

The Leader's Room
Wandsworth Town Hall
Wandsworth High Street
London SW18 2PU

8th September 2023

Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Sent via email

Dear Minister,

We are writing regarding the reconfiguration of children's cancer care services for South London, most of Surrey, Kent, Medway, East Sussex and Brighton and Hove.

As Council Leaders of affected areas, we know that the decision on the location of the new Principal Treatment Centre will be of vital importance to local families. We understand that NHS England's current preferred option is the Evelina in central London, over St George's Hospital in Tooting, which provides the current service in collaboration with the Royal Marsden.

We are concerned at the potential transfer of services away from South West London into central London. Parents of children with cancer have said that they prefer to take them to hospital by car rather than public transport (especially if children are on immunosuppressants). This means that venues outside of central London are preferable.

We are also concerned at the loss of paediatric cancer services from hospitals with significant expertise in delivering this care. St George's Hospital, the second choice for the location of the new Principal Treatment Centre, has 25 years of experience and expertise in delivering paediatric cancer care including complex surgery. It is also important to note that children's cancer care is not a stand-alone service: it is closely interlinked with other specialist services at St George's. The removal of children's cancer care from the hospital could have a significant impact on other services provided to children in South West London and beyond, particularly surgery and pathology.

Finally, we have been disappointed to learn that parents consulted with so far in the process feel that their voices have not been sufficiently heard. We hope that the extra time created by postponing the public consultation will be used carefully, to ensure that the views of clinicians and families are captured meaningfully.

We will be closely monitoring the process as it develops.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Simon Hogg
Leader of Wandsworth Council



Councillor Anthony Okereke
Leader of Greenwich Council



Councillor Andreas Kirsch
Leader of Kingston Council



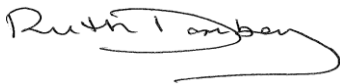
Councillor Ross Garrod
Leader of Merton Council



Councillor Gareth Roberts
Leader of Richmond Council



Councillor Tim Oliver
Leader of Surrey Council



Councillor Ruth Dombey
Leader of Sutton Council