

## New treatment centre for Somerset will treat 11,000 patients a year

**Published:**

Thursday 26 August 2004

**Reference number:**

2004/0318

Health Minister Rosie Winterton today announced a £100 million contract with OR International to build, staff and run a new treatment centre next to Shepton Mallet Community Hospital.

The centre will carry out 11,885 operations a year from July 2005. Staff will be additional to the NHS, performing a mixture of orthopaedic and ophthalmology procedures and general surgery.

The centre will include four operating theatres and a new MRI scanner.

Rosie Winterton said:

"Thousands of people are being treated more quickly as a result of the NHS treatment centre programme, which is delivering real results for patients. Nearly 60,000 patients have had their operations more quickly in treatment centres run both by the NHS and independent providers so far.

"I am pleased that today we have signed contracts for this new treatment centre for Somerset to be run by OR International. The centre will be used by patients living in Mendip, North Dorset, Taunton Deane, Somerset Coast and South Somerset, Primary Care Trust areas.

"Record investment in the NHS and the continued hard work of staff means that we have seen huge increases in NHS capacity, and the total waiting list is at its lowest for over fifteen years. But there will be no loss of momentum in our drive to speed up access to surgery and offer patients a choice of where they are treated.

"I am determined that no NHS patient should wait in pain where we can negotiate good value agreements with the independent sector."

### Notes to editor

---

1) OR International is a US based developer of specialty surgical hospitals.

2) For media enquiries only please contact Georgie Agass 020 7210 5738, Malcolm Fawcett 020 7210 4984, Katie Robinson 020 7210 5329, or Lee Bailey 020 7210 5010 in the Department of Health media centre.

3) 'OR International' media contact: Belle Horwitz +1 646 688 3126