

7 April 2009

Local blood centre closure must be reconsidered

Keighley and Ilkley Conservative Parliamentary Candidate Kris Hopkins has written to the Chief Executive of NHS Blood and Transplant asking her to reconsider plans to close the Leeds Blood Centre because of the potentially catastrophic threat it could place on patients' lives at Airedale Hospital.

Cllr Hopkins said transporting blood supplies to Airedale Hospital from Sheffield – which is set to become a new “super-Centre” – rather than Leeds would almost double the length of the journey and increase the risk to patients' wellbeing.

“It is a very worrying development and, other than the Government trying to save money, I see no reasonable argument for it,” he commented.

“Blood supplies coming from Leeds to Airedale currently have to travel a distance of 27 miles. However, if the Leeds Blood Centre is forced to close, this journey will increase to more than 50 miles.

“Blood supplies can often fluctuate and, in an emergency, a lot of blood can be needed at very short notice.

“Additionally, we all remember the recent floods in Sheffield which effectively cut parts of that city and, indeed, South Yorkshire off from West Yorkshire.

“The bottom line is that the closure of the Leeds Blood Centre creates a risk to patients' lives in Keighley and Ilkley that the Government should not be taking.

“I have therefore written to Lynda Hamlyn, Chief Executive of NHS Blood and Transplant, and asked her to reverse this ill-advised decision.”

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