

# Press release: Patient benefits can clear way for Manchester hospitals merger

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has been looking at the impact on the quality of healthcare services from the planned merger between Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (CMFT) and University Hospital of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust (UHSM).

UHSM operates Wythenshawe Hospital and Withington Community Hospital, and CMFT operates Manchester Royal Infirmary, Manchester Royal Eye Hospital, Royal Manchester Children's Hospital, Altrincham Hospital, Saint Mary's Hospital, The University Dental Hospital and Trafford General Hospital.

In its provisional findings report today, the group of independent CMA panel members investigating the merger has found it could have some effect on competition and patient choice in the supply of elective services and some specialised services. The group will now look in detail at patient benefits the trusts claim will result from the merger to see if these outweigh any concerns.

The provisional findings report has found that significant financial pressures in the NHS along with local plans (in response to policies from commissioners and national regulators) which focus on greater collaboration and integration between healthcare providers, have dampened the role of competition between the trusts.

John Wotton, Chair of the Manchester hospitals merger inquiry group, said:

If we see convincing evidence of how this merger can benefit patients then we will look to clear it. We will now examine carefully the case put forward by the trusts before we come to a final decision on whether those benefits to patients will outweigh any loss of competition or choice.

Although the merger could reduce choice for patients and commissioners, we think the effects are likely to be limited. Recent developments both nationally – and in Manchester following devolution of health and social care – mean that in practice NHS providers are less able to act independently, which limits the extent to which they look to compete with each other.

In assessing the effect on patient choice, the CMA has been looking in detail at the elective (that is, non-emergency) procedures across a number of clinical specialties and maternity services provided by both trusts. It has also looked at certain specialised services commissioned by regional and national bodies, non-elective care and community services, all of which are

also provided by the trusts.

The CMA has heard from local commissioners, the devolved health body in Manchester, NHS England and NHS Improvement, all of whom have expressed strong support for the merger. In particular, NHS Improvement has told the CMA that it will help deliver improvements for patients more quickly and at less cost than would be the case without the merger.

The provisional findings report has been published on [the case page](#) where all other information relating to this investigation is also available. The CMA must publish its final decision by 13 August 2017.

Patients and their representative groups, commissioning groups, other health providers, regulators, local authorities and any interested bodies are invited to give their views on the provisional findings (by 7 July 2017) and notice of possible remedies (by 29 June 2017), by email to [cmft.uhsm.nhs@cma.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cmft.uhsm.nhs@cma.gsi.gov.uk), or by post to:

Project Manager  
CMFT/UHSM merger inquiry  
Competition and Markets Authority  
Victoria House  
Southampton Row  
LONDON  
WC1B 4AD

## Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law. For more information see the [CMA's homepage](#) on GOV.UK.
2. On 25 February 2015, the 37 NHS organisations and local authorities in Greater Manchester signed an agreement with the government to devolve health and social care expenditure in Greater Manchester. This followed the agreement between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and leaders of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) devolving new powers and responsibilities to Greater Manchester on 3 November 2014. As a result, the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership assumed control over the region's health and social care budget, which amounts to approximately £6 billion per year.
3. The test the group of CMA panel members is required to consider is whether the proposed merger may be expected to result in a substantial lessening of competition in relation to the services the hospital provide. They provisionally found that, in relation to certain elective (including maternity) and specialist services, it would.
4. For CMA updates, follow us on [Facebook](#), Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [Youtube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

5. Enquiries should be directed to [press@cma.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:press@cma.gsi.gov.uk) or 020 3738 6798.

---

## **[News story: Interim Manager appointed to Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators](#)**

The Charity Commission has appointed an Interim Manager to [Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators \(registered charity number 303167\)](#). The appointment comes as part of the regulator's inquiry into the charity, which began in August 2016.

The inquiry is examining a range of concerns, including the trustees' failure to comply with a previous action plan set by the Commission. A statement about the investigation is [available on GOV.UK](#).

The Commission has now appointed [Gordon Reid of Barlow Robbins Solicitors](#) as Interim Manager of the charity. He has been appointed to fulfil specific functions, including to consider the trustees' decision not to take action to recover a loss suffered by the charity when it granted an easement for access rights over charity lands at a significant undervalue. The Interim Manager will assess whether the trustees' decision was taken properly and was in the best interests of the charity. The charity's trustees remain responsible for the day-to-day management of the charity.

The Interim Manager was appointed on 31 May 2017.

The Commission's investigation continues. It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. [Reports of previous inquiries](#) are available on GOV.UK.

The charity's registered number is 303167.

The charity has also published its [own announcement](#) regarding the appointment.

---

## **[News story: BBC Springwatch at Porton](#)**

## Down

The current series of BBC Springwatch features two special items about flora and fauna which were filmed recently at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory's (Dstl) Porton Down site.

Porton Down will be featured in tonight's episode, due to be broadcast this evening at 7:30pm on BBC Two. It will look at some of the animals that make their home amongst the chalk grasslands of Porton Down's ranges.

A previous episode, which aired on Thursday 8 June, featured the flora that flourishes on the site, including the rare Lady Orchid. It is now available to [watch on BBC iPlayer](#)

Porton Down is one of, if not the, best-preserved chalk grasslands in Europe. The low level of human impact and development has enabled the man-made, semi-natural grassland to flourish and encourage a wide range of biodiversity. As a result, Porton Down boasts many rare species such as the Lady Orchid, the Duke of Burgundy butterfly and the Stone Curlew.

The programmes look at the many ways in which the wildlife flourishes and discuss the reasons for such an abundance of biodiversity. They also explore the relationships between the plants and animals, specifically insects and other invertebrates, as well as describing some of the various plant species that thrive on the plain.

---

## News story: CMA publishes full decision in phenytoin case

[In December last year](#), the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) imposed a record £84.2 million fine on the pharmaceutical manufacturer Pfizer and a £5.2 million fine on Flynn Pharma after finding that each broke competition law by charging excessive and unfair prices for phenytoin sodium capsules, an anti-epilepsy drug. The CMA also issued directions ordering both companies to reduce their prices, which they have now done.

The decision sets out the evidence gathered by the CMA during its investigation and its reasons for finding that Pfizer and Flynn Pharma infringed competition law.

The decision and fines related to both the prices that Pfizer charged to Flynn Pharma for phenytoin sodium capsules and the prices that Flynn Pharma subsequently charged its customers for the product since September 2012. The CMA found that both companies held a dominant position in their respective

markets for the manufacture and supply of phenytoin sodium capsules and each had abused that dominant position by charging excessive and unfair prices.

As a result of Pfizer's and Flynn Pharma's price increases, NHS expenditure on phenytoin sodium capsules increased from about £2 million a year in 2012 to about £50 million in 2013. Phenytoin sodium capsules are used in the treatment of epilepsy to prevent and control seizures, and are an important drug for an estimated 48,000 patients in the UK.

The full non-confidential decision and all other information on this investigation are available on the [case page](#).

[Pfizer](#) and [Flynn Pharma](#) have lodged appeals against the decision with the [Competition Appeal Tribunal](#). The hearing will start on 30 October 2017.

---

## [News story: Annual return service for charities](#)

A reminder to submit your annual return for 2016, and information about the 2017 annual return service.

All charities have a legal responsibility to [send an annual return to the Charity Commission](#). Failing to do so risks the public's trust in your charity and its reputation.

If you haven't filed your return for 2016 you have 10 months from the end of your charity's financial year to do so. If you are experiencing difficulties logging into the system, it could be that the service is experiencing high demand at that time – try it again later.

What you need to [submit depends on your annual income](#). If your charity's income is:

- under £10,000, then you just need to submit your charity's income and expenditure figures – the easiest way to do this is through the annual return service
- between £10,001 and £25,000, you need to complete an annual return form
- more than £25,001, you must submit an annual return form with a set of annual accounts as well as an independent examiners' or audit report and a trustees' annual report (TAR)

Our [guide to the accounting essentials for charities](#) will help you understand the type of accounts your charity has to prepare, and whether they need an audit or independent examination.

All Charitable Incorporated Organisation's (CIO) need to submit an annual

return and annual accounts. If your CIO has an income over £25,000 you also need to submit an independent examiners' or audit report along with a trustees' annual report.

We are developing a new, improved annual return service for 2017.

The new system will make it easier to file your charity's accounts and will be available to use from 31 August 2017.

We will let you know when the new system is available. Keep a check on this website and our [Twitter feed](#) for information.