

LONDON ASSEMBLY  
Health and Environment Committee

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**Matthew Kershaw**

Office of the Trust Special Administrator  
South London Healthcare NHS Trust  
Queen Elizabeth Hospital  
Stadium Road  
London SE18 4QH

**Our ref: 13/12/12**

**Date:** 13 December 2012

Dear Matthew

**South London Healthcare NHS Trust: Public Consultation on Draft Report by Trust  
Special Administrator**

The London Assembly's Health and Environment Committee discussed the proposed changes to the provision of A&E service across London with key NHS experts at its meeting on Wednesday 12 December as part of its on-going review of the changes to the NHS in London. The proposed closure of Lewisham A&E formed part of our discussion.

While the Committee accept that changes to NHS services may be necessary in order to ensure that Londoners continue to receive high quality care both now and in the future, we have serious concerns as to whether the proposed changes will deliver what is intended.

We are also concerned about the short time for consultation that you have allowed for, given the very complex nature of the changes you are proposing. Furthermore, we are unclear about the efforts you have made to ensure that you have consulted with the widest possible group of people likely to be affected by the changes you are proposing. Issuing a consultation document by itself does not make an effective consultation.

We are concerned at the lack of rigour in the modelling on the impact the proposals to Lewisham A&E will have, for example on maternity provision, and whether there will be sufficient capacity within the new hospital structure you are proposing to cope with the population's needs both now and in the future. We believe that further analysis of the impact of the closure of the A&E department at Lewisham will have on the Princess Royal University and Queen Elizabeth A&E departments (and on other boroughs like Southwark), and on the potential for under-use of the facilities at Lewisham hospital are needed to support any recommendations you make to the Secretary of State.

We also have concerns about the robustness of the data you are using for estimating travel times and would welcome independent validation of your methodology.

We are also concerned to ensure that the impact on blue light/ambulance journeys has been fully considered and that the London Ambulance Service has sufficient capacity to cope with the additional journey times for Lewisham residents. Again we are unclear that your work on this is sufficiently robust to support your recommendations.

Given these concerns a majority of Committee members oppose your proposal for the closure of Lewisham A&E.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Murad Qureshi', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Murad Qureshi

Chair of the Health and Environment Committee