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20 August 2008

Dear Colin

Re: PCT Proposals relating to GP Practice & GP Led Health Centre Development

The Health Scrutiny Panel has considered the above topic at three separate meetings and has taken evidence on the matter from PCT officers, as well as hearing the views of the Cleveland Local Medical Committee.

The Health Scrutiny Panel met on 30 July 2008 to hear about how the consultation had gone and the type of views that were being put forward by people taking part in the consultation. The Panel decided that rather than support the broad principles as consulted upon, that were very difficult to disagree with, it would prefer to wait until firm proposals were published and make comment upon those.

To that end, the Panel met on 20 August 2008 to consider, in further detail, the proposals that are due to be put before the PCT Board on 21 August 2008.

In respect of the proposals for Middlesbrough outlined in the Board Paper, the Panel welcomes the proposed development for a new General Practice in Hemlington and particularly welcomes the fact that it is proposed to be an enhanced service. Whilst the Panel notes that a location is yet to be identified, it would encourage the PCT and the successful bidding organisation to utilise the expertise of the local authority in discussions around a location.

The Health Scrutiny Panel also welcomes the proposal to develop a new practice in East Middlesbrough. East Middlesbrough's poor health statistics are well documented, as is the area's relatively low number of doctors. The Health Scrutiny Panel would like to commend the PCT for listening to views expressed by the Panel and others about this topic and its willingness to act upon such information. The Panel hopes the Board approves this proposal.

In respect of the consultation, the Panel would like to place on record its view that the PCT has gone about the consultation in good faith and made an excellent attempt at providing local people with the opportunity to submit their views. The Panel is also aware

that the PCT feels lessons have been learned in respect of consultation processes, which will be implemented into future projects. In addition, the Panel is pleased to see that the consultation process has genuinely had an impact on proposals. It is felt that the proposals around developing services in East Middlesbrough demonstrate this.

Finally, the Panel feels these proposals are ultimately in the best interests of local people and should be supported. It is hoped that they will be successful in empowering local people to make choices over their care and the services they receive. The Panel would also hope that by introducing a further element of choice for people accessing primary care, the process of making an appointment will be made easier and more accommodating of patients' requirements.

The Panel looks forward to continuing its excellent working relationship with the PCT in considering other matters of local importance in the near future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eddie Dryden". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Cllr Eddie Dryden
Chair, Health Scrutiny Panel