

11<sup>th</sup> September 2008

**New £3 Million Blandford Medical Centre heralds bright new future for Braintree Community**

6 GPs of Braintree, Essex were able to celebrate an expansion of their medical facilities after moving into a state-of-the-art medical centre which is now able to offer greatly improved services to its patients in the Braintree community.

The GPs and a total of 28 staff are can now settle into the purpose-built centre in Rayne Road, Braintree after receiving the keys last month. The new building is next to the town's planned new community hospital and will include a pharmacy, which is due to open next month. The Christchurch Pharmacy will be moving from the High Street to the centre and will include a hi-tech robotic dispenser – only the second to be introduced in a community pharmacy in the county. The robot quickly finds drugs from shelves to speed up dispensing.

Business manager for the GPs' practice, Caroline Hird, said that among services likely to be expanded were phlebotomy and minor ailments clinics. The centre has 14 consulting rooms and will be capable of expanding to a 10-GP surgery in the future. It currently serves almost 15,000 patients. The modern new centre, is four or five times larger than the former premises and represents another milestone for Ashley House in their ongoing and successful provision of high quality Primary Care premises across the country.



**KEY TO THE DOOR:** Dr David Williams (left, front) accepts the key from David Milburn of Ashley House, with (background left to right, Dr Emmanuel Jessa, Chris Burr, Dr Abdul Rashid, Chris Huggins of Ashley House, Dr Ian Gibson, Dr Carol Gibson, and Alison Howett,