Bicester Community Hospital Project Group

Newsletter

Issue 9 May 2010

Welcome to the ninth edition of the Bicester Community Hospital Project Group newsletter

Project Update

It is very important to NHS Oxfordshire that the plan to re-provide health facilities for Bicester and the surrounding area succeeds. We know how valued and much loved the community hospital is and we have been working hard on the complicated project to ensure future health provision.

In the past few months we have been carrying out a procurement exercise to decide on who should take on the task of re-providing the health facilities. However, following routine legal advice, we are now making some changes.

Our plan is to re-start the procurement process and make it clearer and more straightforward. If we don’t make these changes now, we run the risk of the project failing further down the line.

This will inevitably mean an alteration to our timetable. We had hoped the project would be put before the PCT Board in November this year, but 2011 now looks more likely and we are currently working out the revised timetable.

It is regrettable that we have a delay, but, we feel it is better to have a short delay now, than risk a more serious setback later on. Meanwhile, all the detailed planning and survey work we have carried out in the past few months will be used in the project as it progresses and has not been wasted.

It is also important to stress that NHS Oxfordshire remains committed to the Bicester hospital project. The money for the scheme is protected and our new Chief Executive, Sonia Mills, said earlier this month (May) that she wants to see it succeed.

Ambitious about improving the health and wellbeing of local people
Update from the Community Hospital Engagement Forum (CHEF)

The Community Hospital Engagement Forum (CHEF) was formed last year to give the people of Bicester and surrounding area a voice on the project. The CHEF has 20 members with representatives from Cherwell District Council, health workers and members of the public with an interest in the issue.
Chairman of the CHEF is retired Bicester GP, Dr. Michael Curry. He said he was disappointed at the procurement alteration, but added: “Recent changes to European law have made contracting for public bodies very tricky. The new offer to contractors will be more explicit and should better reflect the wishes of the people of Bicester.”
The CHEF is due to meet later this month (May) where members will discuss the new developments and hear directly from NHS Oxfordshire.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will all the forecasted public spending cuts affect the plans for Bicester Community Hospital?
A: The money to reprovide Bicester Community Hospital is already with NHS Oxfordshire and the scheme it remains something we are committed to.

Q: Will we lose current services or hospital beds in the new plans?
A: No, NHS Oxfordshire is committed to re-providing all existing services, which includes the current intermediate care beds.

Q: When will we know what site the new hospital will be on?
A: NHS Oxfordshire is looking at all the options and working with key partners on where best to locate the new facilities.

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

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