

SUPPORT
NHS
GENERAL
PRACTICE

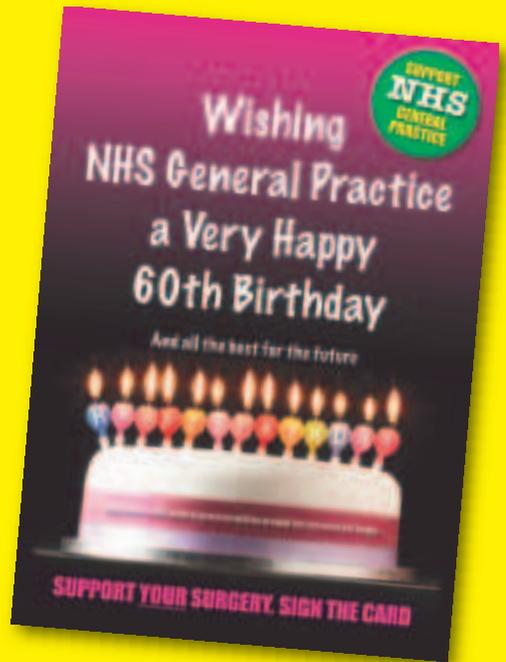
The Government's plans could affect your surgery. For details of how you can show your support for NHS general practice, please read this leaflet.

HAPPY 60TH BIRTHDAY TO NHS GENERAL PRACTICE!

Your local surgery needs you – please sign the card to show your support.

This year, the NHS is celebrating its 60th birthday. For 60 years, local GP surgeries have been providing the personalised care that you and your family need close to home by people who know you and your health.

But we are very worried that new Government plans to change the way in which GP services are provided will put at risk the comprehensive, high-quality patient care that your local surgery provides.



THE THREAT TO YOUR SURGERY

Introduction of more commercial companies

Most NHS GP practices are independently run by local GPs on behalf of their patients. However, the Government is now encouraging commercial companies to run GP surgeries.

These companies are accountable firstly to shareholders **not** patients.

Commercial companies are likely to be offered short-term contracts. This could lead to a higher turnover of doctors who may not know you and your long-term health needs. This is bad for patients.

Polyclinics

The Government plans to introduce up to 250 large new health centres – often called polyclinics – across England instead of funding extra services in local surgeries.

Polyclinics are very expensive to develop and run and there is no evidence they are needed in many areas.

These health centres may contain up to 25 GPs, and we are worried that patients may lose the personal relationship they usually have with their current family doctor.

As a result of these changes we are concerned that many local surgeries may not survive. We believe NHS funds would be better spent on expanding the high-quality services at your own local GP surgery.

Why are we so worried?

We want you to be treated by GPs who see you as patients, not customers.

We want the Government to:

- improve services to patients by further investment in existing GP surgeries and not waste money on unwanted polyclinics
- halt its plans to encourage commercial companies to run GP surgeries

**Support your local surgery
by signing the NHS General
Practice 60th Birthday Card!**

Because we are so worried, we are collecting signatures for a nationwide petition that urges the Government to change its plans.

We will present our petition to the Prime Minister in June with the NHS General Practice 60th Birthday Card.



IF YOU DO NOT WANT THESE CHANGES TO HAPPEN – TELL PEOPLE!

It's not just the Prime Minister we need to tell.

- Tell your friends and family and ask them to sign our petition as well.
- Write to the Primary Care Trust (PCT) which organises your local NHS services.
- Write to your MP.
- Write to your local Council (for the attention of their health overview and scrutiny committee).
- Write to a newspaper or contact your local radio station to tell them how much you support your surgery.

Your letters will be read, and your views can make a difference!



More information

If you need contact details for these groups, just ask at reception or, alternatively, visit our website www.supportyoursurgery.org.uk for further details. Or have a word with your doctor who will be happy to answer any questions you have.