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From: HAMMOND, Stephen

To: hello@improvinghealthcaretogether.org.uk

Date: 01 April 2020 at 12:33

Subject: Consultation Response - Stephen Hammond MP

I wholeheartedly welcome the £500m investment into the Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust. This is an unprecedented investment and is fantastic news for patients and NHS staff locally.

I have visited St Helier Hospital many times as the Member of Parliament for Wimbledon, and I have always been impressed by the dedication and professionalism of its staff. I am all the more impressed at the way the staff do their best in a building which makes offering modern levels of care incredibly difficult.

The hospital is in need of a wholesale refurbishment, building on the programme of works over the last few years. The refurbishment will mean less money and time needs to be spent on repairs and will mean that ambulances will not need to transport patients from the back of St Helier to the front because the lifts are too small for modern hospital beds.

I support the submission of the Merton Conservative group and join them in welcoming this consultation and the proposals to improve St Helier and build a centre of clinical excellence accessible to all local residents. All consultation options will lead to a significant improvement in the level of healthcare my constituents can access.

My preference will always be for the new centre of clinical excellence to be based at St Helier Hospital, I recognise the difficulties in providing this and the requirement to cater for the whole of the Epsom and St Helier Trust area.

Therefore, I will not seek to block any of the consultation options from being pursued, as long as they raise the standard of healthcare available to my constituents.

I note that under the new proposals to build a new hospital, 85% of services would stay at Epsom and St Helier hospitals in refurbished buildings, with both hospitals running 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with urgent treatment centres at each hospital. Despite much scaremongering this confirms that St Helier Hospital is safe.

Six core major services, for the most unwell patients, those who need more specialist care, and births in hospital, would be moved together one site in new state-of-the-art buildings. This would mean that specialist doctors, nurses and clinical staff would be able to work together to provide round-the-clock specialist care. The Trust's proposals are for this to be based at Sutton.

Some have suggested that Sutton is too far away for these services for those who use St Helier Hospital. The services at Sutton would be those for which patients usually arrive by ambulance, and in my view, the priority must be to ensure patients get the best care from the best staff providing the full range of critical care services in one location.

However, to improve access, I do hope consideration will be given to a bespoke bus service in the Cannon Hill and Morden areas of my constituency to the new hospital, should the plans go ahead. This would be very similar to the "G" bus route that serves St George's Hospital.

The most important consideration in this consultation is to improve the levels of healthcare that residents can access. Whilst we would prefer the new centre of excellence to be built at St Helier Hospital, the most important thing for local residents is to have access to the highest quality of care and this means that it is imperative that the proposed investment goes ahead. Under all the options of this consultation it is clear that St Helier Hospital is safe, will be improved, and will continue to build on its record of serving the community.