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To: "hello@improvinghealthcaretogether.org.uk"
Date: 1 July 2020 11:25
Subject: Merton Conservatives second submission to IHT consultation

Sent on behalf of the Merton Conservative Group

Merton Conservatives fully support the proposed investment into the three CCG's, and believe that St Helier Hospital is the best location for the new specialist treatment centre. After many missed opportunities this investment is critical for the future of healthcare in Merton, and the wider CCG's catchment area. We do not believe that a two hospital model is in the best interests of local people, and nor does it allow for a sustainable future for St Helier Hospital. Missing out on this investment would be a disaster for local people, and it is clear that those who claim that a £500 million investment is a 'downgrade' are clearly not motivated by the need to ensure the best health outcomes for local residents.

From our engagement with the trust, and with local residents, it is clear that the healthcare delivery model in Merton must change to ensure a sustainable future. NHS professionals have repeatedly called for change to deliver a higher standard of healthcare. This can only be achieved by the three hospital model, and not by any retrograde attempts to sustain a flawed model of healthcare delivery. We consider the two hospital proposal to be the 'do nothing' option, as it does not achieve a better outcome for residents of this borough. We share the opinion of our local NHS professionals that if the three hospital model is not implemented, then that decision will jeopardise the future healthcare of residents of the London Borough of Merton.

We have closely considered the IHT review of the impact of Covid19 on the existing clinical model. The weaknesses of the current health provision are clear and stark. Currently we do not have enough ITU beds, and it is not possible to increase this due to the layout of the hospitals. Furthermore, only 20% of beds at St Helier and Epsom are single room beds, meaning that for some of the small number of Covid19 patients who the hospital could care for could not be isolated, thereby putting the lives of other at serious risk. Positive and negative Covid19 spaces were unable to be separated, and the antiquated design of Epsom and St Helier Hospitals created extremely challenging working environments for doctors and nurses dealing with a little known and deadly virus.

In our previous submission to this consultation we made the case for this new investment to begin as quickly as possible. It is clear from the pandemic that the 'do nothing' option is not viable and is a danger to the health of local residents. We therefore hope there will be no further delays, and reiterate our support for the three hospital model.

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