

GENERAL PRACTICE IN BANBURYSHIRE

Dame Fiona Caldicott
Chairman
Oxfordshire University Hospitals Foundation Trust

24 August 2016

Dear Dame Fiona,

We write as local General Practitioners who oppose the OUH proposals to downgrade the Horton Hospital, including, but not limited to, consultant led obstetrics.

We are opposed to the proposals on the grounds of safety, sustainability and the reduction in access to basic health care and choice for our patients, which will affect especially the most vulnerable.

We maintain that a midwife led unit with a delivery rate of 450+ per annum, which is 25 miles away from the nearest obstetrician and paediatrician, is not safe. Through no fault of the midwives working in such a unit, GPs would have to consider the wisdom of recommending mothers to this service. Numbers would drop further and the service soon become non-viable.


We believe that these proposals, and the tenor of discussions relating to them, pose a risk to the overall integrity and sustainability of The Horton as a general hospital. They undermine the morale of its staff and impact adversely on recruitment and retention of high quality personnel. Far from creating excellence in health care in the north of the county (where the population is increasing), they betray a lack of will, vision and imagination and consequently degrade it.

We feel the proposals

- will result in services which are unsafe and unsustainable into the future.
- are not in the best interest of our patients who will be faced with serious obstacles in both accessing services and visiting sick relatives. The most vulnerable will be hardest hit.
- will increase demands on the ambulance services and its crews and on already overstretched departments at the JRH.

- will have consequences both in medico-legal and human terms that are far reaching and expensive.
- adhere to an outmoded model of centralisation that ignores more modern trends to bring services closer to patients.
- ignore the clear recommendations of the Davidson Inquiry and the prerequisites of the agreement to merge into a single trust.

We, the GPs of North Oxfordshire, request that, with immediate effect, you use whatever power and influence you have to reverse these proposals to downgrade The Horton.



Dr Emma Haskew
For and on behalf
The GPs of

Bloxham Surgery and Hook Norton Surgery

Chipping Norton Surgery

Cropredy Surgery

Deddington Surgery

Fenny Compton & Shenington Surgery

Hightown Surgery

Horsefair Surgery and Middleton Cheney Surgery

Shipston Medical Centre

Sibford Surgery

West Bar Surgery

Windrush Surgery

Woodlands Surgery

Wychwood Surgery