

# Hospital Messenger

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# SAVE LIVES NOT MONEY



← Accident & Emergency

**CLOSED**



## A&E AT HEMEL TO CLOSE BY APRIL 2006

The bureaucrats will say that we will still have an A&E Department. We won't! It will close and be replaced by a minor injuries unit. They will try to still call it A&E, but from April next year no Blue Light ambulances will go there. If you are about to die, the ambulance will have to take you to Watford.

## “ACT NOW IF YOU WANT TO SAVE HOSPITAL SERVICES”

Mike Penning, new MP for Hemel Hempstead, urges all the residents of Dacorum to act without delay to stop the imminent closure of acute services at Hemel Hospital. Mike warned “The health bureaucrats are using local financial deficits caused by government under funding as an excuse to bulldoze through the early closure of acute and other services at Hemel. Blue light ambulances will have to be redirected elsewhere after April next year.”

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# MESSAGE FROM MIKE

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Unfortunately by the time I was elected as your MP the government had already decided to downgrade Hemel's hospital. Despite this 'fait accompli' I determined to quiz the government and the local health officials on their disastrous plan for Hemel. The Secretary of State for Health, Patricia Hewitt, told me categorically that the future of our hospital is a purely local matter and that she could not and would not intervene. However, during the course of my various meetings it came to light that our local Health Authority was insolvent and heading for a massive £100 million deficit in this current year. They have been told by the government that they must slash future spending and repay all their debts.

Our local hospital trust plan to make savings of £26 million per annum. Their list of cuts are reproduced on Page 3. Most significantly they seek to save £10 million per annum by accelerating the downsizing of our hospital. In plain English they plan to bring forward by six years the closure of acute and other services at Hemel Hempstead Hospital.

# LONGER WAITS AT WATFORD

There will be a shortage of sixty beds at Watford when Hemel invade their A&E. Today patients are shipped from Watford to Hemel because Watford can't cope. More patients and no investment will mean two things – longer waiting times and more fatalities. This is unacceptable.

# 999 MORE AMBULANCES WILL BE NEEDED

In 2001/02 over 20,000 patients were carried by ambulance to Hemel A&E with urgent, very urgent or life threatening conditions. The proposed closure at Hemel will mean that next year the vast proportion of these patients will need to be ambulated to Watford. The extra nine mile journey will take longer and will mean that journey times will increase and many more ambulances and skilled paramedics will be needed. No provision has been made for this.

# WATFORD WON'T COPE



The early closure of acute medicine at Hemel and the transfer of patients to Watford will mean that Watford will not be able to cope. The original plans involved the extensive repair, rebuilding and expansion of the run down Watford facilities and new roads to cope with the additional patients by 2011. These investment plans seem to have been abandoned in a panic to save money at all costs. The bureaucrats now plan to start running down services at Hemel from September this year and by April 2006 to close completely our acute services. Just where is the sense in closing a modern well maintained facility in Hemel where our road links are excellent in favour of a decrepit falling down ancient building located right in the middle of one of the most congested traffic areas in the County? What chance will an ambulance stand in the height of the Christmas shopping season or on a football or rugby match day when thousands of people clog up the roads for hours on end.

# £10 MILLION NEEDED TO KEEP A&E IS JUST £39 PER-HEAD

Hemel A&E serves a catchment area with a population of 260,000. The £10million forced saving that is causing the early closure of our A&E amounts to just £39 per head per annum. In fact the whole £26million that West Herts Hospital are planning to save is just £100 per head.

The government funding for the current year for Dacorum is £960 per head. How does this compare with the constituencies of certain Government Ministers?

AREA	MP	2005-06	ALLOCATION PER HEAD
Leicester City PCT	Patricia Hewitt MP – Secretary of State for Health	£1,131	
Doncaster Central PCT	Rosie Winterton MP – Minister of Health	£1,165	
Sedgefield PCT	Tony Blair MP – Prime Minister	£1,210	
Salford PCT	Hazel Blears MP – Minister	£1,346	
Lambeth PCT	Tessa Jowell MP – Secretary of State	£1,407	

DACORUM PCT		£960	
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Dacorum are obviously under funded. Tony Blair's constituents get £250 a year per head more funding than we do.

# WE'VE PAID OUR EVER INCREASING TAXES - SO WHERE ARE OUR A&E AND ACUTE SERVICES??

## VISIT OUR HOSPITAL WEBSITE...

Keep up to date with what is happening and sign up to help us. Download petition forms, Investing in Your Health document and other information.

[www.savehemelhospital.com](http://www.savehemelhospital.com)

# FINANCIAL CRISIS

## HEALTH AUTHORITY HEADING FOR £100 MILLION DEFICIT

The Health Authority deficit at March 2005 was £47.5 million. They have stated that unless the underlying causes of this are tackled the deficit will increase by a further £52.5 million to £100 million by April 2006.

## WHO IS IN DEFICIT?

Forecast deficits by April next year:

TRUST	DEFICIT
Bedford Heartlands PCT	£20.0m
Luton PCT	£1.9m
NH & Stevenage	£2.5m
Bedford Hospital	£12.1m
E&N Herts Hospitals	£18.9m
West Herts Hospitals	£19.3m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£74.6m</b>

## CUT THE BUREAUCRACY NOT OUR ACUTE SERVICES

If cuts have to be made, why not cut the bureaucracy? Which would you rather have;

HR Managers, Press Officers, Communications Directors, Waiting List Administrators, Accountants, or

Life saving services and acute facilities at Hemel Hospital?

## HEMEL HOSPITAL CRISIS

West Herts Hospital Trust runs the hospitals at Hemel, Watford, St Albans and Mount Vernon. In April 2005 they were in deficit by £11million. In this current year they plan to reduce net costs by £11.5million but still end up with an increased deficit of £19million.

The plan that they have submitted to Government identifies some 24 projects for cutting costs which amount to an annual saving of some £27million. A list of their proposed cuts reveals projects with a saving of £1million or more as follows:

CUT	SAVING
Surgical services	£1.4m
Length of stay	£1.5m
Outpatients performance	£1.5m
Outpatient costs	£4.3m
Corporate Management	£3.8m
Prescriptions	£2.0m
Unspecified savings	£1.0m
Early closures at Hemel	£10.0m

## GOVERNMENT FORCE CLOSURES

The Hospital Trust originally planned cuts of some £7.5million a year which would have taken longer to recover the deficits but would not have meant any early closures at Hemel Hospital. On May 4th the Government told them that this was not acceptable and instructed them to save more money and repay overspends much quicker.

To do this they decided the only way was to immediately start to close down services at Hemel and transfer them to Watford even though the necessary investment at Watford in buildings, repairs, roads and refurbishment have not yet been approved, let alone started.

## COMMENTS FROM THE BUREAUCRATS

"There are serious financial problems right across the health service in Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire."

*Patricia Hewitt – Secretary of State*

There is no more money and we will not bail them out.

*Patricia Hewitt – Secretary of State*

"There are currently no plans to modify ambulance stationing patterns in relation to the transfer of Hemel Hempstead A&E unit."

*Rosie Winterton – Health Minister*

"The configuration of local services is a matter for the local health authority. Ministers have no formal part in this process unless the matter is referred by the overview & scrutiny committee. (Herts County Council)"

*Rosie Winterton – Health Minister*

"In the last 12 months there have been significant increases in demand at all acute hospitals."

*John de Bruax*

*CEO Beds & Herts Health Authority.*

"The funding we receive from government is on the basis of a national formula ... which ranks Beds & Herts 25th out of 28 SHA's (the fourth poorest funded)"

*John de Bruax*

*CEO Beds & Herts Health Authority*

"Unless something is done about the financial shortfall we will not have the money to pay staff wages later this year"

*David Law*

*CEO West Herts Hospital Trust*

"The accelerated transfer of acute services from Hemel to Watford will mean a shortfall of just 60 beds at Watford"

*David Law*

*CEO West Herts Hospital Trust*

# THE CUTS

## NO BLUE LIGHT AMBULANCES TO HEMEL

From April next year no emergency ambulances will go to Hemel. They will make the longer journey to Watford fighting their way through the horrendous traffic.

## LONGER WAITS IN WATFORD A&E

More ambulances to Watford without the necessary investment in facilities will mean just one thing – longer waits for treatment.

## CASUALTY (A&E)

Acute and major trauma treatment will be transferred from Hemel to Watford and we will be left with a Minor Injuries Unit.

## INTENSIVE CARE

Closed at Hemel. High dependency beds reduced in number.

## STROKE UNIT

Our brand new state of the art Stroke Unit will not be able to offer its full range of services once acute facilities disappear to Watford and will need to be 'scaled down'

## SURGERY

Acute surgery to close and move to Watford

## MATERNITY

A Birth unit replaces full maternity services. They plan to downsize the Birth Unit.

## PAEDIATRIC

Overnight inpatient beds for children closed at Hemel. They have to go to Watford.

## HOSPITAL BEDS

Wards to close and beds to reduce. No new wards built at Watford.

## MRSA

More intensive use of fewer beds has been proved to contribute to MRSA and other infections.

## JOBS, JOBS, JOBS

The cuts are to save money. There will be redundancies at Hemel Hospital. Skilled workers may lose their jobs. The lucky ones will face the terrible journey every day to Watford.

# SAVE LIVES NOT MONEY

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