

Hospital to close

Shock announcement

The Regional Health Department has announced that the local hospital will be closed in two years time.

Local area

The hospital was built in 1935 to serve this small town and the villages and farms in the area. Ten years ago the Regional Health Department suggested closing the hospital, but local people fought the idea so hard that the hospital was allowed to stay open.

Money

Since then a lot of money has been given by people who use the hospital in order to keep the building and equipment in good condition.

Patients speak out

Our reporter asked a number of patients what they felt:

"It's particularly important for us older people who live in the villages. We haven't got cars to drive all the way to the city hospital to see a specialist - it's fifty miles - you can't get there and back on the bus in one day."

"Look, I've got a car so I can get to the city and back. The problem is that I'm going to lose a day's wages while I do it. The local hospital may be small, but it's here, and I can be in and out in an hour."

Family feelings

"When my grandmother was dying, she was very ill for a long time. We could visit her every day because she was

near us. The nurses were wonderfully kind, they're all part of a small team, so they knew all the family and were very helpful to us. It was a bad time, but if the hospital wasn't there, we wouldn't have had the equipment to nurse her at home, so she'd have been far away, not seeing us often, that would have been much worse."

Top specialists

It is said that it is not possible for top specialists to work at such a small hospital, but in fact there are specialists who come to the hospital every week. When asked about the cost of this, Dr A. Chan told our reporter, "It saves time and money for one specialist to travel 100 miles instead of asking 20 patients to travel the same distance to see the specialist in the city. . . ."

Look at the newspaper article about a hospital and decide whether the following statements are true. If you think a statement is true, put a tick in the box under 'Yes'. If not, tick the box under 'No'.

- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. The local hospital was nearly closed ten years ago. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. The government has had to spend a lot of money to repair the local hospital. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Old people will find it hard to go to the city hospital. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Working people think the local hospital is unnecessary. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Local people prefer to nurse dying relatives in their own homes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. The nurses at the local hospital make difficulties for patients' families. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Some specialists visit the local hospital regularly. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Dr Chan believes it would be better to see all the patients at the city hospital. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |