

Friends of Chiswick Health Centre – Summer meeting, Chiswick Town Hall

11 June 2011.

About 80 people attended FCHC's third public meeting, to hear three experts share their views about developments in the NHS as a whole, and some of their views about the implications for local health care and the Chiswick Health Centre.

Mary McLeod MP emphasised the importance of healthcare to the Government, summarised progress with the Health and Social Care Bill, and stressed the need to embrace reform that would ensure that clinicians lead a patient-focused health service – integrated with social care delivery – via the new commissioning arrangements. She said that she was “fighting hard” for the Chiswick Day Centre, and would “look into” the historically low levels of funding that Hounslow received.

Dr Brigitte Unger-Graeber, of Chiswick Health Centre, talked about her hopes and fears for CHC, based on her experience as a member of the Great West Commissioning Consortium (GWCC). She emphasised the importance of dialogue between doctors and patients, and of streamlined ‘pathways’ for primary and secondary care, to improve patients’ experience. She also talked about the need to specify the level of service to be expected from providers, and the (necessary) burden of additional administrative work associated with the new arrangements. She highlighted three noteworthy local developments: (a) an integrated diabetes clinic at CHC; (b) CHC’s involvement in an Integrated Care Pilot, run by Imperial College, and focused on the elderly and diabetes; and (c) that CHC’s Treatment Room would re-open in July.

Sue Jeffers, Director of Commissioning at Hounslow PCT, described how the PCT is looking to manage positively the transition to the new commissioning arrangements – for example, GWCC operates as a sub-committee of the PCT Board, and is already taking some responsibility for commissioning. She summarised the PCT’s funding position, describing it as a “strong” basis to move to GP-led commissioning, and suggested that there would be further development of the CHC building over the next few years - that it might be possible to build upwards, which would give welcome additional space. Given Chiswick’s geographical position, in relation to Hounslow, Ealing, and Hammersmith, she talked about the need to try to ensure that GP-commissioning arrangements offered local patients the opportunity to use secondary care services in whichever borough was most convenient to them. She also suggested that FCHC might want to work in partnership with healthcare commissioners and providers across this area, on behalf of local patients.

Paul Hopper, Chair of FCHC, described the role of the Friends – to represent the views of patients to doctors, managers and administrators. He emphasised that the Friends operates independently, though it works with relevant organisations such as Healthwatch. Closing the

meeting, he thanked the speakers, and invited members of the audience to read our newsletter and leaflets at the CHC and to follow our work on our website: www.fhc.co.uk.