

Dear Councillor Khan

Independent Assessment and Treatment Centres

The NHS is currently in the process of procuring services from the Independent Sector (IS) as part of the programme to expand access and choice for patients. The Department of Health, via the Strategic Health Authorities, has now released details of the 2nd wave London Schemes for IS procurement.

For North East London, the SHA has confirmed that the sector does not require additional elective surgical capacity. Instead, the focus will be on providing additional clinical referral, assessment and treatment centres that can provide alternatives to surgery, such as physiotherapy. The casemix specified for these centres will include:

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- ENT (adult and children)
- Gynaecology (linked to urological disorders)
- Neurology(specifically 'headache services')

The SHA is currently reviewing waiting list data and care pathway work for these specialties. At present no site has been identified for the new centres. However, it may be possible that an NHS site might be identified that would appeal to the IS providers. The SHA has indicated that the Department of Health is planning to issue an Invitation to Negotiate to prospective providers in late February 2006.

As the procurement is London wide, the 5 SHAs have adopted a common approach to information sharing about the national programme. Please find attached a briefing document that sets out in more detail what is planned across the capital.

The SHA has indicated that they do not believe that formal consultation on this work is required. However, the PCT is keen to share this initiative with the Health Scrutiny Panel and we are requesting a slot on the agenda for the 20th December to discuss this initiative further. Jeremy Burden is the lead director from the PCT.

The PCT is committed to working with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to ensure that this initiative is consistent with the aims of our joint Health and Well Being strategy and contributes to improving patient experience.

The NHS is currently at an early stage in this work and we are committed to keeping you informed as soon as further developments emerge.

Yours sincerely

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