



Wandsworth Health News

February 2008

Issue Number 1

The NHS,

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Wandsworth PCT is selling off the family silver’



**Beware-
Privatisers
on the Prowl**



HAPPY BIRTHDAY NHS

Our National Health Service is 60 years old this year. There should be a national celebration.

It is and remains, one of the envies of the world.

Its aim, to provide all irrespective of status or wealth the best of all possible healthcare, that is free at the point of use, and paid for out of national taxation. A kind of all embracing national insurance scheme that includes everyone and pools all risk, and with an allocation of resources according to medical need.

In the USA they clamour for a system likes ours, that is cheap , efficient, offers choice, and covers everyone.

Here however after 60 years, moves are well underway to dismantle our health service, break up its national structure, and move whole swathes outside of democratic ownership and control.

A new breed of ‘get rich quick’ entrepre-

neurs have been eying the health service for years and now they see their chance. Under the guise of ‘patient choice’ they are moving in to ‘offer services’.

United Healthcare, the American company, currently under investigation in the USA, is planning a big buy up of GP surgeries.

British companies too, like Virgin are looking to enter what has now become an NHS market.

That wasn’t the idea of those who founded the NHS in the aftermath of the war.

Like them we think that the NHS should not be subject to speculation or profiteering.

Our health is important-too important to be left to those who want to make a fast buck.

Keep Our NHS Public

Whatever Happened to St George’s Social Club?

Whoever visited St George’s Social Club passed remark about what a nice setup is was.

Friendly staff, nice atmosphere and a meeting place for workers at the Hospital-surgeons and porters could rub shoulders with each other and meet on an equal level.

Well that won’t happen

any more. The club was closed by the Trust on 31st December-allegedly because they needed the space. A petition opposing the closure, signed by 1773 staff was ignored

Whether or not the Trust even owned the premises is a matter of debate. The Board of Governors minutes covering the crucial

period appear to have conveniently gone missing.

So St George’s staff are now without somewhere of their own to socialise or celebrate.

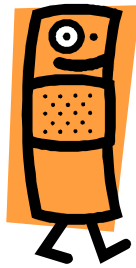
Be interesting to see what effect this has on staff morale

The 'Friends' get the brush off

The Friends of St George's who have been raising money for years for the Hospital were told they had to leave their well established shop.

The Trust Board has decided that nearly £3million pounds plus a fee for a consultancy company needs to be spent on a new entrance.

The new entrance, some have called it a 'shopping mall', is meant to sell St



George's to patients looking to make a choice of hospital.

So, why not a couple of 'one armed bandits' in the foyer –it not only brings in the customers, but adds to the Trust's revenue.

That seems to be the thinking behind the proposal.

Why not spend the £3 million on health care. We don't want hospitals competing with each other. We are all part of the NHS.

'Presumably health workers in Wandsworth are inundated with offers of subsidized housing'

Wandsworth Primary Care Trust sells off more NHS Family Silver

In last week's Wandsworth Borough News, the discerning reader may have notice the article announcing that Wandsworth Primary Care Trust proposed to sell off Arton Wilson House, in Roehampton Lane.

Arton Wilson House is a block, or rather blocks of flats, specifically for NHS workers. It also includes a Social Club.

Wandsworth PCT would have us believe that that there is no take up of these subsidized flats and only 37% are occupied.

Where they have been advertised no-body knows. Presumably health workers in Wandsworth are inundated with offers of subsidized housing.

So, the proposal was that at

the next meeting of the Trust Board, which was on Wednesday 30 January, the Trust Board would deliberate and then make a decision.

But the plot thickens. In the same edition of the WBN was an advert for the self same Arton Wilson House, offering the freehold for sale.

Somebody in the PCT had clearly jumped the gun.

No mater what decision the Trust Board came to-it looked very much like a done deal.

All this at a time when millions are being spent on a so called consultation over the Darzi proposals for London.

Wandsworth PCT couldn't

wait for the outcome of that before selling off more NHS family silver.

It all looks like a quick fix to get the sale done and dusted before the end of the tax year in April.

No patients or Wandsworth residents have been consulted about the closure, despite the PCTs commitment to 'consult with patients'

Let Wandsworth PCT know what you think about their short term squandering of our assets



'Wandsworth PCT is Selling off the family silver'

Who's runs your local health services !

The governing bodies of your NHS service providers are anything but democratic.

You can elect your MP-you can elect your Borough Council, and replace them both if you don't like them.

Yet the local hospital ,or the Primary Care Trust that provides your GP and other services-tare all paid for out of your taxes-yet you have no say in who sits on the

governing bodies of these organisations.

The Trust Boards consist of full time staff, and a Chair and Non Executive Directors, who are all supposedly there to represent local interests and to be drawn from a cross section of the local community

The Chair and non executive directors are all paid, and are appointed



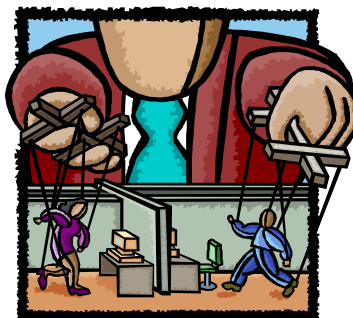
Who's who in Wandsworth Primary Care

The chair of Wandsworth PCT is Ian Reynolds. He is also the chair of City Bond Holdings PLC and a non executive director of General Industries PLC.

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The five non- executive directors of the PCT who are supposed to represent local interest include the following:

- A senior consultant for a venture capital company
- A member of the Institute of Directors
- Two accountants
- A Professor of Litigation at Nottingham University.
- So much for representing local interests and being drawn from a broad cross section of the local population



Whose pulling the strings?

Don't Forget 'Sicko'

This acclaimed film that lifts the lid on private healthcare is being shown at 'The Bread and Roses' Pub, Clapham Manor Street on Wednesday 20 February, 7.30pm in the back-room bar

SW London 'Keep Our NHS Public'

Keep our NHS Public Campaigning in SW London

**Join South West London
‘Keep Our NHS Public’**

**Campaigning to keep the
NHS in public hands .**

Our health is not for sale



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Darzi’s Proposals for Health- care in London

Some people may know about Lord Darzi’s proposals for healthcare in London-millions do not. So NHS London, the body that spends £11 billion of your money on health services for the capital, decided to hold a consultation process, at a cost of £15 million- so far about 2,000 people have returned the questionnaire.

One of the reasons that people aren’t that enthusiastic about the ‘tick box approach to gauging our feelings, is that many feel nobody will take any notice.

Here in Wandsworth we had a similar ‘consultation’ over the Bolingbroke. What difference did it make ?- overwhelmingly everyone said ‘let’s keep services at the Bolingbroke’ What did Wandsworth PCT do-exactly the opposite- and with government approval mothballed the much loved hospital.

NHS London, like all NHS governing bodies is not elected-why should they take any notice of what we say-we have no control over them whatsoever.

In May, Londoners will go to the polls to elect a new mayor and Greater London Assembly. We won’t be electing the equally powerful NHS London

Want a say in Mental Health care in Wandsworth

We are always being told in New Labour newspeak that ‘patients are to be put at the heart of the new NHS.’

Don’t you believe it.

South West London and St George’s Mental Health Trust based at Springfield Mental Health Hospital at Tooting Bec are looking for Non Executive Directors to set on the Trust Board-as we mentioned on page 1 these are suppose to be local people and drawn

from a cross section of the population.

The advert in the local paper said,

“People who have worked at main board level in a large company or complex organization are invited to put themselves forward as non-executive directors “(WBN 31 January)

So if you’ve not headed up a big company-like 99.99% of us-don’t bother-you’re not wanted by St George’s and South West London Mental Health Trust

Beware- Privatisers on the Prowl

Last week in Tower Hamlets in East London, doctors and patients took to the streets to protest against the decision by Tower Hamlets PCT to award the contract for St Paul’s Way Practice to private health company, Atos Healthcare.

Local doctors, including Dr Sam Everington, European GP of the year, and, ironically, the government’s advisor on access, were push

In Camden too in

North London, United Health, one of the major players in the private US health market, outbid local doctors to win the contract for a local practice.

We must be on the lookout in Wandsworth against any attempt by the PCT to privatise our GP surgeries.

Private companies have one aim- that is to maximize profits for their shareholders.

Our health is not a commodity that can bought and sold in the market place