

7 January 2014

Dr Nicola Smith  
Chair  
Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group  
155 Sherwood Drive  
Bletchley  
Milton Keynes  
MK3 6RT

Dr Paul Hassan  
Accountable Officer / Chief Clinical Officer  
Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group  
Suite 1, Capability House  
Wrest Park  
Silsoe  
Bedfordshire  
MK45 4HR

Dear Dr Smith and Dr Hassan,

**Re: Health services in Milton Keynes and Bedfordshire**

David Bennett has asked that I respond on his behalf to your letters setting out some of the challenges Milton Keynes and Bedfordshire CCGs are facing in ensuring essential healthcare services are provided for local patients. We thank you for these letters as we are aware that health services in Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes are under pressure from an ageing and expanding population with local people relying on hospitals that have faced clinical and financial challenges for several years. We therefore welcome your invitation to collaborate on plans to improve local healthcare provision.

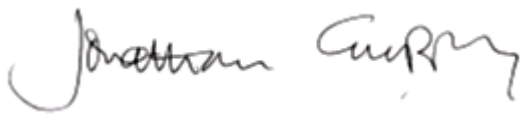
We have now appointed a team to work with you and other national and local partners to undertake a comprehensive, locally-led strategic review of the health needs and healthcare services in Milton Keynes and Bedfordshire. We expect to launch the review with you early in January 2014.

As you rightly say, for this joint work to reach a successful conclusion that both CCGs can take to consultation, you will need to make the decisions about the services that will best meet your patients' needs and protect service continuity. To this end, the review has been designed in a way that supports you to make these important decisions. The team will work closely with both CCGs in the early stages to agree the precise scope of work, recognising the respective issues to be considered by each CCG in taking forward your commissioning strategies.

We also agree with you that a successful outcome will depend on significant engagement with local communities, clinicians and healthcare providers, building on your existing engagement work. The team will work closely with you and these groups to inform and guide your decisions over future healthcare services.

Thank you for your continued commitment to this important work which we hope will further strengthen your local NHS and build on the innovations already introduced. I look forward to working together with you on this review.

Yours sincerely



**Jonathan Guppy**

Interim Senior Enforcement Director

On behalf of Dr David Bennett and national partners (NHS England, NHS Trust Development Authority and NHS England)

Cc:

Ms Jeannie Ablett, Chief Officer Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group  
Mr John Rooke, Chief Operating Officer Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group  
Jane Halpin, Director (Hertfordshire and South Midlands), NHS England  
Jeffrey Worrall, Portfolio Director, NHS Trust Development Authority  
Stephen Hay, Managing Director Provider Regulation, Monitor

Copied for information to:

Sir David Nicolson, Chief Executive NHS England  
Mr David Flory, Chief Executive NHS Trust Development Authority  
Dr David Bennett, Chief Executive Monitor