

# SCHOOL REPORT

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## Save our NHS!

Hold onto our hearts, don't break them!

\_\_Around the UK many NHS branches are being closed down and funding has been cut in areas including: The Glenfield hospital children's cardiology department. The chief executive John Adler, of the University of Hospitals Leicester, has said

that "We are confident that our clinical outcomes are now amongst the best in the country so we strongly disagree with the NHS England's decision and will not sit by whilst they destroy our fabulous service." There have been many protests against the closure of these branches, one protest against the closure of the children's cardiology department at Glenfield was held on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

The NHS England has told three units- in Leicester, Manchester and London- to halt complex surgery on patients born with heart problems by April 2017. The closure of the Glenfield hospital child cardiology department will cause a struggle for patients and parents. Parents will have a struggle to travel further out for the routine appointments of their children and if a child has heart surgery it will be a struggle for the parent/s to travel far and find a place to stay near to the new location of

the cardiology department. The NHS helps many of its patients back to health:

“I was helped by the NHS, up until about I year ago. Since birth I’ve had congenital heart disease, so I was born with a hole in my heart, which is life threatening, but Glenfield hospital’s child cardiology department helped me get better, from when I was a baby and now thanks to their help I no longer require the necessary treatment and check ups. This is why I believe keeping Glenfield hospital’s children’s cardiology department open is very important, so that other child patients can be helped like I was and can be treated by the same care. In fact one of my relatives was born with congenital heart disease and because around that time they didn’t have the treatment that we do today, he died. We should keep this department open so that the NHS can save more lives and help more people.” Mayna a former child patient at the NHS.

Improvements in technology has led to easier and quicker diagnosis in heart conditions and East Midland Congenital Heart Centre is said to be one of the best performing surgical centres in England.

The closing of the Glenfield child cardiology department would cause a struggle for parents and many children wouldn’t still be here today if it wasn’t for the help of the department: “If we didn’t have the Glenfield Hospital child Cardiology department it would have been much more difficult for my daughter to receive the treatment necessary. She was on a lot of medication and so her appointments when she was younger were quite frequent and regular. Also I couldn’t imagine having to travel so far if an emergency situation had arisen”. Mrs. Gill, mother of patient who received treatment from the Glenfield Hospital Child Cardiology Department.

Support and protests having continued to pour in since the announcement was made, a decision will soon be made on the outcome.

Another area, we feel has been overlooked for too long, is mental health, particularly in children and teenagers. Earlier this year, Theresa May delivered her first speech on domestic policy where she outlined her

determination to right some of the ‘burning injustices’ that plagued society. The outlook seems positive, with hopes of reversing the damage done by years of NHS cuts.

In the last 3 months of 2016; figures from NHS Scotland showed that 4,222 patients started treatment from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) .9

Of these, 101 had waited 53 weeks (or more) for their specialist help.

In the last quarter of 2015, figures show that only 16 people had to wait this long.



One in 4 people within the UK suffer from a mental illness

After Brexit, many EU national nurses and doctors have left, causing a nursing shortage in the UK and putting a strain on the services.

More young people than ever before are suffering from some sort of mental illness, we can blame technology, social media or school, but rather than point fingers at different factors, we need to change the way our society reacts to mental illness, to allow people to be helped whilst they are in the early stages of it rather than have it develop silently.

Charities specializing in mental health have recorded surges in urgent calls. For example figures from Childline show that 50,819 young people contacted them for serious mental disorders from 2015/16 alone; they have also seen a 36% rise in youngsters needing help for depression and other disorders.

Peter Wanless, chief executive of the NSPCC, said the figures were deeply concerning. **“To ensure the next generation aren’t left to deal with a mental health epidemic, there has to be a much more comprehensive network of**

**professional support and treatment in place that is easily accessible for young people who are desperate for help to get their lives back on track.”**

We asked pupils and professionals for their verdicts on the issue.

**Do you think the NHS is supporting children and adolescents with mental health issues successfully?**

**"To some extent, the NHS often only intervene once a young person/child has reached crisis. At this point, the NHS does provide successful intervention"**

Miss Kadir, Certified Psychologist, 24

**"Not really, I think they focus more on physical illnesses."**

Pupil, 14, Female

**Why do you think rates of mental illness are so high in young people?**

**"Numerous reasons including better understanding , recognition and acceptance of mental health issues. The emersion of adulthood in adolescents, the growth of social media, higher drug dependant behaviours in young people, increasingly difficult family situations and limited teaching of mental health coping strategies in schools can all contribute."**

Miss Kadir, Certified Psychologist, 24

**"We are more aware and so more people are starting to speak up"**

Pupil, 14, Female

**What improvements do you think could be made to current services?**

**"Early intervention, more integration within schools, more funding, a more holistic and systematic approach as well as more psychologists."**

Miss Kadir, Certified Psychologist, 24

**"More funding"**

Pupil, 14, Female

**This report was written by Mayna and Ravinder from The City of Leicester College for the BBC School Reports.**