Welcome to the second issue of the Bicester Hospital and Community Services Project Newsletter, which we hope you will find informative and interesting. By means of this newsletter, we hope to keep all stakeholders updated on progress on a regular basis—look out for the next issue in June 2008.

**PCT holds a successful public engagement event on the future of health services in Bicester**

On 11 and 12 February many people took the chance to come and find out more about Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust’s (PCT) plans for the future of their local health services.

PCT representatives welcomed over 150 people to the successful public engagement event, where they were invited to ask questions and say what they thought of the primary care centre for the 21st century the PCT is planning for the area.

Alan Webb, Director of Commissioning for the PCT, said: “We were delighted to be able to talk with so many members of the local community face to face about our plans to improve their local health services.

“People told us that they value the services they have now and wanted to keep these, and would welcome any additional services provided in the future, close to where they live. This was good news as it reflects the plans we are making.

“We were also able to talk to people about our plans to make sure that there will be beds available in Bicester when they need them and to listen to their views about that too.

“People also told us that they were keen for the PCT to end the long period of uncertainty over health services in the area and move forward swiftly - which we are committed to doing.”

The PCT will be finalising its proposals over the summer. These will involve the local community and local people will also be kept informed as plans progress.

**What next?**

Following Oxfordshire PCT Board’s approval of the outline business case for the redevelopment of health services in Bicester, the Project Group will now begin meetings to plan the way forward.

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What next? Cont.

The Project Group is chaired by a local GP, Dr John Galuszka, and is made up of local people from Councils, local interest groups and senior managers from the PCT. This group will now advertise widely for developers and providers who may wish to be part of the Bicester Hospital and community services development. Their work will include a review of design options, finances and contracts and they will use the expertise of the NHS procurement services to ensure all decisions about the development are in line with NHS policy and guidance. This work will take several months.

There will also be a Community Forum, a new group that will meet for the first time in June and throughout the development phase. This Forum, made up of people who can effectively represent local interests, will advise the Project Group on issues of local importance and will help with decisions about design and contracting. As many as possible of the local interest groups and bodies will be invited to send a representative to join the Community Forum, to make best use of local knowledge in this exciting development.

Invitations to join the Community Forum will go out in early June but there will also be newsletters in libraries and doctors’ surgeries, and news releases in the local newspapers, to keep local people up to date. In the meantime, services in and around Bicester Hospital will continue as usual, with staff looking forward to a time, in the not too distant future, when their services can be provided from modern, up-to-date buildings in Bicester.

Contact us...
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† This newsletter is distributed to the following stakeholders: PCT staff, local MPs, local NHS trusts, Bicester Town Council, Cherwell District Council, the Local Practice Based Commissioning Consortia, the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board, South Central Strategic Health Authority, Oxfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, patients and public in the Bicester locality – including the interim LINks organisation (Local Involvement Networks), relevant community and voluntary groups and the media.

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