

Consultant 6

1 February 2014

Dear Mr Witcomb

RE: Proposed that divestment of London Bridge Hospital from HCA.

I am a consultant surgeon of four years standing. My full-time NHS appointment is at a leading London teaching hospital and over the course of the last two years I have entered the private healthcare market. My practice is based both at HCA as well as facilities run by other private health care providers.

I am writing to express my personal concerns and reservations regarding the proposed divestment of London Bridge Hospital from the HCA group. My concerns are in relation to possible detriments that any divestment may result in, such as the ability to continue delivering and building upon the high quality care of current arrangements.

London Bridge Hospital is a high volume medical establishment with a strong ethos of patient centred care, quality improvement, and innovation, and these are the reasons I have chosen to practice there.

There has also been a long and established track record of substantial investment in facilities, equipment, new technologies as well as the investment in human capital such as the development of highly skilled specialist practitioners such as clinical nurse specialists. This innovative and patient centred approach in my experience has not been echoed by other private health care providers. These clinical initiatives have been strongly supported and in many instances lead by the London Bridge clinical and nonclinical management team. One cannot help but be nervous and anxious about whether or not new ownership and new management would continue to have a similar patient centred approach, or whether a more commercially minded approach would be adopted.

Furthermore within many clinical disciplines there is a very high degree of multidisciplinary team working, and working within the HCA network has afforded many clinicians the opportunity to collaborate with fellow clinicians from teaching hospitals across the whole of London in the interests of maximising the quality of the care delivered. I am somewhat fearful that removing London Bridge Hospital from this network would impact on the ability to deliver this multidisciplinary care within the fields such as oncology to give but one example.

I am of course sensitive to the commercial issues at play, however I am also anxious that in an attempt to address perceived issues within the commercial market, we do not inadvertently hinder our ability to continue delivering a high quality patient centred service, nor do we hinder our ability to innovate clinically into the future.