

Community Bulletin

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Next steps in securing GP care for North Tawton

As you will know, Wallingbrook Health Group has served notice to terminate its contract for providing GP services in the North Tawton area, as of 31 March 2015. While it is business as usual until then at the Devonshire House surgery, NHS England is legally responsible for making sure care continues to be available from 1 April 2015 for people registered with the practice.

As a result, we are now in discussion with Bow Medical Practice, with a view to their providing a service at North Tawton under a one-year contract. Encouragingly, the landlord of Devonshire House has also indicated that he would be willing to continue to make the premises available as a GP surgery.

However, before taking any decisions, we are keen to talk with patients, with the wider public and with councillors on overview and scrutiny committees, whose role is to look at developments in the NHS on behalf of the communities they serve. As well as discussing the prospective handover to Bow Surgery, we need to look at all possible options for the longer term (from 2016).

I have met with North Tawton Patient Participation Group (PPG) and with members of the town council to begin this process. As a result, a North Tawton Engagement Group is being set up to keep people involved over coming months. Both the council and the PPG are part of the group, but it is important to make sure others also have the opportunity to take part, representing a cross-section of the community. For example:

- Villages and outlying areas around North Tawton, where many of the surgery's patients live
- Different age groups – younger people, older people and those of working age
- Families
- People with disabilities
- People from ethnic minorities

The group's work will pave the way for a **public meeting** on **15 January 2015**, when I will be able to tell you far more about the tie-up with Bow Medical Practice and we will be able to discuss ways forward beyond 2016. Further details will be circulated once arrangements are confirmed.

If you are interested in the Engagement Group or would like to sign up for future editions of this bulletin, please let me know. I am also collating any questions you have, so these can be answered in the bulletin.

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