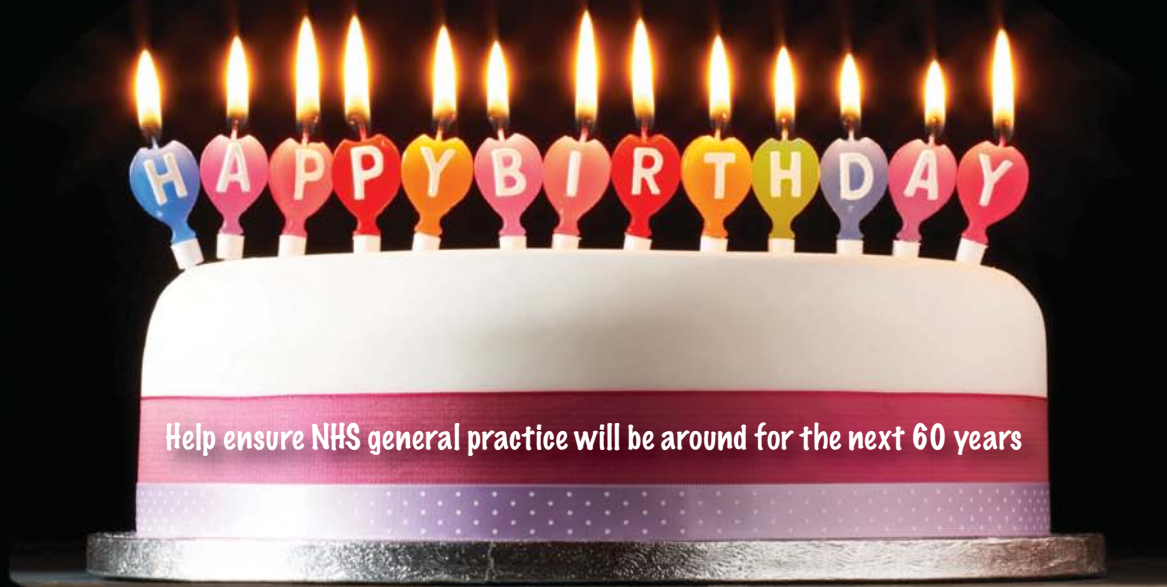


WISHING NHS GENERAL PRACTICE A HAPPY 60TH BIRTHDAY...



www.supportyoursurgery.org.uk

...BUT WILL THERE BE MANY HAPPY RETURNS?

It is 60 years since the birth of NHS general practice and GP surgeries have been providing personalised high-quality primary care that patients need and value. But new Government plans for England to create commercially-run polyclinics and/or health centres country-wide, regardless of local need, could affect our local surgeries and put current patient services at risk.

We, as patients, are extremely concerned that these plans will result in a move away from GPs enshrined in the NHS ethos to commercial clinics and will lead to a decline in the quality of patient care in England.

We are concerned that:

- older people, those less able and those with long-term conditions will be most affected adversely
- Government plans for the new GP arrangements are a step backwards for community health and are likely to reduce involvement of local communities in improving healthcare
- commercial, private companies running general practice services may impact upon how GPs prescribe, treat, investigate and refer
- there could be problems of travel and access to general practice
- proper consultation with patients, the public and local GPs has not taken place



Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) should be encouraged to invest in local GP practices and support joint working between practices. This would deliver the Government's goals without the risk of unnecessarily duplicating or destabilising existing services, and would undoubtedly be better value for money for the taxpayer.

We would like to call upon MPs to:

1. speak to their PCT about plans to establish polyclinics or health centres in their own or a neighbouring constituency
2. question their PCT about its current investment in existing general practices
3. speak to their local GPs regarding their views on the PCT proposals

Juliet Dunmur and Natalie Teich
Patient Liaison Group, British Medical Association

For further information, please contact the BMA's Parliamentary Unit,
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