

Consultant 67

31 January 2014

Dear Mr Witcomb

Competition Commission

I am writing to you in respect of the Competition Commission's recommendation that HCA sells the London Bridge Hospital and The Princess Grace.

I am a [X], for the last few years, has been working from the Out-Patient Department of The Princess Grace Hospital and has been in practice as a single-handed practitioner for over [X] years in central London. I therefore feel in a good position to comment about quality of care in the various hospitals that I have used.

I am on the staff at [X] Hospital and have had admitting rights at [X]. I have particularly used [X] regularly.

I chose to move my practice to The Princess Grace Hospital after very careful consideration about the quality, the morality and the efficiency of this establishment; I have not been disappointed. I consider the concept of closing these two hospitals is counter to the success and the ethic of such an organisation. To keep up to date, The Princess Grace Hospital has had to make significant investment. Reducing the size of the HCA network limits HCA's ability to make investments in its hospitals, and therefore impacts its ability to provide world-class hospitals. Therefore, it is very important that the size of the HCA network is not diminished.

One of the major reasons for coming to The Princess Grace Hospital was because of the excellence of its Radiology Department and the fact that it has always been ahead of most other healthcare facilities in the UK of having the most modern and appropriate equipment. I have also benefited from the quality of attention by its administrative staff to maintain morale, efficiency and a care profile that is exemplary. I have also sent patients to other organisations, such as [X] because of the nature of the facilities and the specialists who work there, and I noticed the difference in the ethic of provision of care in the different hospitals and the expectations of the patients who enter there. Similarly, my experience of working in the PPU field also gives me a different view about the expectation about what a unit such as the [X] can provide and I consider that the autonomy of the HCA hospitals is vital for continuing development of quality medical practice. All of the hospitals that I mention, whether under the umbrella of a commercial organisation or a charity, are run as a business and they are successful because they have high quality administrators.

Furthermore it is interesting to note that the smaller units, such as [X], have been able to compete in this market with significant developments such as the installation of a robot or stereotactic radiotherapy units even though they are small. Nevertheless, they have significant limitation, such as the presence of a cardiac catheter laboratory does not exist in either and a limited investment capability.

So, in essence, I consider that it would be a significant and retrograde step for HCA to release these two hospitals into the marketplace, and I trust you will take this into consideration.