

Doctors and surgeries

I have taken up the issue of how many GPs we have in the area and whether we need more to cope with demand for surgery appointments.

The local NHS tells me that "recruitment of GPs is difficult nationally with high retirement rates, less GPs willing to take on partnership roles and many GPs now choosing to work part time." They assure me they can fill vacancies though it sometimes takes time to do so. They also stress that they are recruiting more nurse practitioners, pharmacists, paramedics and physicians' assistants. There is more money for these roles under the new GP contract. The Clinical Commissioning Group for our area has now commissioned evening and week-end provision in accordance with the new national policy to be more flexible for patients.

We have needs to cater for growth in patient numbers and to provide a flexible service for people in employment or with family responsibilities which limit the times of appointment they can accept. I wish this to be fully taken into account. The government is providing substantial new money for the NHS, so I wish to see local service improvements from the extra cash.