



Barnsley Court
Barnsley Hall Road
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire
B61 0TX

Our Ref: HWW-08/2019

Simon Adams
Chief Officer
Civic Centre
Queen Elizabeth Drive
Persnore
WR10 1PT

6 August 2019

Dear Simon

Thank you for your response to the proposed merger of the four Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). I am pleased to hear that Healthwatch Worcestershire does not have any significant objections to the proposal and I am happy to respond to those areas where you raise some concern or seek further information and explanation.

1. The decision to merge has already been made by NHS England

No decision has yet been made. While the NHS Long Term Plan does set out an expectation that by April 2021 every Integrated Care System will have a single CCG, we strongly felt that carrying out a consultation on the proposal would provide us with the best opportunity to hear from our people, communities and stakeholders and for them to be able to shape our proposal. As well hearing views on how soon the CCGs could merge, we were really keen seek views on how to find the right balance between being able to respond to the needs of local communities while also commissioning on a much larger geographical footprint. This feedback will be used to ensure that we make the right choice and to support NHS England's final decision on our application to merge.

2. Impact on services for patients and the public

We were very clear as part of the consultation that this proposal that a merger of the four CCGs would not have any impact on NHS services currently being provided across Herefordshire and Worcestershire, and that it was largely about reducing some of the bureaucracy and duplication that comes with running four CCGs. The new CCG would be expected to comply with all statutory duties including the duty to involve patients and the public in any future service changes.

3. Access to information about reduced spend on management costs

The CCG will publish an Annual Report and Accounts each year which will include full details of running costs, including senior management remuneration. This will be a public document and will be discussed in public at the Annual General Meeting.

4. Concern about a single control total for Herefordshire and Worcestershire

If a single CCG was established across Herefordshire and Worcestershire then the current CCG budgets will be combined into one budget and we will get one allocation for the combined population. The historic deficits in Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG and Herefordshire CCG will

On behalf of:

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

be combined with the historic surpluses that South Worcestershire CCG and Wyre Forest CCG have created. We understand the concern about where the money will be spent in the future and we plan to monitor some budgets at 'place' (i.e. County) level so that we are clear and transparent about performance in each locality and are able to report to stakeholders accordingly.

5. Rationalised engagement structure

Our commitment to meaningful patient and public involvement would continue as a single CCG and part of our consultation has sought views on how best we can meet the requirements to work as a strategic commissioner while also ensuring we respond to the needs of local communities. This has been a recurring theme of the consultation when discussing the proposal with partners and members of the public, and while we already have some thoughts about how best to strengthen engagement with local communities, the development of our new engagement framework is something that we would be extremely keen to work closely with yourselves on to ensure it best reflects local patient views and needs.

I hope that this helps to provide some assurance around those areas that you have raised with us. If you have any further questions or concerns please don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Trickett', written in a cursive style.

Simon Trickett
Accountable Officer