

21 December 2011

For Immediate Release

## **‘We Share Because We Care’**

Patients attending the Accident and Emergency Department (A&E) and the Medical Assessment Unit at Tameside Foundation Trust Hospital will be asked to provide consent for the clinician treating them to access a summary of their GP’s electronic medical records.

This is local project designed to improve the care and safety of patients when they are being treated outside of their own general practice. It will enable the attending clinician to look at the patient’s history to aid any diagnosis, identify medication that the patient may have recently taken, and ensure that the patient is not given any medication that has previously been identified as causing an allergic reaction.

Richard Bircher, GP at Lockside Medical Centre in Salybridge said: “It is important that an attending clinician has as much information as possible about the patient’s medical history. Often time is a critical factor when it comes to treating people in A&E. The information in their GP’s electronic medical records can be vital in informing diagnosis and treatment. Although the clinician can and will ask a patient for as much information as possible; patients in A&E are often under a lot of stress and unable to recall important, potentially life saving information.”

Patients will be asked for consent to view their GP data each time they are treated by clinicians who have access to the system, and can refuse at any time. Patients who do not wish to make their data available to share at all, can inform their own General Practice who will make their records permanently unavailable.

**Ends**