



AIHO

Association of
Independent Healthcare
Organisations

Roger Witcomb
Private Healthcare Inquiry Chairman
Competition Commission
Victoria House
Southampton Row
London WC1B 4AD

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4th February 2014

Dear Mr Witcomb,

RE: Private healthcare market investigation

I am writing to you on behalf of the Association of Independent Healthcare Organisations (AIHO). AIHO is the trade association looking to highlight the role the independent sector plays in delivering the nation's health. AIHO's membership, and its Board, is representative of the broad and varied independent hospital sector (please see list of Board members at the foot of this letter).

The independent healthcare sector is an integral part of Britain's health system. Our members offer a diverse and competitive range of services so it's unsurprising that they have different opinions about the inquiry. However, what all AIHO members agree on is the need to support a diverse and vibrant market for private healthcare in the UK, and giving patients and commissioners the information they need to help make an informed choice.

Given the Competition Commission's latest provisional decision on remedies (PDR), the Association has agreed with its members to develop an industry Code of Practice on a number of areas identified within the PDR. AIHO is currently coordinating the development of that Code, in conjunction with its members. This will likely address the detail that will need to sit behind your Remedies 4, 5, 6 and 7 as laid out in the PDR. I would very much welcome the opportunity to give the Commission an overview of the Code and its proposed content, before your final report is published.

There is one area where it may be helpful to provide you with an immediate response. AIHO, and its members, support the Private Healthcare Information Network (PHIN) and believe that, once the structure and Governance issues are addressed (as mentioned in the PDR), PHIN should be the organisation for the collection and publication of all consultant-level data. PHIN already has the infrastructure in place and it is a natural and cost-effective progression from its current operation of collecting hospital data for publication, to that of collecting in addition, consultant data – all for the benefit of the patient.

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Booth
Chief Executive

