



London Ambulance Service **NHS**
NHS Trust

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Nick de Bois MP
Member of Parliament for Enfield North
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr De Bois

Thank you for your recent letter regarding your concerns about the LAS cost improvement plan. I'd like to reassure you that there is no threat to front line services in Enfield and we will continue to provide high levels of patient care.

We are, however, looking at what we can do differently to manage the increasing demand on our service while reducing our costs. Our improvement plan sets out how we will do this. For example, we plan to increase the number of patients given clinical advice over the phone. Traditionally we have sent an ambulance to most patients and taken them to hospital. While this is the right response for our more seriously ill patients, others - with less serious illnesses such as coughs, colds or minor injuries - will receive more support in the community. This will reduce the number of ambulance journeys and free up our crews to respond to more serious calls

We also have other projects in place to reduce pressure on our crews such as improving hospital turn around times and reducing the amount of time our vehicles are off the road. All these measures mean we can gradually reduce the number of posts while still maintaining services.

We are also working with health care providers locally and have been involved in the Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Clinical Strategy review to look at the impact of hospital closures. To support this work the LAS commissioned an external consultant to review proposed changes and to model the additional resources required to maintain services for residents. The proposals were presented at several public forums and the independent reviews that followed. This was further supported by Sir George Alberti, the then Department of Health Emergency Care Director. The outcome of this was that £1.2M was required to provide additional resources to ensure that

patients still received an appropriately timely response. This was agreed by the project board and has formed part of the financial business cases produced so far. I am content that this level of additional funding for the LAS would continue to ensure an appropriate level of service to the residents of Enfield. Also, North Middlesex Hospital is in Enfield and so your residents will still have a hospital with an A&E Department within their borough.

I understand your concern regarding the clinical impact if an A&E department closes. However, the LAS is now bypassing many local A&E departments and taking patients to specialist centres offering enhanced levels of care. This has been happening for the past three years for heart attack patients, over the past year for strokes and for major trauma since last April. The evidence clearly shows that a patient taken to specialist centres has a much better health outcome.

I hope this offers you some reassurances that changes we are making will benefit the residents of Enfield. If you would like to meet to discuss this further with me or members of my team locally I would be happy to arrange that.

Kind Regards

Peter Bradley CBE
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Simon Burns, Minister of State for Health
Katy Millard, LAS Assistant Director of Operations, East London