

<http://www.naturalmatters.net/article.asp?article=3032&cat=85>

The Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital needs your support

09/03/2007

By Dr. Peter Fisher, Homeopath to Her Majesty, the Queen

Courtesy of <http://www.zeusinfoservice.com>

There is a serious threat to the future of the Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital (RLHH), and we need your help. Please forward this to sympathetic contacts.

Many of you have seen Carol Boyce's recent email DEATH BY STEALTH. We are grateful for her intervention on our behalf, and the bottom line, that there is a serious threat to the RLHH is correct, but some of the details given in that email were wrong. This email is to explain the situation, ask for your help and explain how best you can help us.

The basic problem is that several Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), the local bodies which pay for NHS care, have stopped, or drastically reduced, their funding of treatment at the RLHH. If a PCT stops funding, we cannot see patients resident in its area on the NHS. If too many PCTs stop funding, the Hospital may be forced to close, we are already having to cut our services. Some PCTs have completely cut off funding, other have set up 'referral management centres' which screen all referrals. Referral management centres vary, but often block most referrals to us.

In Greater London the boundaries of the PCTs are the same as those of the boroughs (although PCTs and Borough Councils are completely separate), elsewhere the situation is more complex, you can find which PCT's area you live in at www.nhs.uk/England/AuthoritiesTrusts/Pct/list.aspx. PCTs can basically be divided into the following four groups:

- continuing to fund
- put in a referral management centre
- recently cut the contract completely
- long term refusniks

I have listed these at the bottom. If your PCT does not appear it means that they are continuing to fund, or have never referred patients (which may be because they are nearer one of the other NHS Homoeopathic Hospitals).

The PCTs have generally justified their decisions by claiming that scientific evidence of effectiveness for homeopathy and other complementary therapies is lacking. It is clear

that the current financial crisis in the NHS has played a very important role, although some PCTs deny that money comes into it.

We believe that patients seen at the RLHH receive first class medical care from a team of highly trained specialist doctors and health professionals, who successfully integrate conventional and complementary treatments. Our unique approach enables us to treat successfully chronic complex conditions and our patients have a very high level of satisfaction with our services. We are pioneering new ways of using complementary therapies cost effectively, and expanding the scientific evidence.

Lurking behind all this is an orchestrated campaign, including the '13 doctors letter', the front page lead in The Times of 23 May 2006.

www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/debate/article724136.ece

Ernst's leak of the Smallwood report (also front page lead in The Times, August 2005), and the deeply flawed, but much publicised Lancet meta-analysis of Shang et al published only 2 days later are other elements (see attached, published in the journal eCAM for my take on this).

What you can do

1) Sign up for our campaign by completing the attached form (below) and returning to valerie.lawler@uclh.nhs.uk (Valerie Lawler, Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital,

Great Ormond Street, London WC1N 3HR, 020 7391 8890). We will keep you informed.

2) Write to your MP expressing your concern. Ask him to put a Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State (don't write to the Secretary of State yourself, you will just get a standard reply). We have some suggested Parliamentary Questions (below), but please be creative. Points you might like to include are:

Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) is very widely used (at least 20% of UK population, and higher for the chronically ill), but grossly under-researched: 0.08% of medical research expenditure.

In view of the declining number of innovative drugs, CAM may offer safe, effective and cost-effective options. The very centres that have the capacity to lead such research are being threatened by short term, financial driven local decisions.

Safety: Vioxx (rofecoxib) is estimated to have caused 88,000-140,000 extra cases of serious coronary heart disease in the US alone. SSRI antidepressants cause an increase in suicidal thoughts and behaviour in young people with depression. Long-

acting beta-agonists such as salmeterol used to treat asthma increase asthma-related deaths.

(The Truth about the Drug Companies by Marcia Angell is an authoritative and readable account of the declining number of really new drugs and the highly dubious commercial and marketing practices of Big Pharma).

According to a British Medical Journal Clinical Evidence review of 2,404 conventional treatments, only 15% were rated as beneficial, 22% as likely to be beneficial, 7% as trade off between benefits and harms, 5% as unlikely to be beneficial, 4% as likely to be ineffective or harmful and 47% of unknown effectiveness.

www.clinicalevidence.com/ceweb/about/knowledge.jsp

3) If your PCT is on the list of refusers or referral management centres below, write to the Chief Executive giving your point of view. You might want to say that you have positive experience of homeopathic treatment (and perhaps negative experience of conventional treatment) want to be assured that you will have the option of receiving NHS homeopathy. You will be able to find the address of your PCT from www.nhs.uk/England/AuthoritiesTrusts/Pct/list.aspx. It is best to write direct to the Chief Executive.

If your PCT does not appear on the list below, I would not presently advise you to write.

4) If you know any celebrities, high-profile individuals, politicians etc who might be willing to help, please let us know.

Dr Peter Fisher
Clinical Director, Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital
Great Ormond Street, London WC1N 3HR

020 7391 8890

peter.fisher@uclh.nhs.uk
<http://www.uclh.nhs.uk/rlhh>

Long term refusal to fund
Adur, Arun & Worthing PCT
Bexhill & Rother PCT
Bracknell Forest PCT
Brighton & Hove City PCT
Colchester PCT
Crawley PCT
Croydon PCT
Eastbourne Downs PCT

Epping Forest PCT
Harlow PCT
Hastings & St Leonards PCT
Horsham & Chanctonbury PCT
Lambeth PCT
Lewisham PCT
Maldon & South Chelmsford PCT
Mid-Sussex PCT
Newbury & Community PCT
North Chelmsford PCT
Reading PCT
Slough PCT
Southwark PCT
Sussex Downs & Weald PCT
Tendring PCT
Uttlesford PCT
Waveney PCT
Western Sussex PCT
Windsor, Ascot & Maidenhead PCT
Witham Braintree & Halstead PCT
Wokingham PCT

Recent referral management centre or other 'demand management'

Kensington & Chelsea PCT
Westminster PCT
Barnet PCT
Hammersmith & Fulham PCT
Islington PCT
West Kent PCT (referrals go to Tunbridge Wells Homoeopathic Hospital)

Recent complete cessation of contract

Brent PCT
Broadband PCT
Cambridge City PCT
Central Suffolk PCT
E. Cambridgeshire & Fenland PCT
Great Yarmouth PCT
Harrow PCT
Hillingdon PCT
Huntingdonshire PCT
Ipswich PCT

N. Norfolk PCT
N. Peterborough PCT
Norwich PCT
S. Cambridgeshire PCT
S. Peterborough PCT
Southern Norfolk PCT
Suffolk Coastal PCT
Suffolk West PCT
W. Norfolk PCT