



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

Sent Via Email

Our Ref: AC/VLD

Chair and Chief Executive's Office

Westmorland General Hospital
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18 September 2019

Dear colleague

I wanted to provide you with an update regarding the urology services at University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT).

As you will no doubt be aware the Trust has experienced an increased level of external scrutiny since a former Trust employee Mr Peter Duffy, a consultant urologist, raised a large number of patient safety concerns in a book recounting his experiences of raising safety concerns during his time with UHMBT.

Since his book was published we have undertaken a number of actions which I'd like to update you on. We have:-

- Established an internal Urology Task and Finish Group. This group meets fortnightly and actions and minutes of the meetings can be found on the Trust website: www.uhmb.nhs.uk. The Task and Finish Group will report progress at the monthly meeting of the Trust Board and in public.
- Begun to commission an independent review of actions taken following an invited Review of the Urology Services in 2016 by the Royal College of Surgeons.
- Written to NHS Improvement requesting that they undertake an independent external review of our urology service; and the allegations made.
- Written to Mr Duffy – while all of the cases that we can identify in Mr Duffy's book have previously been investigated – to ask for a meeting to assist us in identifying several cases where we require further information to be able to do so. This meeting is now arranged for later this month.
- Shared copies of all media statements and Freedom of Information responses relating to urology on our website.

I have also personally begun to meet with a number of families and patients to discuss any outstanding or new concerns.

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CHAIR: IAN JOHNSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE: AARON CUMMINS

With such allegations and concerns being raised it is only right that we come under such scrutiny and following recent headlines of “deaths cover up” we have:

- Received confirmation from Cumbria Police that they do not have any live investigations into the accusation of covering up deaths
- Received confirmation from the senior coroner that he is assured with the actions taken following an inquest relating to the allegation.

I think Mr Duffy should be thanked for raising these concerns and pressing the Trust for answers to ensure the safety of others. I do regret that we were not able to amicably resolve the contractual dispute with Mr Duffy, without the need for him to exercise his legal right of seeking recourse through an Employment Tribunal.

I would like to take this opportunity to also recognise and thank the skilled and professional work of our urology service who are continuing to deliver a safe service, in what has become an emotionally charged environment for them.

This is a difficult time for all concerned and I'd like to reassure you of the Trust's unwavering commitment to safety and supporting and encouraging staff to speak out and raise the alarm when standards fall below acceptable minimum standards.

If you would like any further information or to meet with me, please do not hesitate to contact my office or contact Phil Woodford at Phil.Woodford@mbht.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely



Aaron Cummins
Chief Executive

CC:
Trust Board, UHMBT
Council of Governors, UHMBT
Leadership Team, Bay Health & Care Partners
UHMBT Website