

YOU ARE BEING CONSULTED!

The Save Paddington's Hospitals campaign is fighting the proposed closure of St Mary's Hospital, Harrow Road in North Paddington, one of the most deprived areas in the City of Westminster.

This health district has three major hospitals, St Charles' in Ladbroke Grove, St. Mary's in Paddington, adjacent to the medical school and St Mary's, Harrow Road. The local Area Health Authority intend to close this and Paddington Green Children's Hospital, adding 300 beds to the hospital on the medical school site, giving a net loss of 200 beds by 1986 (present total 1500).

The local Community Health Council have opposed this plan and have until March 31st to submit alternatives. They will, however, be doing so within the constraints of the planned revenue budget cuts of £ $\frac{1}{3}$ M annually in the district over the next 3 years.

The SPHC will be formulating its own alternative plan, working as closely as possible with local people. We are planning a "health afternoon" for March 10th when, amongst other things, people will be invited to talk about their health services. We're also producing a questionnaire. The first priority in our plan will be the health needs of the community rather than available finance. One issue is clear; an overwhelming majority of the local population do want some kind of health facilities to remain on the Harrow Road site.

An important part of the SPHC's presentation to the AHA will be a critique of the Feasibility Study. The District Management Team claim that even without the general financial restrictions applying and the effect of RAWP, their plan would essentially be the same - the "three hospitals into two" rationalisation and the bed number reduction (based on the prediction of a continued decline of the population as far ahead as 1986).

So this is an invitation: we need help, particularly in the analysis of the AHA plan and with ideas on the format of the SPHC's alternatives. If you are interested, please phone me, evenings, 01 289 2038.

There is a good resumé of events so far in the BMJ, January 6th.

Erig Brunner

for the Save Paddington's Hospitals Campaign