

## Patients at West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust get free online entertainment services

***West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust is giving patients free online entertainment services provided by WiFi SPARK. TV, radio, games, newspapers, magazines and hospital services will be accessible from any internet-enabled device, to help improve patients' time on wards.***

Patients at West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust can now access a range of online entertainment and media services, free of charge, on their phones and tablets. The trust has installed the SPARK Media platform, by WiFi SPARK, to provide a range of services including TV, radio, films, games, newspapers and magazines. The service also enables patients to make video calls to family and friends during their stay in hospital, giving them a boost at a time when visits are not allowed or restricted due to coronavirus safety measures.

Liam McLaughlin, acting chief information officer at West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust, said: "Over the recent times it has become even more apparent how important it is to support our patients during their stay in hospital. The launch of this new service is a great example of how digital solutions meet the aspiration of the wider care and support we can offer to our patients and really complements their clinical care."

In addition to the free entertainment and media services, patients can discover NHS educational health videos to support their recovery and access dementia support services including BBC Music Memories and BBC Archive.

Cassia Nice, head of patient experience and engagement at the trust said: "Being away from those you love when you are unwell, particularly with current visiting restrictions across the NHS, can be extremely difficult and days in hospital are long. Entertainment is important to people and with the variety offered through WiFi SPARK, from games to magazines to favourite television programmes, will certainly help to improve people's experience of being in hospital. We are delighted to offer this service to our patients."

The installation of the SPARK Media platform at West Suffolk follows the successful roll-out of WiFi connectivity at the trust – supplied by WiFi SPARK – for patient and staff use, since 2018 and 2020, respectively. Users can now access all WiFi and entertainment services, as well as links to the My WiSH charity, which supports patients and visitors at West Suffolk Hospital and Newmarket Community Hospital. The trust and the charity have purchased some tablets for use by inpatients, if they don't have a phone or WiFi accessible device with them during their stay in hospital.

"Having access to a range of entertainment services can help patients in their recovery by providing some normality during what is often a difficult time," said Dean Moody, chief commercial officer at WiFi SPARK. "If they can have video calls with their friends and family, it might give them a boost when they need it, and the team at West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust have always been forward-thinking in their holistic approach to the patient experience."

"In the past, the only option for many trusts was to install bedside TV units, but these were expensive to set up and costly for patients to use, and often didn't work properly. With WiFi connectivity and new technology, hospitals are now able to provide more convenient options for patients to get online and access entertainment and hospital services from their own phones and internet-enabled devices. It's also less expensive for trusts to install these technology services rather than hardware units."

WiFi SPARK is a leading provider of commercial WiFi and media services to the healthcare, retail, transport, sport and exhibition space sectors. The company works with nearly 300 hospitals across more than 80 NHS trusts and health boards in the UK. It provides 24/7 support to customers.

**Ends**

### **Notes for editors**

#### **About: WiFi SPARK**

WiFi SPARK is the leading provider of guest and patient-access WiFi in the UK. The company is the owner and developer of the unique SPARK® Platform which delivers the most flexible, feature-rich and scalable solution for guest-access WiFi on the market today.

WiFi SPARK specialises in WiFi in the healthcare sector and provides services to over 50% of the NHS Acute Trusts. WiFi SPARK has recently launched SPARK® Media, a revolution in patient entertainment, delivering TV, radio, educational content and more directly to the patients' device of their choice.

No other wireless network provider can offer the same adaptability, span of features, and ultimately, return on investment.

#### **About: West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust**

West Suffolk Hospital is a 430-bed hospital on the edge of Bury St Edmunds, serving a population of around 280,000 across 600 square miles. As well as running the hospital, West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust is joining up NHS care across the area by providing many of the community services in West Suffolk.