

Appendix A.

From the Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt MP  
Secretary of State for Health



SofS43442

Councillor Angie Meader  
Chair of Lambeth & Southwark Joint Health Scrutiny Committee  
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12 JAN 2007

Dear Councillor Meader,

Thank you for your letters of 16 August and 19 December, enclosing a referral about proposals to reconfigure local mental health crisis care services by the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.

In order to make a decision on this matter, I have considered the concerns raised by your Committee and have also taken views from the local NHS, Departmental officials and the National Clinical Director for Mental Health.

I understand that the local NHS wishes to implement the following proposed changes:

- closure of the 24 hour walk-in Emergency Clinic at the Maudsley Hospital;
- maintaining 2-4 inpatient beds at the Maudsley Hospital;
- strengthening the response of the community mental health teams to crisis presentations;
- reviewing all crisis plans to ensure that all service users are clear about the best course of action in a crisis;
- introducing an advice line to signpost service users, carers, GPs and other agencies to appropriate services;
- developing extended drop-in facilities to provide out of hours social support; and
- provision of better information about access to services.

I also understand that, subsequent to your referral, a specific proposal to strengthen local A&E service has now been included in the local implementation plan:

- creation of a designated space at King's College Hospital, adjacent to A&E, which will provide a safe and segregated area for mental health service users who require assessment.

I understand that NHS London has agreed to provide the necessary capital funding to enable the proposed changes at King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust to be put in place.