

Please contact: Rosie Gunstone (direct line 01634 332715)

Your ref:

Our ref:

Date: 19 February 2013

To:
Felicity Cox
Local Area Team Director & NHS Kent
and Medway Chief Executive
By email

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Dear Ms Cox

**Re: KENT AND MEDWAY NHS JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE (JHOSC) - 13 FEBRUARY 2013 - ADULT MENTAL HEALTH
INPATIENT SERVICES REVIEW**

Following the JHOSC meeting of 13 February 2013, we are writing to you ahead of your Cluster Board meeting tomorrow to reinforce the request for a delay in your decision concerning this matter. The Cluster Board need to be aware of the strength of concerns across Medway and Kent about the proposals as they stand. The view of Medway Members is that Medway residents are best served through the reprovision of local acute in-patient beds located in Medway.

This review has been ongoing for some years. While we understand the need for urgency in proceeding with plans for acute inpatient services for Kent and Medway, we strongly advise that the decision is delayed until such time as the predicted bed numbers data is validated by an independent source and it is clear that it is based on reliable factual evidence. This work has been commissioned by Medway Members and will be available at the beginning of March. We believe that an independent expert view is needed on the data on which this proposal rests. Two examples emerged last week in Medway of a lack of beds available for patients detained under the Mental Health Act.

There are also concerns about the adequacy of transport arrangements. It is important that, before you take such a critical decision, all concerns around transport for family and carers are resolved within a comprehensive transport plan, bearing in mind the impact lack of family contact will have on patient recovery. A Transport Plan was promised in July 2012, but as yet has not been produced. Significant concerns were raised by consultees across Kent and Medway during the consultation period about access.

A third vital point is that, in order for option A to be successfully implemented, it is heavily reliant on high quality services being delivered in the community by the Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team (CRHT) and other community mental health services. You will see from comments made during the consultation process and from the comments made at the JHOSC that there are serious concerns about the quality and safety of community services from service users, families, GPs and Members of both Councils. We

respectfully ask the Cluster Board to review these matters before coming to a decision on Option A.

We recognise that taking these three important issues into account is likely to mean that your proposed decision tomorrow will need to be delayed for a short time until these matters can be fully resolved. We believe we are making a reasonable request for the Cluster Board to defer its decision on this matter until next month. We trust you will appreciate the necessity of ensuring that all the outstanding issues are resolved satisfactorily prior to proceeding with the outcome of this Review.

Rosie Gunstone will be in touch with you shortly to let you know the proposed date for the re-arranged JHOSC meeting.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Wendy Purdy
Vice-Chairman - Kent and Medway
NHS Joint Overview and Scrutiny
Committee

Cllr John Avey
Chairman - Health and Adult Social
Care O&S Committee

cc Helen Buckingham
Sara Warner
Lauretta Kavanagh
David Tamsitt

Mr C Smith (Chairman of the JHOSC)
Tristan Godfrey, KCC
Emailed to all JHOSC Members