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Monday 18th February 2013

Via email to chris.smith@kent.gov.uk

Mr Christopher Smith
Vice Chairman in the Chair
Kent Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Dear Mr Smith

Re: Francis Inquiry Recommendations

Further to the published paper on 6 February 2013, I am writing to provide assurance on the steps that the NHS in Kent and Medway are taking to consider and respond to the 290 recommendations.

The newly formed clinical commissioning groups in Kent and Medway have safety and quality at the top of their agenda. A number of steps have already been taken in Kent and Medway to address concerns identified in the first Francis report. For example, health service providers have given assurance on the actions that they are taking to ensure that the lessons learnt from the Mid-Staffordshire Hospital are considered by their own Board. A further self- assessment was conducted and reviewed by commissioners.

The NHS Commissioning Board Area Team (covering Kent and Medway) is already establishing Quality Surveillance Groups as recommended in national guidance and will be drawing on the lessons learnt from Francis. The Group met in shadow form this month and will formally commence in April 2013. The National Quality Board has published accompanying guidance to the system on establishing Quality Surveillance Groups (QSGs): www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/01/establish-qsg/.

The purpose is to bring together different parts of health and care economies in Kent and Medway to routinely share information and intelligence to protect the quality of care that patients receive. The QSGs should not add another level of bureaucracy but instead provide a forum for local partners to realise the cultures and values of open and honest cooperation which should be in place already. They should seek to reduce the burden of performance management and regulation on providers of services, by ensuring that supervisory, commissioning and regulatory bodies work in a more coordinated way.

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Mr. Christopher Smith
HOSC
18/02/2013

I would be happy to attend a future HOSC meeting when we have had time to consider the national, regional and local response to the Inquiry recommendations.

Yours sincerely



Sally Allum
Acting Director Nursing and Quality

cc: Tristan Godfrey, Research Officer to Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Malti Varshney, Public Health Consultant, NHS Kent and Medway
Meradin Peachey, Director of Public Health (Kent), NHS Kent and Medway
Dr David Woodhead, Clinical Accountable Officer, Dartford Gravesham & Swanley CCG
Dr Peter Green, Clinical Accountable Officer, Medway CCG
Patricia Davies, Accountable Officer, Swale CCG
Ian Ayres, Accountable Officer, West Kent CCG
Hazel Carpenter, Accountable Officer, Thanet and South Kent Coast CCGs
Simon Perks, Accountable Officer, Ashford and Canterbury & Coastal CCGs
Felicity Cox, Area Director, NHS Commissioning Board and Chief Executive, NHS Kent & Medway
Debra Vidler, Project lead for HSGs and Acting Associate Director of Quality, NHS Kent & Medway