



**Rutland**  
County Council

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22 July 2016

Will Huxter  
Regional Director of Specialised Commissioning NHS England  
Mezzanine Floor  
Southside  
105 Victoria St  
London  
SW1E 6QT

**BY EMAIL to [will.huxter@nhs.net](mailto:will.huxter@nhs.net)**

Dear Mr Huxter,

**Re: Proposal to cease commissioning CHD services at University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust.**

On behalf of Rutland County Council and the community we serve, we wish to make you aware that we oppose your proposed commissioning decision relating to CHD services based in Leicester.

We would ask you to reconsider this decision in the interests of maintaining this lifesaving service in a location that is accessible to our rural community. Expecting patients and families to travel to Birmingham or London will significantly undermine patient safety and overall wellbeing. This proposed change to service would also lead to increased and unnecessary emotional trauma for current and future patients and their families.

The East Midlands Congenital Heart Centre (EMCHC) based in Leicester, from the information we have seen, has made excellent progress over the last 18 months. Local evidence shows the increase in bed numbers, improvements in outcomes, investment in staffing and the creation of a new adolescent unit.

The future plans of a new single site children's hospital which would include the EMCHC and provide a wonderful new environment for the care of all our younger patients, could now be put at risk by your commissioning decision. Commissioning needs to look at the wider picture and the knock-on impacts, we fear this decision could lead to a wider reduction in services and patient care.

It is of concern that NHS England has not consulted any of the County or City Councils representing the communities that use the CHD services you are planning to cease commissioning. Additionally, the Rutland Health and Wellbeing Board (RHWB) would have expected that NHS England would present commissioning proposals like these in advance, which did not happen in this case.



This would enable the RHWB to ensure that the views and wishes of the community are considered. The RHWB enables all commissioners of health and care services to work together to ensure the highest quality and sustainable solution for the whole health and care system are implemented.

It is hard to understand how NHS England can be making such a significant commissioning decision at a time when you have not completed your consideration of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STP). Again we would ask that your decisions on commissioning of CHD services are not finalised until the STP process has been completed.

We hope you can appreciate our concern with your proposals and would ask for your commitment to the following:

- Meet with the Rutland Health and Wellbeing Board to present your proposals, the evidence that supports these and answer the questions and concerns from the Rutland Community.
- Put a hold on any final decision on changes to commissioning of CHD services until the STP process has been completed.
- Review and update your proposals based on consultation with the Rutland Health and Wellbeing Board and the outcome of the STP process.
- Enter into a full public consultation on your final proposals before they are implemented.

We look forward to receiving your response and we truly believe you have a duty to consult with patients and families, as well as those that represent and support them.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Terry King  
Leader Rutland County Council



Cllr Richard Clifton  
Health and Social Care Portfolio Holder