



Hampshire

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25 March 2011

Ms Daphne Jamieson
Chairman
Odiham Cottage Hospital Charitable Trust
Odiham Cottage Hospital
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RG29 1NE

Dear Ms Jamieson

Thank you for your letter dated 16 March 2011 which provides some helpful background to the efforts the Trustees have been making over the years to develop facilities at Odiham Cottage Hospital. We do appreciate how hard you have worked with the community to raise funds and keep pace with changing needs, and this is to be commended.

I would like to reassure you that an inpatient bed-based model providing 24-hour nursing care and rehabilitation remains one of the five options being considered for meeting the health needs of people in Odiham and the surrounding area. The point that we are keen to stress is that we would not now expect to commission a nursing service alone, given that this type of care can be provided within an individual patient's own home or a nursing home.

As you will be aware, there is already a question about the cost effectiveness of the nursing service operating from Odiham Cottage Hospital and adding therapists to the staff complement to provide a rehabilitation service would add further costs. It is within this context that I made the comment about needing additional beds covering a much larger population to make this viable.

This of course does not address the on-going problem that Hampshire Community Health Care has experienced in maintaining safe staffing levels.

I am very concerned that the community believes that a decision has already been made to close the hospital, and I would reiterate that this is not the case. However, there are a number of very real constraints that need to be acknowledged and addressed in order for us to work together to find solutions and move things forwards.

We recognise that it is extremely difficult for the Trustees, the Parish Council and other partners to explore a range of options as part of the engagement process, whilst at the same time, you are running a "Save our Beds" campaign and appreciate your efforts here to remain objective.

You refer to the information on costings for the hospital which I know your colleague Ginny East has received and analysed in detail, along with colleagues from the PCT, Hampshire Community Health Care and the local Practice Based Commissioning Group. I understand Ms East has confirmed that she is happy that this information is accurate.

In order to ensure there is a clear understanding as to the costings of the five potential options currently being considered, one of our senior finance managers is arranging a special meeting with the Hart Locality Stakeholder Group, to explain this information in more detail. We therefore did not attempt to assess the value for money element of the criteria at the Option Appraisal exercise that took place yesterday (24 March 2011).

It is not true to state that NHS Hampshire has not approached any providers to explore the potential to provide nursing services at Odiham Cottage Hospital. We have in fact had discussions with Basingstoke and North Hampshire NHS Foundation Trust, Frimley Park NHS Foundation Trust and Hampshire Community Health Care services. Regrettably, none of these organisations wish to provide a nursing service to Odiham Cottage Hospital at this time.

As stated previously, we would encourage you to initiate discussions yourself with potential partners, given that if we were to tender for services to operate from the hospital, we would expect to receive a single response from all parties involved in providing both the service and the facilities. We would then use the standard NHS contract to formalise the agreement.


As you are aware, the NHS Hampshire Board will not be taking a decision about meeting the health needs of people in the Odiham area at our March Board meeting, given that the engagement process, Option Appraisal and costings will not have been completed by this date, and all this is needed to inform a recommendation. Unfortunately, this does mean that we shall become caught up in the period of purdah, which restricts any public consultation activities for the 6 weeks leading up to local elections. The PCT is in discussion with the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to identify if there is any flexibility here.

The PCT is very aware that Hampshire Community Health Care will be ending their service at the end of July 2011 and we may not have concluded the exercise to determine and implement future commissioning arrangements by this time. We will therefore be considering contingency arrangements should the need arise.

I understand that a meeting is being arranged for the week commencing 28 March 2011, and I look forward to discussing this matter in more detail with you then. In closing, I am pleased to note that you are committed to working with the PCT as we seek to find a resolution.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely



D.M. Fleming (Mrs)
Chief Executive
NHS Hampshire

CC The Rt Hon James Arbuthnot MP
Cllr Jonathan Glen
Cllr Tim Southern
Cllr Ken Crookes
Cllr Pat West
Martin Combs, HCC

Dr Hugh Freeman, Calleva
Jonathan Montgomery, Chair, NHS Hampshire
Tracey Faraday-Drake, Non Executive Director, NHS Hampshire
Susanne Hasselmann, Non Executive Director, NHS Hampshire
Malcolm Heritage-Owen, Non Executive Director, NHS Hampshire
Sarah Elliott, Director of Commissioning – Out of Hospital Services, NHS Hampshire
Mel McKeown, NHS Hampshire
Dr Andrew Fernando, Hook GP Surgery
Dr Tony Weaver, Odiham GP Surgery