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Our ref: LAB/Dem Svs  
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Dear Mr. Phipps

## **GP-LED HEALTH CENTRES**

Thank you for taking the time to provide Members of the Council with your presentation on new proposals for the establishment of two new Health Centres.

I know that the PCT want to hear from people on specific issues such as service provision, criteria to be used in selecting the organisation to run the new Health Centres and monitoring. The Panel however had a number of comments to make generally which I will set out below as the Council's response to the formal consultation process.

Members had very real concerns regarding the registration process with the Health Centre and the possibility that this could mean that GP's might lose funds as people "deregistered". It was noted that approximately 6000 people were needed to register with the Health Centres for them to be viable. Members were in no doubt that this would have an impact on service provision by local GP surgeries which might be forced to close or cut back on staff.

The issue of transport and car parking was of considerable concern to Panel Members especially since the QEII was now the preferred site for the new local general hospital at Welwyn, Hatfield.

In response to the question about what services could be provided from each Health Centre. Members supported the provision of a pharmacy, minor surgery, blood tests, pre natal checks, stitch removal, optician and urgent dentistry.

Members were of the view that knowledge of the community, generally, culturally and demographically was essential for the Health Centres to be viable and preference should be given to these being staffed using local GPs. It was felt that Health Centres should be able to access a translation service in recognition of the fact that the area continued to grow.

It was recognised that the Health Centres were seen to be a direct response to a public survey whereby Members of the public had complained that they were not able to access GPs for appointments. Following on from this, Members felt that the consideration should be given to the Health Centres opening from 7am rather than the 8am being proposed.

In relation to the question raised within the consultation document about effective monitoring, Members were of the view that monitoring profit and investing this back into the system was essential to ensure that the provision of service met what the community needed and kept up with continually changing needs. It was felt that the results of monitoring should be fed back to the community and this could be done using the Council's Community Voice meetings.

Thank you for providing the Council with the opportunity to comment on the proposals.

Yours sincerely

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