

**Save**

31<sup>st</sup> October 2006

**Whipps Cross Hospital**  
as our District General Hospital  
~ fully functioning - fully funded ~



Launching a community-wide campaign to defend Whipps Cross and our local community health services - **Second Public meeting**

**700 at Meeting to Save Whipps Cross**



*Report over the page*

Walthamstow

**Thursday 2 November, 7.30**

Discussion and Speakers including:

**Dr Indira Mootosamy** BMA chair of LNG Whipps Cross consultant radiologist

**Dr Alan Hakim** Consultant Rheumatologist, Chair of Whipps Cross Medical Staff Association ,

**Dot Gibson** National Pensioners Convention

**Charlotte Monro** UNISON Whipps Cross Staff Side

MPs Neil Gerrard , Harry Cohen, and Ian Duncan-Smith will be attending

**Al Badr Hall, Lea Bridge Road** Corner of Northumberland Rd, (Between Bakers arms & Markhouse Rd., next to mosque)

**Wednesday November 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**National Lobby and March**  
**NHS Together Stop Cuts Closures and Privatisation**

**Lobby of parliament** called by the TUC, health unions and staff associations -  
Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November, Rally 12.00 Central Methodist Hall (Let your MP know you want to see them)

**March** to join the lobby called by National Pensioners Convention and supported by Keep our NHS Public and local health unions. Assemble 11.30 for 12.00 start, Forum Magnum Sq., York Rd, (Westminster Bridge end) by the river [www.keepournhspublic.com](http://www.keepournhspublic.com)

**Walthamstow contingent** meeting at Walthamstow Central tube 10.30 am – book time off now to join

Please help make this lobby as big as possible – your presence counts!



# Public Meeting for Whipps Cross

*Report from one of the audience*

Seven hundred people packed the James Hawkey Hall in Woodford Green on Thursday night for the first of two meetings to launch the Save Whipps Cross Campaign. They were joined by three MPs, several councillors, and two camera crews, as an expert panel of front-line health workers described the impact of the looming cuts and reforms on local health services.

**Panel:** (left to right)

Dr Charles Gauci; Dr. Indira Mootosamy, Chair of LNC, Norma Dudley (chair), AMICUS; Charlotte Monro, Unison and WX Staff side; Dr Sanjoy Kumar, GP; Dr Alan Hakim, Chair MSA, Whipps Cross.



Charlotte Monro spoke vividly of the effect the cuts were having on staff morale, as staff “are made to feel like a liability rather than an asset”. She explained the dramatic increase in days when the hospital has been on “red or yellow alert” over recent months, indicating a serious shortage of beds following three ward closures.

Alan Hakim gave a clear and scathing account of the realities behind the principle of “patient choice”. He explained how the people who devise the choices may decide not to offer the choice that most patients actually want, i.e. a fully-funded, good-quality, local district general hospital.

Dr Kumar, a Chingford GP and lifelong local resident, described how his patients value the high-quality service they receive at Whipps Cross, and how this was borne out by his own personal experiences of the hospital.

Several consultants spoke from the floor to explain how it takes years to build up a highly specialized and respected department, such as cardiology, and only a day to destroy it. They pleaded with patients to choose their local hospital when offered a choice - or face losing it. They also argued that the proposals for Whipps Cross to become an emergency medical centre would make it unviable. A&E would lack essential specialist back-up services with leading consultants leaving and junior doctors would seek more comprehensive training elsewhere. This would then leave the hospital vulnerable to total closure.

Having negotiated their way through a thorny maze of commissioning, Primary Care Trusts, private finance initiatives, stakeholders, strategic health authorities and the “Turnaround Team”, the panel handed over to the MPs.

Ian Duncan-Smith foresaw that if Whipps Cross is down graded closure will follow with the land sold for a block of flats, and roused the audience to a thunderous shout of “We will save Whipps Cross”. Whilst Lee Scott (MP for Ilford North), whose constituents rely heavily on King George’s Hospital, roused a call to save all our hospitals. Harry Cohen spoke of the years he had fought for Whipps and his concern for its present and future.

Having elected the key figures to head up the Save Whipps Cross campaign (Charlotte Monro and Alan Hakim), everyone was invited to contribute their time and skills to the campaign, sign a petition and donate to the campaign fund. This was truly an umbrella group, spanning the full spectrum of political persuasions, but all shared a profound concern for the future of their local health services.