



North East London Commissioning Alliance

Jane Milligan
Accountable Officer
NHS North East London Commissioning Alliance
4th Floor, Unex Tower
5 Station Street
Stratford
E15 1DA

23 October 2020

Councillor Neil Zammett
Chair, Outer North East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Sent by email to Anthony.Clements@oneSource.co.uk

Dear Councillor Zammett

Thank you for your recent letter on behalf of the Outer North East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. I would like to thank Members for their ongoing support to all of our north east London health and social care partners over recent months and while we continue to deal with the pandemic. I recognise the undoubted benefits of working in partnership with committee members as we go forward.

I would like to provide clarity around my role, as referenced in the last paragraph of your letter. I am the single Accountable Officer for all seven of the CCGs who work together under the North East London Commissioning Alliance, which includes Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Havering CCGs. I assure you that I provide equitable, strategic leadership to all of our local systems and support them in their plans to drive forward improvements for local people. As part of my senior team, each local system has a Managing Director. For Tower Hamlets, Newham and Waltham Forest, this is Selina Douglas. For Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Havering, you will know this is Ceri Jacob. For City and Hackney, this is David Maher. Each CCG also has a clinical GP chair and is led by a governing body, which is made up of both elected and appointed members who have the duty to ensure the CCG exercises its functions effectively, efficiently and economically.

The committee should now be aware that the GP members of all seven North East London CCGs have passed the vote on our proposals to form a new North East London CCG with strengthened local borough partnerships. As a single CCG, the vast majority of health and care delivery will continue to be delivered at local place and borough level, but we will also work together as partners with our local population to integrate acute, community and social care services for the benefit of all our patients.

An alliance of North East London Clinical Commissioning Groups

City and Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge CCGs
Co-Chairs: Dr Naqvi, Dr Mehta and Dr Rickets | Accountable officer: Jane Milligan

This leads me on to my other role, which is the senior responsible officer of the East London Health and Care Partnership (ELHCP). The partnership consists of the seven CCGs, eight councils, three hospital trusts (the Homerton, Barts Health and BHRUT) and two mental health and community trusts (NELFT and ELFT). My role is to bring us together and provide leadership on our collective plans for strategic transformation and improvements across NEL. However it is very much a partnership approach between organisations and the recent pandemic has demonstrated how as local healthcare partners we are able to work closely together at pace to address our challenges and deliver safe, sustainable care at a system level.

To address the points in your letter:

Members have noted with increasing concern developments such as the transfer of more clinical services and beds to the Royal London Hospital; and the overall number of acute beds in Inner North East London is nearly three times that of Outer North East London

The hospitals in north east London do not have the same estate, clinical or workforce capacity that would enable any fair comparison. The number of beds in use at any hospital also changes daily, depending on the numbers of patients, the type of care required and safe staffing needs. Some of our hospitals provide very specialist care (such as St Bartholomew's Hospital) and we have designated hospitals for people across London with a heart attack or stroke. Some beds are used as part of national networks, and are therefore used by patients from outside of north east London and indeed outside of London.

The distinction of what is outer north east London and what is inner north east London is also drawn around borough boundaries rather than health systems. We know that residents have access to, and are often closer to, other hospitals depending on their choice. For instance, a proportion of residents in Redbridge and Havering will use Whipps Cross or Essex services as they are closer to their homes. As Whipps Cross Hospital serves patients across a wide geographical area, the redevelopment programme for a new hospital is being developed in partnership with a broad range of partners, which includes communities, local authorities and CCGs in outer north east London and Essex.

We also know that hospital is not necessarily the right place for people to receive the right care for their needs and so where appropriate and safe to do so we want to continue to provide more care in local communities and reduce the need for people to go to hospital.

In terms of some of the recent investment to our hospitals - as part of the national funding provided to all of our hospitals to prepare for winter, Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (BHRUT) received £4.1m to improve the Emergency Department at Queen's Hospital. This will be spent on providing Point of Care Testing (meaning patients' results are available immediately, cutting treatment delays and providing a better quality of care to patients) and on expanding the current Rapid Access and First Treatment area. The Trust also recently received £15million in Government funding over the next two years to improve their Emergency Department at King George Hospital.

The first £3m will provide a Rapid Access and First Treatment (RAFTing) area, and Point of Care Testing. The department will also benefit from a new x-ray facility. The further £12m funding, subject to approval of a business case, will fund a Paediatric Assessment Unit and to implement Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC). SDEC aims to treat more complex patients on the same day, reducing the need for them to be admitted to hospital, which improves overall flow throughout the hospital, ensuring beds are available for patients who really need them. Other developments include offering 7 day a week mechanical thrombectomy in the Hyper Acute Stroke Unit, providing Same Day Emergency Care at Queen's Hospital, and BHRUT are the first in the UK to introduce Ethos therapy – using artificial intelligence to personalise and constantly update radiotherapy treatment for cancer patients.

Specifically during the pandemic, the Barts Health NHS Trust board agreed to rapidly develop the previously dormant 14th and 15th floors at The Royal London Hospital to enable the hospital to play a full role in managing a co-ordinated response to coronavirus. Up to 176 extra intensive care and high dependency beds were created in a brand new state-of-the-art unit on these floors, which played a key part in the peak of the local NHS response. Barts Health leads the Critical Care Hub for north east London, which monitors daily demand for specialist beds with ventilators and co-ordinates capacity requirements among providers across the patch. If there is a sudden surge in demand from patients with respiratory problems, we would be able to utilise this and our collective resource across NEL and safely respond to any future expected demand for Covid-19 treatment.

There are two maternity departments located in Tower Hamlets compared to only one covering Barking & Dagenham, Havering and much of Redbridge

We want to make sure that all babies born in north east London have the best possible start in life and their parents experience the best possible pregnancy and birth. Women can choose to give birth with one of our five maternity providers, and their birth options include obstetric labour wards, co-located midwife led units, freestanding midwife-led birth centres and at home.

North east London hosts the largest maternity trust in England, Barts Health, with three hospitals providing maternity services - Royal London Hospital, Newham University Hospital and Whipps Cross Hospital. Queen's Hospital in Romford, run by BHRUT, is one of the largest single site maternity providers in England.

In Tower Hamlets, women can be cared for at either the Royal London Hospital or at the Barkantine Birth Centre, a free standing midwifery-led unit, although some will also choose to deliver at other local hospitals outside the borough. The Barkantine also provides care to low-risk women from the surrounding boroughs, including Newham and Waltham Forest.

Women living in Waltham Forest, Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge can also choose to give birth in a number of different birth settings.

In addition to the obstetric-led unit at Queen's Hospital, local women have an additional birthing choice with the along-side midwife-led unit within the hospital. Depending on where they live, some women may give birth at Whipps Cross, which as you know is also used by many women across Redbridge, or Newham Hospitals. If women are low-risk, they can also choose to give birth at the free standing Barking Birthing Centre, which is based at the Barking Community Hospital, and there is a supportive community midwifery service which provides low risk women the additional choice of a home birth where appropriate.

We are committed to continuing to ensure we support demand and capacity management for all of our maternity providers, provide early access to maternity services and to aid the choice and personalisation agenda. As far as possible (given each woman's clinical needs) we want local women to be able to have the type of birth that they want – be that at home, in a midwife-led unit or on a hospital ward.

There are also two major hospital sites in Tower Hamlets

We understand from the council officers the committee is referring to The Royal London and Mile End Hospital.

As outlined above the Royal London is a major acute and specialist hospital. It offers a range of local and specialist services to patients from across all areas north east London (and beyond) and is one of the capital's leading trauma and emergency care centres and hyper-acute stroke centres.

Mile End is a community-based site, not a major acute hospital. It provides a range of outpatient services for Barts Health, mental health services from the East London NHS Foundation Trust, and ophthalmology from Moorfields Eye Hospital. The site also provides training facilities for Queen Mary University of London and is home for other local organisations such as the facial injury and disease charity Saving Faces.

Barking Community Hospital provides similar services to Mile End in terms of ophthalmology from Moorfields Eye Hospital and local mental health services, but also offers a wide range of services for local residents including dermatology, cardiology, MRI, X-Ray, Phlebotomy, Urgent Care, Sexual Health and outpatient services, along with a GP Practice, Birthing Centre and community café.

We have also secured £17 million of national funding to progress our plans to build the new health and wellbeing centre on the site of St George's Hospital in Hornchurch. This investment will provide a range of services for our growing population both now and into the future, including outpatient based services, GP services and space for local voluntary and community groups.

Would there be any possibility for example of the Clinical Sciences Centre being located on the Barking Hospital site and the Cancer Service being sited in vacant accommodation at King George Hospital?

The life sciences campus in Whitechapel is a partnership between Barts Health, their academic partners at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and supporters in the Barts Charity. This will provide a space for researchers, scientists and clinicians to work alongside businesses and entrepreneurs, and share ground-breaking ideas to improve health outcomes for patients but will benefit all of north east London. This has been a vision for sometime as part of the Whitechapel development and will be one of the most modern research facilities in Europe. It is not something that could be relocated and this site is well located next door to the QMUL that is ranked third in the world for excellence in medical research. The life sciences team is proactively seeking opportunities to work with partners across north east London and beyond. The centre will act as a catalyst for growth and innovation far beyond it's footprint in Whitechapel, helping to reduce health inequalities and transform patient care in East London and across the UK. The overall impact will be to improve health and well-being in an area hard hit by the Covid-19 crisis.

There are also opportunities already underway in the outer boroughs to partner with NHS organisations, local authorities and academic institutions (universities and colleges). This includes creating the innovative BHR Health Care Academy, promoting education, learning and training; improving recruitment and retention; building human resource capacity and capability across the system.

With regards to cancer diagnosis and treatment, it would be helpful to clarify that the Mile End Early Diagnosis Centre (EDC) is a shared resource with developed pathways across both the inner and outer boroughs of North East London so this is very much a facility to ensure equity of access to clinicians for patients across all boroughs. An estates review was conducted at the time to determine the most suitable location and the Mile End Hospital site was concluded as the best option. We are keen to develop a further rapid access diagnostic centres at the new St George's Health and Wellbeing Centre in Hornchurch (subject to funding).

The Joint Committee remains unconvinced by the overall argument that the concentration of facilities in geographically distant locations will result in better standards of care and is likely to be undertaking further scrutiny work on this area.

We know clinical evidence shows that by consolidating speciality care, and by undertaking large numbers of the same procedure every day, we will be able to ensure patients get the best possible results. The scientific evidence shows this leads to better outcomes, more consistent clinical standards and shorter hospital stay. An example of this is how we already provide major trauma and hyper acute stroke care across the capital, saving hundreds of lives a year in London alone.

We welcome the opportunity to ensure there is robust scrutiny in local care provision, and will work closely with the committee on any review they would like to undertake.

I hope my response provides some reassurance to the committee and thank you again for the ongoing support during what has been an unprecedented time of pressure for the NHS. We are still in an emergency and need to be prepared to be so for a year. Covid infection rates are rising,

new measures are in place nationally, and so our response to Covid-19 must continue to be flexible. We appreciate your understanding and support whilst we do this. Our collective focus remains on the health and safety of our staff and patients, and we will continue to work in partnership across north east London to provide the best care possible to all of our communities during this challenging time.

Yours sincerely



Jane Milligan

Accountable Officer

NHS North East London Commissioning Alliance (City and Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge CCGs)

Senior Responsible Officer North East London Sustainability and Transformation Partnership

E: jane.milligan1@nhs.net

Head of Office – Laura Anstey

T: 0203 688 2108

E: l.anstey@nhs.net

Senior Business Manager – Rebecca Waters

T: 0203 688 2397

E: Rebecca.Waters@nhs.net

CC:

Ceri Jacob, Managing Director, Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge CCGs

Selina Douglas, Managing Director, Waltham Forest, Newham and Tower Hamlets CCGs

Alwen Williams, Chief Executive Officer, Barts Health NHS Trust

Tony Chambers, Chief Executive, Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust

Professor Oliver Shanley, Chief Executive, NELFT

Borough Directors of Public Health – Barking & Dagenham, Havering, Redbridge and Waltham Forest