

MP seeks reassurances over GP consortia

Mark Lancaster is striving to ensure doctors continue to devote their time to treating patients.

The city MP quizzed the health secretary over how the two consortia, 'GP Healthcare MK' and 'Premier MK', will continue to provide medical care while controlling the city's health budget.

He wrote to every surgery in Milton Keynes North asking for the views on the plans to scrap the bureaucracy of the Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs), and met with many of their GPs and patients.

During Health Questions in the House of Commons on Tuesday, Mr Lancaster said: "One area of concern that has been raised with me by patients, in particular, is the amount of time that they will get to spend face to face with their GP."

Secretary of State Andrew Lansley MP responded that there is no intention to turn GPs into managers. But it will be their choice whom to employ for administrative support – either from the existing PCT, from local authorities or from the private sector.

Mr Lancaster, who made health his priority before the general election, said: "Over the last few months, doctors, nurses, staff and patients in my constituency have broadly welcomed the removal of the overly-bureaucratic aspects of the NHS. I think we all agree that those who know where the money is best spent are those on the front line. But there is one concern: will GPs continue to be able to devote their time to patients? I am assured by the Secretary of State that they will."