

Local Health Board "a disgrace "

BACH comments on the recent Local Health Board meeting held at Bronllys
(29/11/06)

The Editor, Mid-Wales Journal

Dear Sir,

Those who care about the future of health care in Knighton, Llanidloes, Bronllys and Builth Wells will have read your front page article last week with mounting anger.

For now the Powys Local Health Board have gone public on a practice it has been using covertly over the last few years to defend its budgetary mismanagement by closing hospital beds. Now it becomes completely clear that all the Boards cares about is balancing its budget.

Now we are going to see more spurious and fabricated concerns about "clinical safety" advanced as it continues its shameful record as custodians of our citizens' health care. I wonder how many of your readers realise Powys LHB has closed an estimated 50% of Powys' hospital beds in the last few years – without any vestige of public consultation whatever!

This is a very clever authority. Its record of manipulation and pretence would make Machievelli's eyes water. How clever of it to set town against town, planning to close some hospitals, knowing that those communities who think their hospitals "safe" will support such plans!

How clever of it to fill the Board with GPs from the north of the county – and quote one of as being "increasingly concerned that ... small units are not safe" – while it concentrates its hospital closure threats against unrepresented mid- and south- county communities!

How clever of it to make sure its threats about "stricter discipline" for GP's who step out of line accompanies your article, to try to scare off local doctors who want to fight to defend the interests of their patients!

What a shame this cleverness is not put at the service of our citizens, through imaginative planning solutions and a consultative ethos which actually listens.

What an insult that it should think we will buy the argument that our health care can be somehow improved by closing health facilities.

And what an outrage that it should be allowed to continue in office!

Yours sincerely

Jonathon Morgan
Chair - Builth Against Closing Hospitals