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30th July 08.

copy to

Mr. Gareth David Thomas
Petitions Committee

RECEIVED
02 SEP 2008

National Assembly
for Wales
Cardiff Bay

hrs.

CF99-1NA

Abertillery @ District Hospital- Aberbeeg.

Are we paying too high a price for our proposed new hospital Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan in Ebbw Vale completion date 2010? Costing £53.7 Million Pounds. Would Aneurin Bevan be happy knowing the building of this hospital meant the closures of other hospitals? So they in there wisdom deem it appropriate.

We are told this new hospital will be a state of the heart in health care for our future. With individual rooms and on suite facilities for the patients use. I hope they will employ enough nurses to ensure the safety and care of patients in separate rooms?

Unless of course they employ, C.C.T.V monitoring for each room?

So often in our hospitals of today – nurses are a luxury, often to be found around a ‘Nurses Station, or small office.’ Not on the wards. Another argument being used is that with each patient having their own bathroom’ there is less risk of infections? I would answer this statement that the secret of less infections was in the thorough cleansing after using shared bathrooms, beds after each patient etc.

I was an Auxiliary Nurse for a period of many years working in Australia- Private Hospital, Oakdale Hospital, Abertillery @District Hospital-Aberbeeg. And I also worked in the Community. Aberbeeg hospital was so clean you could eat off the floors. We had no M.R.S.A or other nasties. The Gilbert Stracken and John Dunlop wards are nice and airy. The hospital is set in superb grounds. The Cwmnant Ward was officially opened in 1995.

“We want these modern units for our community.” Said the Mayor of Blaenau Gwent. Councillor Keith Barnes.

The residents of B2, Pen-Y-Fal were moved to Cwmnant so that they would be closer to their relatives than they were at PenyFal.

Pen-y-Fal was closed and sold off for new private housing.

The saddest day of my life was at the recent farewell tea held in Abertillery @ District Hospital grounds. The League of friends had prepared tea in a marquee To show their appreciation to all who had helped them raise funds for the patients care at the hospital over the years.

It was such a sad occasion I couldn't eat the piece of homemade cake. I was choked with emotion. Around me there were so many misty eyed people. The League of Friends had done so much sterling work for our hospital, raising thousands of pounds for the patient's comfort.

Our former matron Rita Evans and her husband were present.

From: Joanne Absalom (Joanne.Absalom@blaenau-gwent.hb.wales.nhs.uk)
To: m-martha-lowman@yahoo.co.uk
Date: Tuesday, 24 June 2008 5:00:23 PM
Cc: bardsteve@aol.com; Judith.Sweeting
Subject: Abertillery District Hospital Closure

Dear Ms Lowman

Thank you for your email of 23 June 2008.

Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board and Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust have been working together over a number of years to develop services that can appropriately care for people in community settings when a hospital stay is not required. This has impacted on the number of hospital beds needed locally as more and more people are able to be cared for in the community with services that have been organised around their individual needs.

Over the last year the numbers of patients cared for in Gilbert Strachan ward at Abertillery and District Hospital dropped significantly and all the patients on the ward had plans in place for their ongoing care. It was therefore agreed that the ward will close when these patients have been discharged. This happened in March 2008.

Closure of Abertillery and District Hospital was supported by the public in early 2003, following consultation on the development of a new Local General Hospital for Blaenau Gwent. Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan is due to open in 2010, and work on site has now commenced.

In addition to providing services for Blaenau Gwent residents, Abertillery and District Hospital provides Elderly Mentally Ill in-patient beds for Caerphilly residents. Mindful of the fact that Abertillery and District Hospital is planned for closure in the future, Caerphilly Teaching Local Health Board is considering the welfare of the patients that remain in the hospital. This work has not yet started. As this work is taken forward an overall timescale for closure of the Hospital will be developed.

Joanne Absalom
Chief Executive

Linda Barrett
PA to Chair and Chief Executive
Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board
Anvil Court
Church Street
ABERTILLERY
NP13 1DB
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From: Linda Barrett (linda.barrett@blaenau-gwent.lhb.wales.nhs.uk)
To: Mirer, Martha Lowman
Date: Wednesday, 25 June 2008 3:52:49 PM
Cc: baroSteve@aol.com
Subject: Abertillery District Hospital Closure

Dear Ms Lowman

Further to my email of earlier today, Joanne telephoned the office so I was able to ask her about your email and she would be happy to meet with you. She has suggested that a Trust representative is also involved.

Can you please let me know if you are available for a meeting to take place on Monday 28 July 2008, 4.00 pm in the LHB's Offices in Abertillery?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Linda Barrett

PA to Chair and Chief Executive
Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board
Anvil Court
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Tel: 01495 325432
Fax: 01495 325425

Meeting now
Thursday 24th July
at 4-30 pm ✓

I recall one bad winter Mr. Evans had walked in the snow to bring bread and milk to our hospital.

What a dreadful mistake closing John Dunlop and Gilbert Stracken Wards. Now we have no Respite -Care. People could have been nursed in Aberbeeg for at least until the replacement hospital was ready.

I was most fortunate in having members of my family nursed in Aberbeeg, Thanks to all the excellent nursing staff at this hospital set in superb grounds.

Will the future bring to us another private housing estate, instead of our hospital?

I have been informed the Health Authority held a public consultation about the hospital closure. I would like to know how many people were at this consultation? Where were the meetings held? And where were they advertised?

Most people I have spoken to are appalled at the closure and know nothing of the effect it will have on the Abertillery, Llanhilleth, Aberbeeg, Cwmtillery, communities. They want our hospital to stay, they are prepared to petition for it.

The only other stumbling block is that boundaries have been changed here and I believe Aberbeeg Hospital is classed as being in the Caerphilly area. However when there is another consultation on our boundaries we hope Aberbeeg is returned to us here in Abertillery.

Yours sincerely,
Mirren Martha Lowman (Mrs)

M. M. Lowman