

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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3 October 2013

Consumer Champion expresses concerns with regards to LRI Emergency Department

The local consumer champions for health and social care services have written to the senior health and social care managers calling upon them to work even harder to relieve pressures on the Emergency Department at the Leicester Royal Infirmary.

Healthwatch Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland have issued a letter to senior members of the local NHS, CCGs and the local authority following a report fed back to them from Dr Mike Pepperman Healthwatch representative on the Urgent Care Board.

Dr. Peppermans report highlighted that the current position at LRI A&E is deeply worrying with experiences of patients attending A&E over the weekend of 14 and 15 September being reported as “distressing and unacceptable”.

The report also revealed that no community care places were available for a number of patients that were eligible for discharge.

The letter, sent on Monday 30 September, from the Chairs of Healthwatch Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland stated that they would be failing their responsibility to local people if they did not express concerns at the Emergency Department situation and has requested an action plan to tackle the problem is issued before the winter.

- ENDS -

Letter attached to email was sent to:

Mr J Adler Chief Executive University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust - C/O Mandy Johnson
Dr P Miller Chief Executive Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust - C/O Samantha Wood
Dr S Freeman Managing Director Leicester CCG
Dr D Briggs Managing Director East Leicestershire & Rutland CCG
Mr T Sanders Managing Director West Leicestershire CCG

Mr M Connell Director of Adult & Social Care Leicestershire County Council
Ms D Watson Director of Adult & Social Care Leicester City Council
Mrs C Chambers Director of Adult & Social Care Rutland County Council

And copied to:

Dr D Sharp Managing Director NHS Leicestershire & Lincolnshire
Councilor E White Chair Leicestershire Health & Wellbeing Board
Deputy Mayor Councilor R Palmer Chair Leicester Health & Wellbeing Board
Councilor M Cooke Chair Leicester Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission
Mrs L Stevenson Chair Rutland Adult & Health Scrutiny Committee
Mrs C Emmett Chair Rutland Health & Wellbeing Committee
Professor D Chiddick Chair Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust
Dr A Farooqi and Dr A Prasad Co-Chairs Leicester City CCG
Dr Nick Pulman Chair West Leicestershire CCG
Dr Graham Martin Chair East Leicestershire and Rutland CCG
Mr Simon Galton Chair Leicestershire Scrutiny Committee
Dr Sarah Hill Chair Leicestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny committee
Mrs Ruth Camomile Chair Leicestershire Adults and Communities Overview Scrutiny Committee
Mr Leon Spence Chair Leicestershire Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Vandna Gohil Director Healthwatch LLR C/O Deborah Govender

About Healthwatch Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

Healthwatch Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland are the independent consumer champions for health and social care in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The organisations will help to shape and improve local health and social care in local communities. Healthwatch Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland are part of the Healthwatch national network, established by the Government to ensure local patients and users have a greater input to shaping and designing local services.

About Healthwatch England

Healthwatch England is the new, independent consumer champion for health and social care in England. The organisation has independent statutory powers, as stated in the Health and Social Care Act 2012, to ensure the consumers' voice is heard and best practice is delivered in health and social care nationally. Healthwatch is also focused on providing leadership, guidance and support to the development of the Healthwatch network. To find out more please go to www.healthwatch.co.uk.

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September 30, 2013

Mr J Adler Chief Executive University Hospitals Leicester NHS Trust
Dr P Miller Chief Executive Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust
Dr S Freeman Managing Director Leicester CCG
Dr D Briggs Managing Director East Leicestershire & Rutland CCG
Mr T Sanders Managing Director West Leicestershire CCG
Mr M Connell Director of Adult & Social Care Leicestershire County Council
Ms D Watson Director of Adult Social Care Leicester City Council
Mrs C Chambers Director for People Rutland County Council

Dear All,

On 25th September there was a very well attended monthly meeting of all Healthwatches in Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland (LLR). There was a very thorough and detailed discussion about Urgent Care informed by Dr Mike Pepperman our representative on the Urgent Care Board.

Notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of all concerned over the past few weeks and examples of some successes, notably the new triage arrangements at UHL, we would be failing our responsibility to local people if we did not express our grave concerns at the Emergency Department situation. With winter approaching the current position is deeply worrying; the experience of some patients attending A&E over the weekend of 14-15th September was extremely distressing and quite unacceptable.

Our meeting was also made aware of the information provided to the UHL Board on the numbers of patients eligible and ready for discharge for whom there were no community places where they could be transferred. We are not unaware of the complexity of the issues that arise when discharge is considered or the financial constraints under which you have to operate but unless urgent solutions are found across health and social care our grave concerns will become a crisis.

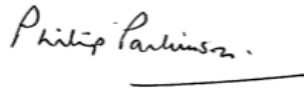
We find it difficult to equate the above with the closure of the Charnwood Ward at Loughborough and the decision of the City Council to close some of its residential homes.

We have similar anxieties about the pressures facing LPT and the unavailability of beds resulting in LLR patients having to be placed out of the county. Once again we recognise that this is not an LLR position alone but taken together with the above it is difficult to remain positive.

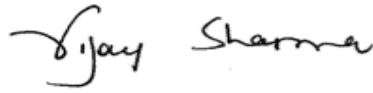
As local Healthwatch we keen to do everything we can to support you all in the resolution of these issues but nothing short of a collaborative approach across health and social care can save patients from a very challenging winter.

We would ask that you and your social care colleagues produce an action plan and publish before the winter which tackles these complex problems in the round. The people of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland deserve no less.

Yours sincerely,



Philip Parkinson
Interim Chair of
Healthwatch Leicester



Vijay Sharma
Interim Chair of
Healthwatch
Leicestershire



Jennifer Fenelon
Interim Chair of
Healthwatch Rutland

CC: Dr D Sharp Managing Director NHS Leicestershire & Lincolnshire
Councillor E White Chair Leicestershire Health and Wellbeing Board
Deputy Mayor Councillor R Palmer Chair Leicester Health and Wellbeing Board
Councillor M Cooke Chair Leicester Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission
Mrs L Stevenson Chair Rutland Adult & Health Scrutiny Committee
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Vandna Gohil Director Healthwatch LLR