



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

9 February 2010

### **The CCP recommends the proposed merger of Bexley Care Trust with Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust and South London Healthcare Trust be allowed to proceed**

The Co-operation and Competition Panel (CCP) has recommended to the Department of Health and Monitor that the proposed mergers of one part of the Bexley Care Trust community services provider unit with Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust and another part with South London Healthcare Trust be allowed to proceed.

The recommendation follows the CCP's review of the proposed transactions under the Principles and Rules for Co-operation and Competition and its finding that the acquisitions would not give rise to any material adverse effect on patients or taxpayers as a result of a loss of choice or competition.

The proposed mergers will see specialist children's services transfer to South London Healthcare and all other community services provided by Bexley Care Trust's community services provider unit transfer to Oxleas. Bexley Care Trust will retain full ownership and control over the premises currently used by its community services provider arm.

CCP Director Andrew Taylor commented:

"In assessing the possible costs to patients and taxpayers of these mergers we examined the services to patients currently provided by Bexley Care Trust community services provider unit and considered whether either of the mergers, in reducing the number of effective bidders for future contracts, would have a significant impact on patient choice or competition."

Mr Taylor added:

"The Panel's advice is based on its evaluation that a substantial number of effective potential providers of community health services operate in the relevant area. Consequently, our view is that the loss of one competitor would not have a material adverse effect on the extent of patient choice or competition."

**ENDS**



**Notes to Editors:**

1. The Co-operation and Competition Panel's (CCP) report and further information on the CCP's approach to mergers is available on the CCP's website at [www.ccp-panel.org.uk](http://www.ccp-panel.org.uk).
2. The Department of Health, Monitor and London Strategic Health Authority will now consider the CCP's advice and recommendation.
3. The Principles and Rules for Co-operation and Competition (Principles and Rules) form the basis of the Department of Health's policy of managing cooperation and competition in the NHS in a fair, consistent and transparent manner. The Principles and Rules aim to ensure the NHS comprises of providers and commissioners who deliver the needs of their patients and population. The Principles and Rules also encourage providers and commissioners to co-operate to foster patient choice and offer patients a healthcare experience which supersedes organisational boundaries, whilst maintaining service continuity and sustainability. The role of the CCP is to advise on the application of the Principles and Rules.
4. For inquiries about the CCP contact Tom Frusher, Policy and Communications Director, on 0207 270 5442/07825 256 530 or visit [www.ccp-panel.org.uk](http://www.ccp-panel.org.uk)