

Simon Stevens  
Chief Executive  
NHS England

25 February 2015

Dear Simon

## **Greater Manchester Devolution**

We are writing as the Chief Executives of the Acute Trusts in Greater Manchester to confirm our support for the proposal to devolve greater decision-making authority and responsibility from central government to Greater Manchester.

It is important to recognise that a number of processes for working collaboratively across the GM footprint are already in place, and this includes the regular monthly meeting of the Greater Manchester Acute Chief Executives. The group is long established, having been in existence for more than ten years, and has its own chairmanship and secretariat functions. Over the years the GM Acute Chief Executives group has come to be recognised as the legitimate source of advice and opinion from the Acute providers in Greater Manchester, and in this respect the group has developed close working relationships with GM Commissioners and other key players in the GM health and social care system.

The GM Acute CEOs group has played a significant role in a number of important strategic programmes in the past, including in the areas of women's and children's service (the "Making it Better" project), service performance (eg facilitating agreement on cancer breach sharing) and specialist cancer services (functioning as a reference group for Manchester Cancer). The group also now plays an important role in the "Healthier Together" programme, which is overseeing the restructuring of acute and emergency care in Greater Manchester.

Much of the work of the GM Acute CEOs group has been undertaken through a period when the prevailing ethos did not encourage Acute providers to work collaboratively, or to cooperate to achieve strategic change and improved outcomes for service users across the wider conurbation. Our experience is that collaborative working is essential to how an integrated community like Greater Manchester can grow and develop, not least in respect of health and social care. Devolution offers the possibility to build on and formalise many of the vibrant working arrangements that have already been established, such that strategic change can be progressed more rapidly and more effectively.

The GM Acute CEOs' group recognises and supports the need to maintain the formal distinction between commissioners and service providers. We believe this is required to ensure clarity of purpose, not least for the Boards of provider organisations. We are also clear that the Memorandum of Understanding that is intended to underpin the health and social care aspects of GM devolution will be focused on the commissioner responsibilities, and needs to reflect the devolution of powers and resources from NHS England to GM CCGs and local authorities.

Having noted this, we strongly welcome the inclusion in the proposed GM health and social care governance arrangements of a formally established Provider Forum, and the centrality of a Co-design approach to the strategic transformation agenda. The Provider Forum will ensure that the voices of service providers can properly be heard on all relevant service

issues, not just in the context of major service change programmes. Emphasising a Co-design principle from the outset will ensure that whilst there is still an important role for competition between providers (as appropriate), there are clearer mechanisms for cooperation between providers and with commissioners, to achieve the best outcomes for the people of Greater Manchester.

The new arrangements will also require the development of a new set of relationships with the regulatory and inspection bodies within health and social care, including Monitor, the Trust Development Authority and the Care Quality Commission. It has been proposed that a Memorandum of Agreement should be developed to define the new relationship. The GM Acute CEO's group strongly welcomes this proposal and would want to play an important role in developing this agreement. The key objective of the agreement must be to create a GM sub-regional focus for the regulatory and inspection functions, whilst maintaining proper consistency. This will allow the regulators to gain a far clearer understanding of the strategic and transformational agenda in Greater Manchester, and to provide advice and support that facilitates rather than impedes change.

The health and social care system in Greater Manchester faces many challenges, but the conurbation is strong and robust, and has many effective, high quality provider organisations. There is considerable potential to make faster and more substantial progress with transformational change across the conurbation, and GM devolution can support this. The GM Acute CEOs' group supports the principle of GM devolution, and the approaches that are being developed to future governance arrangements. These approaches must be developed to facilitate an effective role for provider organisations, including working in an increasingly collaborative manner, in concert with commissioners, and with integrated input from sector regulators and inspectors.

In summary, the Greater Manchester Acute CEOs' group:

- supports the principle of Greater Manchester Devolution
- committed to collaborative working, which is increasingly delivering greater benefits and faster progress than competitive approaches
- believes there is considerable potential to build on previous experience of successful joint working across the conurbation
- strongly supports the proposals to include in the GM Devolution arrangements a clear principle of Co-design
- strongly supports the proposed creation of a Provider Forum to act as a conduit for provider engagement and participation
- strongly supports the approach to developing a new relationship with regulatory and inspection bodies, and would want to contribute to establishing a Memorandum of Agreement that would ensure a clear sub-regional focus for these functions
- strongly supports information sharing

We hope that this letter will be a constructive and useful contribution to the development of the Greater Manchester Devolution proposals.

Yours sincerely



**Mrs Ann Barnes**

**Chief Executive, Stockport NHS FT**



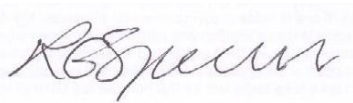
**Dr Jackie Bene**

**Chief Executive, Bolton NHS FT**



**Sir Mike Deegan**

**Chief Executive, Central Manchester  
University Hospitals NHS FT**



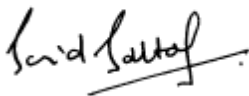
**Mr Roger Spencer**

**Interim Chief Executive, The Christie NHS FT**



**Dr Gillian Fairfield**

**Chief Executive, Pennine Acute Hospitals  
NHS Trust**




**Sir David Dalton**

**Chief Executive, Salford Royal NHS FT**



**Mrs Karen James**

**Chief Executive, Tameside Hospital NHS FT**



**Dr Attila Vegh**

**Chief Executive, University Hospitals of South  
Manchester NHS FT**



**Mr Rob Forster**

**Acting Chief Executive, Wrightington, Wigan  
and Leigh NHS FT**

Cc David Bennett – Chief Executive, Monitor  
David Flory – Chief Executive, Trust Development Agency  
David Behan – Chief Executive, Care Quality Commission