

Office of Steve Baker MP

Steve Baker MP questions top NHS Leader on whether A&E can return to Wycombe Hospital

Local MP discusses whether A&E can return back to Wycombe after eleven years and discusses important developments in modern urgent treatment with senior NHS England director.

On Friday 22nd September 2017, Steve Baker MP met Professor Jonathan Benger, National Clinical Director for Urgent Care for NHS England at Wycombe Hospital. Professor Benger is the most senior clinician to advise the NHS on accident and emergency services in the country. Knowing that many people living in High Wycombe would like to see A&E returned to Wycombe Hospital, Mr Baker invited Professor Benger to come to Wycombe, view the hospital facilities and give him and independent view on whether it was possible for A&E to be reopened.

Professor Benger was taken on a detailed tour around Wycombe Hospital and reflected on what he had seen with Steve Baker, NHS staff and directors of the Hospital. The discussion focused on the dramatic advances in medicine since Wycombe Hospital was built in the 1960s, the implications of local population growth and demographics.

Professor Benger concluded current clinical practice meant bringing back A&E to Wycombe Hospital would not be practical, but said it would be the right place for an Urgent Treatment Centre especially as it would complement the work of the stroke and heart unit currently located at Wycombe Hospital. He was clear an Urgent Treatment Centre would be equipped to diagnose and deal with most of the conditions people needed to be seen urgently, with specialists being consulted when necessary for treatment. It would be part of locally integrated urgent and emergency care services working in conjunction with the ambulance service, NHS 111, local GPs, hospital A&E services and other providers.

The link to the video conversation between Mr Baker and Professor Jonathan Benger is here: <https://youtu.be/CoJvCnmLaxs>

Mr Baker said:

"I am grateful to Professor Benger for coming to Wycombe to give an independent view on local hospital urgent treatment services. It is critically important patients get the right treatment, at the right time at the right hospital. I want an A&E at Wycombe Hospital, but appreciate this is not possible for clinical reasons. An Urgent Treatment Centre will allow us to get the vast majority of the treatment that we need without having to different and bigger hospitals. I am asking local NHS leaders to deliver an Urgent Treatment Centre as soon as possible."

Professor Jonathan Benger, National Clinical Director for Urgent Care for NHS England said:

"It was a pleasure to visit Wycombe and talk to front-line staff and managers about their work and plans to ensure that local people get the right level of care in the right place."

"All the evidence shows us that outcomes for patients improve when specialist, life or death care is provided in larger, well-equipped and staffed centres- even if there is a bit longer to travel to get there. Meanwhile, the majority of less serious urgent care needs can be well met by local, convenient facilities like the one I visited in Wycombe as part of a wider urgent care network which also includes GPs, NHS 111 and ambulance service."

"Getting urgent and emergency care right often means taking difficult decisions, but I am confident that this approach is right for Wycombe, as it is across the country."

Office of Steve Baker MP

Commenting on the visit, **Neil Dardis, chief executive of Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust**, said,

“We were delighted to welcome Steve and Professor Bengler to Wycombe Hospital. Wycombe Hospital has a vibrant future and is key to our ambition to become one of the safest healthcare systems in the country. We were delighted to show our visitors our leading-edge stroke and cardiac facilities, where we have some of the best outcomes in the country. We talked about what we are doing to provide more care closer to home, helping people to stay independent and in control of their own health and wellbeing. We were also able to talk about how we are working closely with other service providers, including the minor injuries unit and local GPs, to look at how we can best provide urgent care support for the people of Wycombe in the future.”