

CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Sir David Dalton

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Salford Royal 
NHS Foundation Trust

University Teaching Trust

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DND/JM

27 June 2016

Dr David McCoy
The Grayston Centre
28 Charles Square
London
N1 6HT

Dear Dr McCoy

Thank you for your letter dated 20th June 2016 regarding patient catering.

At a number of points in your letter you refer to the process we are undertaking as outsourcing patient catering. It is worth clarifying, that the change of hot food production and supplier will still operate under the Trust's catering department. You should also note, I believe contrary to your understanding, that we will retain a specialised diet kitchen with in-house diet chefs and we will retain in-house production of cold food provision to patients.

Decision-making and transparency

In your letter you express concern about the decision-making process that we have followed. For any service change, be that for clinical or support services, we engage service users, service professionals (in this case our dietitians), procurement, finance, staff side and relevant Directors, in order for us to reach the best decision possible. This was the process that was followed in this case (see below). Although we have adopted an open and inclusive process, it should be noted that changes that we are making do not fall within the scope of our statutory duties to consult with the public.¹ Nor would it be appropriate to share tender documentation as this contains commercially sensitive information and hence is not in the public domain.

Quality and cost of patient food

You refer in your letter to a "narrow focus on financial targets and inadequate measures of food quality". I do not recognise this description. Our focus throughout this process has been

¹ Section 242(1B) of the National Health Service Act 2006 ("2006 Act"), as amended by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ("2007 Act").

to secure the best possible catering solution for our patients; to improve the quality and choice of food, its reliability and nutritional benefit.

Our dietitians have played a significant part in our decision-making and we would not make an award for a catering service contract without their full support. Our dietetic team have extensive clinical and management experience, they are HCPC registered and their experience includes NICE quality standards on nutrition, NHS England commissioning group for nutrition and hydration, BAPEN (British Association for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition) committees, Malnutrition Task Force national pilots. **Please note that the nutrition and dietetic team fully support the changes we are making.**

In terms of the selection of our catering partner, we involved staff and colleagues from across Salford in a food tasting day held on 16th May 2016. Invites were sent to Council commissioners, councillors, MPs, the third sector, local commissioners and service users. Over 25 people attended and their decision was unanimous and consistent with recommendation of the procurement panel. It is worth emphasising that the preferred provider was rated the highest on food quality and was not the cheapest option.

The solution we have selected minimises the need for capital investment, enabling us to invest in theatre upgrades and other improvements on the hospital site. By removing the logistical challenges of transporting cooked meals around a large hospital site, we will be also able to reduce current food wastage levels. In terms of the impact on the wider community, our current service uses a national supply framework for all ingredients, meaning that the current operation and subsequent changes have little or no impact on the local economy.

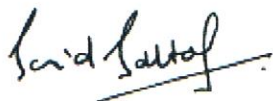
Impact on jobs

We currently have six chefs leading the catering department and the skills of these staff will be retained. We will be retaining four chefs in the operation to lead our diet bay, so we can continue to cater for the approximately 40 patients per day who have very specific requirements that cannot always be met from the main menu.

All other staff will be redeployed and able to utilise very similar operational skills within our facilities department. By retaining staff we can protect their employment and remove any negative effect on our local population and economy.

Our Board of Directors has now approved the appointment of our catering partner and we are commencing implementation of the new service. As such, I see no benefit in meeting nor in continuing further dialogue on this matter.

Yours sincerely



SIR DAVID DALTON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE