



FINANCIAL STRATEGY & Private Finance Initiative

Calderdale: Merging Trusts

NARRATOR:

The arrangement at Calderdale is more complicated than most, because the Trust is a combination of a PFI hospital AND a conventional, that is non-PFI- hospital.

KEITH SEYMOUR:

On the 1st April 2001 we merged with the Huddersfield Trust; that is the former Calderdale Health Care NHS Trust merged with the Huddersfield NHS Trust.

It just happened that that was exactly the day the hospital opened, the systems went live, that our payment procedure went live, so in terms of planning it was the worst possible time for us.

MICHAEL DAVIS:

The Trust with which we negotiated the contract was dissolved on the day we handed over the hospital, and it was merged with the adjacent Trust and we had an entirely new team of executives from the Trust side, yet we were the same consortium, so the PFI contract has become quite an anchor of stability around which there are, of course, restraints - but what a platform to build on.

NARRATOR:

For frontline staff, the merger meant other adjustments too.

ANGELA WALTON:

Obviously because we're a merged Trust on one side we've got one hospital where we've not got the private sector involved and sometimes it can create problems, sometimes we do have difficulty bringing things in because we've got to go by the contract that we've set up with our private sector partners.

Previously we could give patients things like porridge for breakfast and under the new contract we weren't allowed to have porridge because we'd agreed a price and a cost so that did cause some problems initially. But people are happy to work together and I think sometimes you have to go for compromise.

MARK BREARLEY:

We have a hospital in Huddersfield, which is obviously of an older construction and is perhaps not necessarily as adaptable for modern medicine. But having said that I think that from my personal point of view it's actually quite a good mix because it gives the Trust the opportunity to invest in the areas at Huddersfield that will need to be invested in whilst at the same time having the solid foundation of the new hospital in Calderdale.