

Dr Toby Quartley, GP partner Alchester Medical Group and chair of the local federation of GP practices, talks about the future of the practice and future provision of primary care in Bicester in a special video for patients and staff.

Bicester's booming. We expect some 20,000 to 30,000 new patients coming into the Bicester area over the next ten to fifteen years. There's also growth happening at Heyford some six miles away and that will no doubt have an impact on the GP surgeries here in Bicester as well.

So if we do nothing the practices will fill up and the practices in Bicester, ourselves included as well as Montgomery-House Surgery and Bicester Health Centre, are filling up rapidly and while there are possibilities of small-scale expansion within those buildings there is not the possibility to expand enough to look after all these new patients.

One of the problems we have working across three sites is it's very difficult to provide efficient, effective services when we're trying to open three surgeries. So what we're looking to do is to come together on one site to provide more effective more efficient patient care and hopefully provide more enhanced services with that.

So our plans are to find a new location where we can all be in one building on one site to provide a much more fit for purpose doctors surgery as we go forward to provide patients with more opportunities for care without having to travel further afield. So what's happening in Bicester is not something just affecting the Alchester Medical Group. It's affecting all three surgeries.

So we've had to work together to talk to each other about where we're all at what our capacity is now and in the near future and how we can meet the growing demands of this rapidly growing town. There is really only one viable option and that is to relocate the Alchester Medical Group with Montgomery-House Surgery on to a new site.

We're looking to provide more services such as outpatient services from the hospitals. So we would be able to offer those from the site as well. And then there is also work being done with the community health provider at the moment so that we can look to provide more of those services within the building to provide a much more joined up team around the patient and provide that care much more closely to home with much more improved communication technology to allow that to work.

Our aim now, and this video is part of that, is to encourage patients to engage with their practices to have these conversations, to talk to us about the services we offer and what the future may hold. So this is the beginning of that patient engagement process, to have that conversation around the current situation we're facing.

I know some patients will be concerned that if the GP surgery moves then they might have a longer journey to go and see their family doctor and we appreciate that and that's a piece of work we have to look closely at with our patients.

But the aim of bringing much more services to these health hubs is to mean that those long journeys on the busy roads around to Oxford and Banbury can be reduced. So that patients can have their care here in Bicester much more easily and much more readily than having to travel further afield.

Talk to us, talk to staff at the surgeries and let's have a conversation about how we can do this together so that we all end up with a doctors surgery - a health hub - that we're all proud of.

If we do nothing then surgeries will close. And these new patients coming to Bicester will not have a doctors' surgery to register at and to have their care from.

So it's absolutely vital that we work this out together because doing nothing will be the most undesirable option.

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