

Llanidloes GPs Response To Chief Executive Andy Williams

October 2006

Mr Andy Williams
Chief Executive
Powys Local Health Board
Headquarters,
Mansion House,
Bronllys
Brecon
Powys LD3 0LS

Dear Andy,

I am writing on behalf of the Arwystli Medical Practice.

As we have made clear before, we have no confidence in the present proposals for the reconfiguration of community hospitals in Powys and specifically for the removal of all inpatient and outpatient services from Llanidloes hospital. The driving force for this appears to be totally financial and not based on an accurate assessment of the health needs of the area.

The removal of services which are providing excellent levels of care seems to be contrary to the statement by Dr Brian Gibbons in assembly debate on the 11th October that “we need to preserve our present stock of community hospitals as long as they are capable of providing modern care”. It is our strong belief that the services provided both in our local community hospital and in other threatened units across Powys meet these standards. indeed in the same debate Dr Gibbons states that he has “no doubt that community hospitals will have a key role in delivering” the agenda for management of chronic disease. We feel therefore that the decision to remove hospital services is at best extremely short sighted.

We also have very grave concerns regarding the planning for adequate provisions for local healthcare needs in the event of the removal of clinical services from Llanidloes Hospital. The creation of Local Care Teams seems to be the central focus of the plans along with the creation of Primary Healthcare Team Centres. These proposals have not been developed to an acceptable degree. The LCT concept seems to consist of a “re-branding” of the current community teams with no extra funding or recruitment and the PHT centres have not been discussed in any meaningful manner with the General Practices involved but have been presented to the public as a development which will happen.

As a practice we feel that there needs to be realistic proposals in place before we can continue to engage in discussions with the LHB regarding the future plans for health provision locally. We have well founded fears that services will be withdrawn with no provision for their replacement and that as a result the health care of the local community and across Powys will suffer as a result.

The Local Medical Committee met last week and the conclusion of the meeting was that the majority of practices across Powys have similar concerns and have written an open letter expressing this.

We would also like to note that the WAG has passed an unopposed amended motion on 3rd October (NDM3222 as amended) stating that the National Assembly “believes that no reconfiguration of hospital services should take place without adequately planned community provision and that before any reconfiguration takes place there must be genuine public consultation, with the views of local communities not only listened to but taken on board”.

Until these fundamentals are met we do not believe that it is appropriate for us to continue to engage in negotiations with the L.H.B. on the matters proposed.

We await your response to our concerns and hope that you can provide answers that will allow us to become re-engaged in discussions

Yours sincerely

A.D Raynsford.