

From the Rt Hon Andrew Lansley CBE MP
Secretary of State for Health

Democratic Services



Department
of Health

POC1_658946

- 8 DEC 2011

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- 5 DEC 2011

Andrew R. Clements

Invitation to Outer North East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Tuesday 10 January, 2.30 pm, Redbridge Town Hall, 128-142, High Road, Ilford, Essex, IGI 2DD

Thank you for your letter of 11 November 2011 inviting me to attend a committee session on 10 January 2011.

Please accept my apologies, as I will not be able to attend, as I am required to answer oral questions in the House of Commons at that time.

In my letters of 27 October 2011 to Councillor Twomey and the three other referring Overview and Scrutiny Committees, I endorsed the Independent Reconfiguration Panel's (IRP) report in full on the Health for North East London (HfNEL) reconfiguration scheme.

In these letters, I set down clearly the reasons for my decision and the next steps for the local NHS.

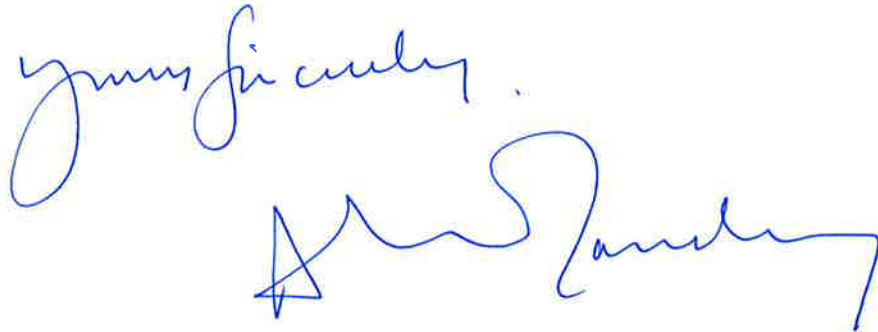
This included the recommendation that the future of King George hospital and the determination of what would best be provided from that location must be the subject of a specific programme of work, led by local commissioners and by engaging the public, service users and staff.

As you know, the Care Quality Commission investigation report, published the same day, expressed a number of concerns in relation to the safety and care of patients at Barking Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (BHRT), in particular at Queen's hospital.

The safety and quality improvements at BHRT before implementation of the clinical case for change can proceed, but implementation should follow immediately after those improvements across the sites have been demonstrated. Commissioners must be satisfied that the changes can be made safely and effectively.

I understand that Heather Mullin has been appointed to lead work on HfNEL planning from early December 2011, and I hope you will continue to engage with her and the wider local NHS leadership in the future.

Once again, please accept my apologies and I do hope this letter is helpful.

Yours faithfully,


ANDREW LANSLEY CBE