

## Editorial - July 2005

Last year the Med.Chi and the BMA held a joint meeting to discuss some of the issues involved in the restructuring of health-care in the City. One of the speakers was Professor Derek Alderson. An important theme of his presentation was the need to unify specialist services throughout the City. A transcript of the meeting was published on the Med.Chi website in April 2004. A video/DVD of the proceedings is available on loan from the secretary ([janet@bristolmedchi.co.uk](mailto:janet@bristolmedchi.co.uk)). It is as relevant today as it was then. I have recently interviewed Professor Alderson and have asked him to expand and further explain his views. What does he think now?

The interview, which is published in this issue, contains a lot of material and is thought-provoking and controversial. A summary is given at the end of the article in the form of bullet points. The medical profession in Bristol should formulate its views and express them clearly. Otherwise, no-one will take any notice of us and the medical perspective will continue to be lost. A second theme involves the need for there to be integrated planning of hospital/specialist services. The idea of two large hospitals doing more or less the same things is unsustainable in the long run. There should be a single acute trust covering the city.

We welcome the substantial planned investment in Bristol healthcare. We would not wish to do anything to jeopardize it. At the same time, it is important to ensure that the best possible value is obtained for such a large financial commitment. This will only happen if planning is undertaken in a thoughtful, cooperative, and realistic way. Hence our wish to encourage constructive debate.

The Med.Chi website is available as a medium for the expression of views. PLEASE do let us know what you think of the six points at the end of the interview or indeed anything else. We will publish all opinions however outrageous as long as they are not libellous and are signed!

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Have a good and thoughtful summer.

R. Langton Hewer. Editor.