Welcome to the fourth 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 local people and interested groups/organisations updated on progress on a regular basis—look out for the next issue in January 2009.

Community Forum

The first meeting of the Community Forum took place in early September. Four people attended this meeting along with three members of the project group. Discussions during the evening focused on what has happened previously as well as the current process. Those attending were generally positive about the PCT’s commitment to involvement throughout the process.

The next meeting of the Forum is being planned for early 2009. If you are interested in joining the Forum or finding out more about it please contact Ruth Atkins (contact details on second page).

Current progress

The Project Group continues to meet monthly, with clinical and managerial representatives from the PCT, social and community services, Cherwell District Council, Bicester Town Council, a GP and a public representative.

A service model sub-group has been set up to look at current services, numbers of staff and patients and activity levels. The group is not looking at room sizes or designing spaces.

The procurement sub-group continues to meet to work on the procurement process. This is the method the NHS uses to find a developer or provider to build the new building and provide the bedded unit.

An advert will be issued throughout Europe so that everyone who may be interested can apply. This requires the writing of quite a complicated document that describes all the services and what is needed for the future. The PCT can start working with several interested parties, leading to the award of a contract or contracts for the new services and buildings.

Ambitious about improving the health and wellbeing of local people
**Key dates**

**December 2008**
An advert is placed in specialist journals seeking expressions of interest in the re-provision of the bed based services and buildings for the remaining services.

**January 2009 to September 2009**
Expressions of interest are evaluated and discussions with bidders take place. Final tender/s should be submitted by bidders.

**December 2009 to January 2009**
Evaluation of tenders takes place and paper presented to the PCT Board with a proposal to award the contract.

**Summer 2010**
Building work should start on-site.

**Further information about this process will be in the next newsletter.**

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...**
If you would like further information or have any questions about the information in this newsletter please contact:

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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 LINks organisation (Local Involvement Networks), relevant community and voluntary groups and the media.

**Receive your newsletter by email**
If you would like to receive copies of future project newsletters by email, please forward your email address to ruth.atkins@oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk