

Healthcare Services

Question 5: Gordon MacDonald (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP):

To ask the Scottish Government how it will provide more sustainable and high-quality healthcare services closer to the communities that they serve. (S40-00403)

The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Health, Wellbeing and Cities Strategy (Nicola Sturgeon):

The Scottish Government is investing more than £200 million in community-based facilities via the hub initiative to support the delivery of high-quality local healthcare.

Gordon MacDonald: I recently attended the sod cutting for the new Wester Hailes healthy living centre in my constituency. The local community has waited for more than 15 years for those new healthcare facilities, and residents in the Firrhill area have been waiting for a similar period of time for a new health and social care centre. Can the cabinet secretary provide an update on the status of the proposed Firrhill partnership centre?

Nicola Sturgeon: I was delighted to perform the official sod-cutting ceremony for the new Wester Hailes healthy living centre. It is a fantastic development and, as Gordon MacDonald said, it is long overdue for the local community. Gordon MacDonald is right to mention the Firrhill area. I can tell him today that that project is now progressing as an NHS Lothian facility; the intention previously was that it would be a joint facility between the health board and the local council. It is intended to include the following services:

- the Craiglockhart and Firrhill medical practices,
- community nursing,
- podiatry,
- older people's mental health,
- learning disabilities,
- community mental health and
- paediatrics.

NHS Lothian is in discussion with the council regarding the purchase of the preferred site. I know that Gordon MacDonald takes a close interest in that issue as a constituency member, and I am happy to keep him up to date with progress.

(extracted from Parliamentary paper dated 24 November 2011)