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4 August 2017

Dear Secretary of State,

Re: Closure of Blood Donor Centre in Seacroft, Leeds

In May 2017, the Scrutiny Board agreed the enclosed statement in relation to the closure of the Bridle Path Blood Donor Centre in Seacroft, Leeds: A summary of key events is provided in the timeline attached at Appendix 1 within the statement.

On 3 May 2017, the statement was issued to following bodies for comment and response:

- NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT);
- Department of Health – Triennial Review Programme Team (DH); and,
- Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP).

A response deadline of 30 June 2017 was provided; and responses were received from NHSBT (6 June 2017) and IRP (21 June 2017). These responses are attached for your information. Please note that a response from DH is still to be received.

The Scrutiny Board considered the responses at its meeting on 18 July 2017; I have enclosed the relevant extract from the draft minutes of that meeting, but would draw your attention to the following elements:

That the Board writes a letter to the Secretary of State for Health to:

- Express disappointment at the lack of response from the Department of Health.*
- Express disappointment that the general response from NHS Blood and Transplant (a publically funded body) was not in the spirit of an open, transparent and learning organisation.*
- Seek clarification about the responsibilities of Special Health Authorities around proposed service changes and/or developments and specifically the applicability of the 'four tests' announced in May 2010.*

Cont./

I trust these elements are self-explanatory; however I would add the following additional context for your consideration.

In its response to the Scrutiny Board, NHSBT is clear that the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulation 2013 do not apply to Special Health Authorities: Indeed, Special Health Authorities are specifically excluded. However, NHSBT is silent on the matter of the 'four tests' for service change (reconfiguration) announced by your predecessor in May 2010 – despite the Scrutiny Board statement making specific and significant reference to this area.

Furthermore, the response from the IRP states that it would seem 'reasonable' for any proposal to implement a clinical service change should be subject to evaluation against the 'four tests' – including the strength of public and patient engagement.

From its response, it is clear that the IRP is in broad agreement with the Scrutiny Board statement that there are clear lessons to be learnt for the future and hopes that all parties involved '*...can work together in a spirit of co-operation, openness and transparency*'.

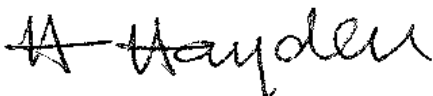
Nonetheless, having reviewed the original statement and the respective responses from NHSBT and the IRP, the Scrutiny Board's view was that NHSBT's response failed to acknowledge that any lessons had been learnt and as the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulation 2013 do not apply to Special Health Authorities, it was not necessary to address any other aspect of the Scrutiny Board's statement and assessment of the proposals against the 'four tests'.

As a publically funded body that forms part of the overall NHS family, I believe it is incumbent on NHSBT to provide a much more detailed response to the issues raised by the Scrutiny Board; rather than simply stating it is not bound to the same duties and responsibilities of local health providers. As Secretary of State for Health, I would urge you to seek (and share with the Scrutiny Board) a more detailed and specific response from NHSBT.

I would also be grateful for your general comments on the range of matters raised by this letter and associated enclosures: However, given the lack of specific guidance regarding the applicability of the 'four tests' to Special Health Authorities, on behalf of the Scrutiny Board, I would welcome your clarification on this specific matter and any further directions that may subsequently be required.

I trust these details are helpful and I look forward to your full response in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Hayden". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H'.

Councillor Helen Hayden
Chair, Scrutiny Board (Adults and Health)

cc Mike Stredder, Director of Blood Donation, NHS Blood and Transplant
Martin Houghton, Secretary to the Independent Reconfiguration Panel
Councillor Rebecca Charlwood, Executive Board Member for Adults and Health, Leeds City Council
All Members of the Scrutiny Board (Adults and Health), Leeds City Council