

North Central London  
338 - 346 Goswell Road  
London  
EC1V 7LQ

23<sup>rd</sup> July 2010

Defend the Whittington Hospital Coalition  
Whittington Park Community Centre  
Yerbury Road  
London N19 4RS

Dear Ms Franklin

### **North Central London Acute Services Review**

Thank you for your letter 21<sup>st</sup> July in which you refer to my letter of 16<sup>th</sup> July to local MPs and Council Leaders.

I can confirm that the NCL review of acute health services has halted.

If I may clarify the purpose of the stocktake referred to in my letter; this work is looking at the process of the review and engagement that was undertaken from September 2009 through to the pre-consultation period up to May 2010. You will see from the list on interviewees that we are talking to a wide range of people about their views. The meeting with GPs on the 15<sup>th</sup> was to discuss with them how in the future GPs might engage with hospital consultants, the academic health sciences partnership and other clinicians. Neither the stocktake nor the meeting with GPs considers any service options for the specialities that you refer to in your letter. This local stock take will help inform how we involve people in the review which will not start before September.

You will be aware that a Health White Paper ("Equity and excellence: Liberating the NHS") has been published setting out the new Government's policy. The White Paper puts patients at the heart of the NHS with shared decision making at its heart. The White Paper describes the need to release efficiency savings by 2014, which will be reinvested to support improvements in patient quality and outcomes. The White Paper also explains how, in order to shift decision-making as close as possible to patients, the Department will devolve power and responsibility for commissioning services to local consortia of GP practices. These GP consortia will begin to assume responsibility for commissioning services from April 2012. The stocktake is part of the work we are beginning to undertake to help the GP commissioners come together in order to formulate their clinical plans for the future of local services and to meet the efficiency gains referred to in the White Paper.

At this point, NCL cannot comment on maintaining services unchanged as to do so could be interpreted as tying the hands of future GP commissioners who are expected to make any decisions in partnership with local acute clinicians, their patients and local authorities.

To summarise:

- The NCL review is halted.
- The stocktake is reviewing the process undertaken; not any potential service changes.
- It can inform the review that is likely to start in September – this will be a transparent and inclusive process
- GPs, in anticipation their new role, will play the major role in determining any new proposals for service changes.

I hope this clarifies the local position. I would be very happy to meet with you if you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Conroy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Conroy  
**Director of Communications & Engagement**  
**North Central London**