www.highbridgemc.co.uk](http://www.highbridgemc.co.uk)

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## Notes to Editors

- The Symphony Programme is nationally recognised as one of the most well-developed NHS PACS (Integrated Primary and Acute Care Systems) vanguard sites. Created to develop an integrated healthcare system to provide more individualised, flexible patient care in a cost effective and efficient way.
- Symphony Healthcare Services (SHS) was first set up in April 2016, through a unique partnership between Yeovil District Hospital and GP practices in Somerset, to help support primary care to deal with the growing challenges of GP shortages and increasing, more complex patient healthcare needs.
- Buttercross Health Centre, Yeovil Walk in Centre and Ilchester Surgery joined SHS in 2016, followed by Highbridge Medical Centre, Crewkerne Health Centre, St Lukes & Greenswood Medical Centre in Brixham, Devon and Oaklands Surgery, Yeovil in 2017.
- Since its initial launch, SHS has grown to support GP practices across a wider geographical area in the south west, in particular those practices who share the same challenges of recruiting and retaining GPs and an increasing demand on healthcare services from more complex long-term health conditions and an ageing demographic
- SHS will enable closer working between primary and secondary care and help patients to access the right care in the right place, as more specialist and integrated services are developed in the community.
- Practices will also benefit from the additional support of an experienced central team, providing support with back office functions as well as clinical expertise, enabling GPs and practice healthcare teams to focus more on patient care
- Through the Symphony Programme vanguard, new models of care have been introduced across 17 GP practices in south Somerset. New roles such as Health Coaches, MSK practitioners and Pharmacists have been introduced to provide additional support to patients to maintain a high quality of life at home, helping to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions. A complex care service has also been introduced as part of the model to help support patients with the most complex medical conditions.
- SHS is an NHS healthcare organisation, providing primary care health services within the south west

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