

From: Tony O'Sullivan

Sent: 18 October 2016

To: Rory Hegarty (NHS SOUTHWARK CCG) Comms & Engagement Director; Mark Easton Mark (NHS SOUTHWARK CCG) OHSEL Programme Director

Subject: RE: South London press article

Thank you Rory

I am not responsible for the words of the journalist. I think the article overall shines a light on the process that has been too obscure, as you and Mark acknowledge – and I realise this is an imposition from NHSE.

You will have seen the [HSJ article](#) where no less a person than Chris Hopson suggests that the £22bn imposed level of savings imposed by NHSE absolutely must be adhered to, and his incredulity and his conclusion that CCGs in Footprints will be forced to create STPs that they know in their heart are unrealisable.

You have heard me say that I sympathise with you on the double bind situation that you find yourselves in.

I cannot stop journalists using the word 'hospital' when in fact they mean 'NHS trusts' or 'local health services'. I do try. I have spent my life trying to educate people that the health service extends beyond a hospital and a GP surgery.

I am of course responsible for my own words: St Helier's has been under threat of closure or major downgrading for several years, and this threat remains. You know that and I know that. And NHS London advertised their plans to close and merge 9 A&Es back in 2013 (on one of the very days of our Lewisham JR hearing). The worry is that the STP process drags such threats out into the open and they may become a reality.

We have openly welcomed your reassurances that the SE London A&Es will not change. However, NHSE's approach is to threaten to take things out of the hands of local commissioners and/or providers if budgets are not balanced. Until we see a financial case that realistically meets current and predicted clinical need (in context of social care pressures) we remain agnostic about the plans and have to say so as D-day – 23rd December – draws near.

Our role as campaigners is to point out what is unrealistic, unachievable and therefore risky – Chris Hopson points to the danger of actions (including closures) being put into plans even though commissioners know that such major changes demand serious consultation.

It will backfire.

We have acknowledged your efforts to be open and to involve us in discussion, and I will continue to do so. I do however reserve the right to point out that the £1b savings plan is so unrealistic, and the threat from NHSE is so real (with drastic measures to follow if budgets don't balance with their imposed limits by 2020) that the only way to save such a huge amount of money in such a short time is to cut off an arm or a leg from the local NHS body, ie to close or slash drastically a major part of the local

NHS. Therefore we are campaigning for openness about the underlying intentions of NHSE and of course the DoH.

We have never stopped saying we would love the community-based care talked about in the OHSEL work to become a reality, but it is hard to believe it when the financial plans are so lacking in detail. I hope we can pursue that quest for clarity when we meet about the finances.

I hope that we can continue to communicate well, and I thank you for your offers to do so. I am of course open to further discussion, as will Dr Louise Irvine, our Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign chair.

Tony