

the Greater Manchester
Pathology
(Laboratory Medicine) Network

c/o NHS Manchester
Newton Silk Mill
Holyoak Street
Manchester
M40 1HA

To:
Greater Manchester Acute Trust Chief Executives
Greater Manchester Primary Care Trust Chief Executives

14th July 2009

Dear Colleague,

Developing the Emerging Vision for Pathology Services Across Greater Manchester

As you will be aware at the May series of Chief Executives' meetings proposals were supported by the Chief Executive community to review the emerging vision for pathology within Greater Manchester in line with the recommendations of the Carter Report.

The paper considered set out a challenging agenda for pathology including:

- The achievement of efficiency savings of 20%
- Measurement and improvement in quality by 20%
- Sustaining on site presence of necessary personnel and services in each Trust
- Ensuring sustainability of future pathology services across Greater Manchester

This proposal emerged from the Strategy Group of the Network and subsequent to the Chief Executives' meeting has now been considered by the full Greater Manchester Pathology Network Board. There is a recognition within the Network of the significant financial challenges that the NHS is going to face over the next few years and therefore a recognition that all aspects of NHS service provision will need to demonstrate credible proposals in terms of how they respond to this challenge.

The Network recognises it has been set a major challenge by the Chief Executive community and believes it can respond to this challenge. It recognises that delivering efficiency savings and quality improvements of the magnitude of 20% is a huge aspiration and is therefore planning to commit to an urgent piece of feasibility work to assess the ability to deliver at this level. The Network recognises that measuring improvement in quality as a percentage may not be appropriate but as part of the piece of work it will aim to develop a set of measures that can assess relative quality and therefore has the ability to demonstrate quality improvement across the

laboratories. As a reciprocal part of this challenge it would seem a reasonable expectation that the Pathology Network is given the appropriate space to commit to undertake this work and therefore would seek assurances that there is:

1. No double counting of annual efficiency targets established by individual provider organisations against this efficiency requirement.
2. Commissioning organisations suspend any plans to tender pathology laboratory services during this period.

It is our belief that this is a reasonable expectation that should enable the pathology laboratories to have the best opportunities to assess the feasibility of delivering the expectations set upon them.

If agreement can be reached on these points then the Network will commit to a challenging timescale to complete feasibility work later during this calendar year. The Network would seek urgent confirmation from the Chief Executive communities that this proposal is supported.

Yours sincerely



Mike Burrows
Chief Executive
Salford PCT
Joint Chairs of the Greater Manchester Pathology Network



Andrew Foster
Chief Executive
WWL NHS Foundation Trust
Joint Chairs of the Greater Manchester Pathology Network