



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr. Andrew Morgan
Chief Executive Officer
United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust
Grantham and District Hospital
101 Manthorpe Road
Grantham
NG31 8DG

Open Correspondence

9 June 2020

Proposed New Temporary Measures at Grantham and District Hospital

Dear Mr. Morgan,

Thank you for informing us of your intention to implement changes to services at Grantham and District Hospital.

As you are aware, Grantham and District Hospital is not only a cherished local healthcare facility, it provides a critical service to a growing population.

Your decision this week to change services to make Grantham and District Hospital the lead facility for cancer treatment and other elective procedures across Lincolnshire is a welcome announcement. Bringing more services to our local hospital is what we have long argued is justified for Grantham. We also welcome the ability for patients to access urgent emergency care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, after four long years of overnight closure. Many local people have dedicated much of their spare time to campaigning for better services at Grantham and District Hospital and they will be pleased by these positive steps.

You have outlined that because of the high-risk nature of cancer patients, you need to make Grantham and District Hospital a COVID-free, so-called 'green' site. You stated that the proposed Urgent Treatment Centre, which replaces the Accident and Emergency unit on a temporary basis until March 2021, would be susceptible to the potential admission of COVID patients and therefore will be classified as 'blue' and as such, in your explanation, cannot include medical beds that are required for the 'green' site.

We do not understand the need to reduce the provision of emergency services and remove the acute medical beds at Grantham and District Hospital. This will mean that only the most minor ailments can be treated in the Urgent Treatment Centre and that any patient who requires an overnight stay will have to travel an hour away to Lincoln Hospital. To do this without adequate justification or explanation is completely unacceptable to our constituents in Grantham and surrounding villages and to us.



We would therefore be grateful for your explanation on why you believe the removal of acute medicine and downgrading of the Accident and Emergency unit are required. Yesterday you told us there are approximately 110 beds at Grantham and District Hospital and only four operating theatres. As the most complex operations requiring long stays will still take place in Lincoln and the theatres need to be cleaned between patient use, these 110 beds will not be fully utilised by the proposed cancer and elective surgery. This will lead to empty wards at Grantham and District Hospital which could otherwise have been used to provide care for acutely ill medical patients close to their home and family. Furthermore, these patients will need to be cared for in Lincoln instead, reducing capacity there and indeed overall within the Trust.

Just as at Lincoln and Boston, Grantham could accommodate the necessary number of beds for cancer and elective surgery, as well as emergency admissions. Your decision to not allow emergency admissions overnight seems unjustified. We would welcome your explanation as to why you have not decided to split Grantham Hospital safely into “Blue” and “Green” areas to accommodate both emergency medical admissions and elective surgery facilities just as they have at many other hospitals in our region and indeed your Trust already does, and will continue to do, at both Lincoln and Boston hospitals.

This decision is even more disappointing given that the national government recently provided your Trust an additional +£342m by way of a debt write off in response to the Coronavirus crisis. Many residents will understandably now question where this money is going and why services at Grantham cannot be enhanced to meet the needs of a growing population. We would welcome an explanation on this matter.

We are aware many of our constituents work at Grantham and District Hospital. They are understandably concerned; many will not be able to commute to Lincoln instead and some are trained for roles that will be moved. What plans for staff support and training do you have?

Finally, we understand the proposed date of March 2021 for the end of the temporary measures, but would ask that you consider shortening that timeframe and setting a specific date in 2020 to provide the assurance that any changes are indeed temporary.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Gareth Davies MP

Dr. Caroline Johnson MP