

28 October 2010

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Dear Helen

Re: Heronwood and Galleon Rehabilitation Unit

Thank you for your letter addressed to Professor Mike Spyer, Chair of NHS London and the copy received by NHS Redbridge. As this is a local matter we would like to respond to your concerns and to ensure that you have the correct information to hand.

No decisions on the proposals put forward by Health for north east London on the vision for King George Hospital have been taken. At present we are working with GPs, clinicians and local authorities to make decisions in December. However, as stated at the meeting you attended on 30 September 2010, there will not be any decision on the future of Heronwood and Galleon Unit in December (this was the reason it was not discussed in the presentation) and before any changes are agreed a consultation with staff and service users will take place. Heather O'Meara, Chief Executive of Outer North East London, also confirmed that the phlebotomy service would remain local in line with local requirements.

You correctly point out that the Health for north east London consultation document does not go into detail on the future of the Heronwood and Galleon Unit, which currently provides rehabilitation beds for local residents. However the documents do set out a vision for King George Hospital which includes bringing local services together to provide a more integrated and supportive service to adults and children, including rehabilitation. This was the focus of question 11d, which was supported by 48% of respondents and opposed by 13%.

We understand that accessibility to services is very important, particularly to older people. Heronwood and Galleon Unit provides a valued service but has a limited health infrastructure in the surrounding area which means that both patients and staff need to travel should any other health care services be required. We monitor the admissions to the unit and 43% are from Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust and 57% from Barking Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust.

You raised the issue of the phlebotomy and physiotherapy services which are located in the building adjacent to the Heronwood and Galleon Unit. We understand that these are vital services for local residents and should remain local. The decisions on services are being led by local GPs and there is a community panel who advise them on the services required to meet local needs.

Due to the significant changes proposed in the Health for north east London consultation local consultation activities arranged by NHS Redbridge were extensive and involved:

- Four consultation roadshows, including one at Waitrose in Wanstead. These were publicised widely through a variety of channels and local media.
- Regular briefings to local councillors and MPs and attendance at each of the local area committees.

- Redbridge LINK hosted six public meetings throughout the borough.
- Copies of the consultation document were posted to all GP practices, dentists, opticians, libraries and local voluntary and community groups.
- An offer was extended for a member of staff and clinicians to attend any meetings to discuss the proposals.
- The proposals were discussed at the five community panels that advise the polysystems in Redbridge.
- In all NHS Redbridge attended over 50 meetings.

We would like to reiterate our offer to you from 21 January this year to attend any local meetings and discuss the Health for north east London programme and your concerns around the Heronwood and Galleon Unit and support services on this site.

Health for north east London is working to address the four reconfiguration tests outlined by the government. Working groups of GPs and other clinicians looked at the responses to the consultation and made amendments as they felt appropriate. These revised proposals were then discussed at five clinical meetings – around 180 clinicians attended. Representatives from the People's Platform (formed to provide a public voice in the programme), Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) and local authorities also attended these meetings, commented and fed back to their groups.

The amended proposals were then presented to a stakeholder event on the 30 September. This meeting was open to all stakeholders and members of the public. Whilst invitations were sent out it was also advertised via the local LINK, to patient panels, on websites and through the community and voluntary service in Redbridge.

In October and November we are meeting GPs and local authority members at over sixty events to discuss the revised proposals (I know you have requested a list of GPs involved in the programme and this is being supplied by the Health for north east London programme). The People's Platform continues to meet and advise the programme and further work is planned with the LINK in Redbridge. We are also engaged in further focus group work on the maternity proposals following feedback from local residents and a mental health stakeholder event took place on 29 October.

A Joint Committee of Primary Care Trusts is scheduled to meet in mid December. It will decide if the four tests have been met (taking into account an assessment by NHS London) and will make decisions on the programme. It will not make decisions on the future of Heronwood and Galleon Unit and, as the proposals do not involve a merger, there will not be an assessment by the Cooperation and Competition Panel.

We hope that we have addressed your concerns. If you have any further concerns please feel free to contact me directly.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Conor Burke', written in a cursive style.

Conor Burke
Interim Chief Executive

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cc via email only

Professor Mike Spyer, Chair, NHS London

John Cryer MP

Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP

Lee Scott MP

Mike Gapes MP

Diana Roxburgh, Chair, NHS Redbridge

Cllr P Goody

Cllr S Nolan

Cllr A Wilson

Cllr T Chan

Cllr C Cummins

Cllr M Dunn