



**University Hospitals of
Morecambe Bay**
NHS Foundation Trust

Sent Via Email

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Ruth May
Chief Nursing Officer for England
NHS England / NHS Improvement

Chair and Chief Executive's Office

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30th August 2019

Dear Ruth

INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL REVIEW OF UROLOGY SERVICES

We write to follow up our telephone conversation with you on 27th August 2019, where we were seeking the support of NHS England/NHS Improvement in commissioning an independent, external review of Urological Services at University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT). This follows the recent publication of a book (Whistle in the Wind, July 2019) by a former employee of the Trust, Mr Peter Duffy, Consultant Urologist about their experience of working in that department and the associated media exposure leading to questions and concerns from colleagues and our communities.

Urological Services at UHMBT have been subject to a long-standing (please see appended timeline) climate of patient safety concerns and a complex employee relations history and the Trust recognises many of the issues being reported and has, over a period of years, undertaken a series of actions in relation to these concerns. There have been Coroners Reviews, a number of formal MHPS investigations and associated actions, NCAS and GMC referrals, independent case reviews, organisational development interventions and an invited review from the Royal College of Surgeons. There has also been a long history of working in partnership with our system partners, arm's length bodies and the CQC as our regulator on these issues.

The Trust believes that it has taken each of those issues seriously and, whilst there will undoubtedly be lessons to be learned over that period, dealt with them following the correct processes and prevailing guidance at the time. That said, there is a narrative building locally of an organisation that has not fully learned the lessons of its past and on this issue, is defensive, not transparent and, most concerning, that is not providing safe urological services and seeking to suppress those people that raise concerns.

As a result of the narrative building around this issue, the impact is being felt widely by local patients (past and present), by staff and on our services, and, based on our recent history it is the view of the UHMBT Board that a fully independent and external review of the issues raised, the related actions taken to date, actions currently in train and a review of the current service is the best way to move forward.

In the interim, the Board has established a sub-committee to oversee this programme of work and has initiated a Quality Summit with regulators, taking place on the 10th September to walk through the timeline of events, actions taken to date and current actions being mobilised.

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CHAIR: IAN JOHNSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE: AARON CUMMINS

We would welcome an opportunity to meet with you and members of your team to discuss whether NHSI can support an independent review and to ensure that you have all of the information you need to enable this to go ahead as soon as practically feasible. Given the very real impact on patient and colleague experience, it is hoped that a review can commence

Yours sincerely



Aaron Cummins
Chief Executive



Ian Johnson
Chairman

Cc Jerry Hawker, Chief Officer - MBCCG
Margaret Williams, Senior Manager Integrated Governance & Quality Improvement - MBCCG
David Levy, Regional Medical Director – NHS England / NHS Improvement
Kim Wood, Inspector, CQC