

Older and chronically ill people most at risk from polyclinics, BMA patient group warns

Under embargo until 00:01, Monday 9 June, 2008

Commercially run polyclinics would put services at risk, with older people and those with chronic conditions most adversely affected, the BMA's Patient Liaison Group (PLG)* says today (Monday 9 June, 2008).

In an advert published today, Juliet Dunmur and Natalie Teich of the BMA's PLG say:

"New government plans for England to create commercially run polyclinics and / or health centres, 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 lead to a decline in the quality of patient care. We are concerned that older people, those less able, and those with long-term conditions will be most adversely affected.

"There could be problems of travel and access to general practice, and proper consultation with patients, the public and local GPs has not taken place."

The advert appears in "The House Magazine" – sent to all MPs. It calls on them to speak to their local Primary Care Trusts about plans to establish polyclinics or health centres in their constituency.

It is part of the ongoing 'Support NHS General Practice' campaign. This Thursday (12 June, 2008) doctors will deliver a petition to Downing Street, signed by many thousands of patients, calling on the Prime Minister to invest in existing GP surgeries and halt plans to promote the use of commercial companies in general practice.

View the full advert under embargo at:
<http://www.supportyoursurgery.org.uk/presscentre.php>

***Notes to editors**

The BMA's Patient Liaison Group is made up of 11 patients and five doctor members. It was set up in 2003 to input into the BMA with patient-informed views.