

CAR PARKING AT THE BRI.

Hospital car parking has been a major problem in Bristol for many years – particularly at the BRI. A recent letter in the Evening Post exemplified what this can mean for patients. An extract of the letter is given below:

'For all of last year my daughter, her baby, and I were regularly visiting the Haematology and Oncology Hospital for my daughter's chemotherapy treatment. We were there at least four times a fortnight for part of the year and twice every three weeks for the remainder of the year. The parking problems caused a great deal of added stress to every visit, without fail. The cost went up considerably during the year and the number of spaces reduced due to building works. I frequently had to drop my daughter off to start her treatment alone while I had to search for a space with her baby son in my car.

Woe betide anyone whose tickets had expired – maybe because their chemotherapy or radiotherapy took longer than expected. Their car would then be clamped or ticketed by the over vigilant parking attendant.

On one occasion, after searching for an hour for a space, I finally joined my daughter on the chemotherapy ward to find her treatment hadn't yet started because her nurse couldn't find anywhere to park.

It's an unimaginable anxiety to have a loved one endure such a gruelling illness and treatment and this totally unnecessary and easily avoided angst caused by car parking is intolerable . . .'

The letter goes on to quote a spokesman for UBHT who apparently suggested that many car parkers at the BRI are, in fact, shoppers and not people who have come to the hospital to receive life-saving treatment. The letter ends up – *'due to the wonderful care my daughter received we are no longer regular visitors, but we feel deeply for those who, like us last year, do not have the strength to complain and instead endure the most difficult times until they can be grateful they are over'.*

The writer to this letter seems to be expressing the feelings/experiences of many people who have to attend the BRI. It is disgraceful that the BRI is being built up as being the main hospital in Bristol and yet the car parking is so inadequate. Many possible solutions exist including renting one of the floors in one of the nearby multi-storey car parks.

We invite the UBHT to state how they propose to deal with the car parking issue. Hand wringing is not appropriate!

RLH