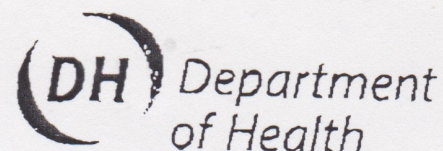


From the Office of the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
David Lammy MP



Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS
Tel: 020 7210 3000

31 JAN 2003

I am writing to inform you that the intended date for abolition of Community Health Councils (CHCs) in England is 1 September 2003. The Association of Community Health Councils for England and Wales (ACHCEW) will also be abolished at the same time.

I would like to thank you personally for your valuable contribution. I am very aware of the significant contribution in representing the interests of patients and the public that CHCs have made over the years. I recognise that the last few years have not been easy for you. I am grateful for your patience.

The new arrangements for patient and public involvement will build on your contribution and strengthen the way that patients and the public are represented as we continue to work towards improving the patient experience in the NHS. CHCs will continue to be resourced and managed to represent the interest of patient and the public in their districts until the abolition date. ACHCEW will also continue until the abolition date.

You will have received a number of newsletters from Sarah Mullally, Chief Nursing Officer, to keep you up to date on developments on the new arrangements for patient and public involvement and addressing the concerns raised by CHC staff. The attached Human Resource Framework has been produced jointly with your employing Strategic Health Authority and Unison and Amicus MSF and further addresses and clarifies questions you may have about your employment options.

Your CHC Lead will have given you details of events they will hold to answer any queries you may have about your future employment options and the support that will be available to you. This will include information on local arrangements and opportunities available to you through the clearing houses. You can also contact the CHC Leads in your area with any questions and concerns you may have. The contact details are annexed in the HR Framework.

You will know that the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health has been established and is working towards the implementation of the new arrangements for patient and public involvement in the NHS. We are working hard with the Commission to ensure a strong and comprehensive system is in place for September. I am aware that a number of you are keen to have details about the posts that will become available in the Commission. The Commission will be ratifying its employment terms and conditions for its staff and also drawing up timetables of recruitment and other details of its implementation in the near future. They will ensure that CHC staff are kept informed of the outcomes.



On behalf of the Government I would like to thank you again for the significant contribution that you and your colleagues have made in the delivery of health services over the years in the Community Health Councils.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'D. Lammy', written over a horizontal line.

DAVID LAMMY