

DM/JW

11 August 2016

Cllr Bill Harnett
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Chief Executive
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Dear Cllr Harnett

Announcement of emergency temporary change to paediatric inpatient services at the Alexandra Hospital from September 2016

Thank you for your 29 July letter on the above. Ms Marsh is currently on annual leave and therefore I wanted to respond in her absence. In your letter, you asked for our views on the changes to paediatric inpatient services in Redditch and whether it would be appropriate for representatives from Birmingham Children's Hospital (BCH) to attend a "Health Commission" to share our views.

On the measures announced, it is clearly a matter for the Worcester Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (WAHT), in conjunction with their commissioners and regulators, to decide whether services need to change temporarily on grounds of safety. You may be aware that BCH has been providing support and advice to the Trust on paediatric services through a formal partnership agreement since the beginning of 2016 following the 'inadequate' rating of these services in the 2015 Care Quality Commission report. In supporting the Trust, we have noted the daily struggle they have had in maintaining safe staffing levels, particularly in paediatric medical rotas, and have noted how this has become more difficult as the year has progressed.

On the "Health Commission", as indicated above we do not think it would be appropriate for BCH to give a commentary or opinion on decisions taken by the relevant parties in Worcestershire. Ms Marsh is meeting with local NHS commissioners (Mr Trickett – Accountable Officer, Ms Emerson, Director of Commissioning and Service Design – NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group), on the 5th September 2016 to discuss issues associated with the provision of paediatric care in Worcestershire who I feel will be in a better position to provide the local NHS view on the measures taken.



However, as the regional centre for specialist paediatric services, we would of course be willing to contribute in any way we can to the discussion about the future of paediatric services at the Alexandra Hospital. It would be helpful if you could send us more details of the working arrangements of the Commission when you have them.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Melbourne', written over a circular scribble.

David Melbourne
Deputy Chief Executive

