

Media Statement

“Slawit Docs and patients fight GP funding cutbacks”

“Gloves come off as Slawit rallies to support resurrected GP Surgery”

“Slawit GPs call for aid and the public comes running”

“Public wake up to NHS meltdown”

“NHS England breaks law in GP funding cuts”

“Yorkshire patient takes legal action against GP cuts”

Drs Shamsee, Ward & Wilding – 10th November 2015 - 0800 hours

Patients could face a two week or more wait for an appointment with their GP after health chiefs slashed funding for our surgery in Slaithwaite.

NHS England has told Slaithwaite (aka “Slawit”) Health Centre Practice near Huddersfield, that nearly half (43.63%) our budget will be cut over the next three years.

This will result in the practice losing almost half our GPs, nurses and receptionists. Our current complement of 2.5 whole time equivalent GPs and 1.8 nurses will be reduced to less than 1.5 GPs and 0.9 nurses who will be *expected to deliver care to the same number of local people.*

The practice has 4,838 registered patients in the village and surrounding communities. More than 1,100 new patients have registered since it was reborn following virtual closure.

The practice is rated “amongst the best” in the country on the NHS Choices web-site and has been run since 2008 by three GP partners – Dr Yusuf Shamsee, Dr James Ward and Dr Paul Wilding with GP associates.

“We do not believe that we can provide a safe service with these proposed staffing levels,” said Dr Wilding. “Same day access will be severely restricted and the waiting time for routine appointments will be up to two weeks.

“Slaithwaite patients will access 999 and A&E services more frequently and the number of unnecessary hospital admissions will rise. The net cost to the wider system will be far more than the money saved from our budget.”

The funding cut would reduce available GP and nurse appointments from 330 to 186 and from 310 to 175 per week respectively.

NHS England is reviewing Personal Medical Service (PMS) GP practice contracts as part of NHS-wide “efficiency savings”.

The contract imposition affects around a forty per cent of GP practices in England and 22 (of 38) practices in Huddersfield who are on PMS contracts. The total amount of money removed from the Huddersfield practices will be around two million pounds.

The local health commissioner (Greater Huddersfield Clinical Commissioning Group) will retain a proportion of this funding to be spent across all 38 Huddersfield practices. The proportion retained locally will be 12.5% (2015/2016), 50% (2016/2017) and 75% (2017/2018).

Drs Shamsee, Ward and Wilding said: “We do NOT oppose change. We believe that the country needs honesty and urgent discussion with citizens, radical service redesign and cohesive cross party national political leadership to secure the ethos of the NHS - free at the point of need care. We embrace change but eschew death by a thousand cuts. These impending cuts to GP services nationally will have disastrous consequences for the wider NHS now and in the future.”

Dr Wilding added: “We are humbled by the level of support from the local community. The practice effectively closed in 2003 and we are proud of what we have achieved together in delivering excellent access and care at Slaithwaite Health Centre.”

“We are NHS employees with little scope for challenging this nonsense. The proportion of NHS spending on primary care is now at a historical low - around 8 (yes EIGHT) per cent to deliver over 1m consultations per day nationally. The country needs investment in GP services. The NHS should be a levelling *up* funding for GP practices, not robbing Peter to pay Paul.”

In a separate development the practice was informed last week of a legal challenge against NHS England after a patient affected by the cuts was advised by a high profile legal firm that NHS England was in breach of several laws relating to statutory patient consultation.

The partners support the approach of the *NHS Survival* campaign group who are campaigning for national cross-party political leadership and a Royal Commission inquiry into the future of health and social care in our country.

Patients at the surgery are launching the “Family Doctor S.O.S (Save our Surgeries)” campaign on social media.

Useful links:

Dedicated telephone access number for media enquiries: 07760 900164

www.familydoctorSOS.co.uk

@familydoctorSOS

www.NHSsurvival.org

@NHSsurvival

Editors notes:

Similar reductions in a different type of contract, General Medical Services (GMS) were found to be unlawful after a legal challenge last year.

“NHS England found to have 'acted unlawfully' after MPIG legal challenge”
Pulse Magazine article 25/11/2014 - web link:

<http://www.pulsetoday.co.uk/home/finance-and-practice-life-news/nhs-england-found-to-have-acted-unlawfully-after-mpig-legal-challenge/20008570.fullarticle>

Greater Huddersfield Clinical Commissioning Group:

Broad Lea House
Dyson Wood Way
Bradley
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire
HD2 1GZ
01484 464000

NHS England North:

3 Leeds City Office Park, Meadow Lane
Leeds, West Yorkshire
LS11 5BD
Tel: 0113 82 52700

Contact details for other local GP practices affected:

Dr Ajay Sharma , Elmwood Health Centre, Holmfirth, Huddersfield 01484 503351