HISTORY OF CAERPHILLY DISTRICT MINERS' HOSPITAL

Caerphilly District Miners' Hospital was originally a mansion owned by Fred Piggott a mining contractor in Caerphilly at the turn of the last century. The mansion was named The Beeches and was built at the beginning of the 20th century (Harris 2007).

In 1923, the house was sold to a group of miners at a cost of over £30,000, which was funded by workers from the 29 pits of the Rhymney Valley (Richards 1969). The miners and their colliery lodges arranged with local colliery management, in particular the East Glamorgan District of the South Wales Miners Federation, the collection of a weekly levy from their wages to help pay for the hospital. Further funding was provided by the colliery owners who contributed over £3,000 (Richards 1969).

The original main building housed only 23 beds at the time it opened to patients. However, the hospital rapidly expanded and many extensions were made to increase its capacity. Originally the hospital was only used by miners, but in 1930 the wives and children of miners were also permitted to use its facilities. Also in 1930 the number of beds available was increased to 84 and in 1942 the hospital was opened to the general public.

The immediate post-war years saw major extensions to the site with a nurse's home added in 1946 followed by a

rehabilitation unit in 1947. In 1950 a maternity unit was added and later extended in 1967.

At present, CDMH provides a broad range of inpatient, day care and outpatient services. These services include the Caerphilly Birth Centre, which offers women the chance to have their babies in a small and friendly unit, run by teams of midwives who work in both the hospital and the local community. The birthing centre remains one of the most popular services provided by the hospital and a large number of the local residents were born within the site. The hospital also houses a limited Accident and Emergency department. Within the hospital, there are three general medical wards with a total of 77 beds and three surgical wards with 34 beds.

The wards are all named after the original collieries in the district and include the Windsor and the Bedwas wards (Harris 2007).