

Save Our Dispensary

The New Beaconsfield Hall was packed with patients on Wednesday, May 28th, to hear our doctors explain the Government White Paper on Pharmacy Services and its likely effect on the Wychwood Surgery. The White Paper is being rushed through this session of Parliament, with very little consultation and could become law in October 2008 with effect from 1st April 2009.

Under current arrangements anyone living more than one mile from a Pharmacy is able to collect prescriptions from a dispensing surgery, such as Wychwood Surgery.

Potential Loss of Services

Under the new proposals this will change if there is a Pharmacy within a distance, yet to be determined, of the Surgery. So there should not be any change here in the Wychwoods, unless a Pharmacy opens. If it did, dispensing rights would be taken away from the Surgery and, if the new Pharmacy was not profitable it could be closed, although there may be provision for a delivery service. Urgent acute medication and late afternoon appointments with your GP would not be covered, necessitating a drive to the nearest Pharmacy to collect medication. With the resultant loss of dispensing income there would be a considerable reduction in availability and therefore access to doctors and nurses. Some services such as minor injuries and minor surgery would go and many more of us would have to travel to Witney, Oxford or Banbury for our care

Polyclinics

A further stage in Government plans is the introduction of polyclinics to provide

easy access to GP services. The Government spent £12 million on a patient survey, which showed that 85% of patients (98% here in the Wychwoods) are happy with current opening hours. Money is promised for these clinics, but in reality will be taken from existing GPs' budgets further eroding services.

How Can I Help?

Think about what these changes might mean to you and your family. We are able to collect our prescriptions from trained staff at our own Surgery, who know us and are able to deal quickly with any queries. After seeing our doctor we collect medicines before leaving the building. Minor injuries are dealt with quickly and efficiently within the Surgery. Blood tests are taken and results are available within a few days.

Write or email your views to:

Rt Hon Alan Johnson, Secretary of State For Health, House of Commons
Rt Hon David Cameron MP for West Oxfordshire, WOCA, Suite 1, Waterloo House, 58-60, High Street, Witney, OX28 6HJ or the House of Commons, or www.writetothem.com

Ms Andrea Young, Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust, Jubilee House, 5510 John Smith Drive, Oxford Business Park South, Cowley, OX4 2LH
West Oxfordshire District Council, The Health Overview Scrutiny Committee.

Further details are available from The Wychwood Surgery. Sign the Card at www.supportyoursurgery.org.uk or the paper version at reception. We all prize the excellent service we receive from our GPs and now we must stand up and fight for them.

Christine Halliday