

£1½ MILLION BOOST FOR HOSPITAL

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THE closure-threatened Standish Hospital is to get a new improved £500,000 chest disease centre.

An appeal will be launched next month for funds to buy state-of-the-art treatment and research facilities and equipment to update the existing centre.

Doctors at Standish already lead the way in Gloucestershire in dealing with chest complaints and the new facilities have been welcomed as a vote of confidence in the hospital's future.

A battle is currently being fought over Gloucestershire Health Authority's proposal to close Standish and move the facilities to the city's Gloucestershire

by Richard Coulter

Royal Hospital.

The chest centre will be based at Standish for as long as it remains open.

Former Stroud GP Dr Roy Lamb, who will lead the appeal, said: "We want to establish, in Gloucestershire, improved facilities for the investigation, treatment, and research of chest diseases.

"These are an increasing problem with greater incidences of asthma as well as established diseases such as lung cancer.

"There are few families nowadays without some member affected and we are

hoping to generate a lot of public support."

Dr Lamb said it makes sense to locate the centre at Standish where the specialists are based. But if the health authority goes ahead with its plans to close Standish, he said there would be no problem relocating to Gloucestershire Royal Hospital.

Save our Standish spokeswoman Betty Sergeant said: "We certainly hope the unit will remain at Standish. If it is set up there it will be of tremendous benefit to all patients and can do nothing but good for the future of the hospital."

The appeal will be launched officially in Gloucester Cathedral on March 12 by the Duke of Beaufort and Cheltenham-based world bowls champion Tony Allcock.