



Barnsley Court  
Barnsley Hall Road  
Bromsgrove  
Worcestershire  
B61 0TX

Our Ref: HWW-03/2018

Jo Ringshall  
Vice Chair  
Healthwatch Worcestershire  
Civic Centre  
Queen Elizabeth Drive  
Persnore  
WR10 1PT

30 March 2018

Dear Ms Ringshall

Thank you for your letter regarding the changes to CCG governance and seeking clarification on some of the issues that were raised following my attendance with Tom Grove at your public Board Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018. I am pleased to hear that Healthwatch Worcestershire welcomes the principle of closer working between the three CCGs and am happy to respond to those areas where you are seeking further information and explanation.

**1. Voting arrangements for the Lay Member for PPI and Quality**

We have appointed a single Lay Member for PPI and Quality who will be a member of each of the three CCG Governing Bodies. While the CCG Governing Bodies will meet in common from May 2018, they remain independent statutory organisations who will each take their own decisions when required. In this respect the Lay Member for PPI and Quality retains three votes for any decisions that are required and is therefore able to represent different views based on the feedback received by the three respective communities who she represents.

**2. Concern regarding PPG involvement**

The CCGs have always valued the important role that PPGs play in supporting patient involvement and we wish to strengthen their voice, not weaken it. In addition to committing to providing additional resources and offers of support to individual PPGs, the CCGs are also planning on bringing together PPG representatives together for the first time across Worcestershire on a regular basis. This will allow for greater networking opportunities between representatives as well as providing additional opportunities to share their views with the CCGs. We do understand the concerns that some PPG networks do have regarding their current meetings and have reaffirmed to all of those groups that the CCG has no desire to stop any of those groups. The CCGs value all local current and emerging networks, and we are committed to supporting them where we can. This includes supporting with sourcing and paying for venue hire, which we understand is a problem for many groups and currently prevents them from meeting as often as they would like.

**3. Alternative forums for public questions**

The CCGs are continuously looking at new ways to invite public involvement in our work and in the decisions that we make. We welcome questions at our Governing Body Meetings and are always willing to attend other public meetings – such as your Board Meetings – to respond to

On behalf of:

NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG, NHS South Worcestershire CCG and NHS Wyre Forest CCG

any public concerns or questions. As part of the new engagement framework we are currently considering opportunities to hold some of our Patient Advisory Group meetings in public to further demonstrate openness and transparency.

#### **4. Public questions at CCG Governing Body Meetings**

As outlined above, we welcome questions at our Governing Body Meetings and agree that it is helpful for members of the public to ask unscheduled questions based on issues that arise from discussion over agenda items. We are therefore confirming as part of the new governance arrangements that members of the public will not only have the opportunity to ask pre-submitted questions at the beginning of each meeting, but also that they will have the opportunity to ask supplementary questions – that will not require submission in advance - at the end of the meeting.

#### **5. CCG Engagement Framework**

We are keen to hear as many views as possible about the proposed engagement framework and have sought views from patient and public groups that have been established across the three CCG locality areas. In addition to this we welcomed the opportunity to discuss this at your Board Meeting in January and appreciate the opportunity to discuss it further with you at your next Healthwatch Worcestershire Board Meeting in April.

#### **6. Membership scheme**

We are currently in the process of aligning the three CCG membership schemes into a single membership scheme operating across Worcestershire. This will fulfil largely the same function as the current membership schemes and will present members with similar opportunities for involvement in CCG activities. I would be happy to keep you updated with developments as this alignment progresses.

I hope that this helps to assure you that we have no intentions to reduce opportunities for patient involvement and that the CCGs are in fact seeking to strengthen patient involvement as part of the changes to our governance arrangements. If you have any further questions or concerns please don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

Yours sincerely



**Simon Trickett**  
Accountable Officer