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20<sup>th</sup> August 2014

Dear colleagues

Following the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) inspection of the Trust in May 2014, I am writing to update you on the report and next steps. The CQC's final report was discussed at a Quality Summit hosted by the Trust on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014 and is published on their website [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk).

The CQC presents a fair reflection of the Trust. It identifies where improvements are required and also recognises areas of good performance and outstanding practice. Importantly, the report confirms the care, commitment and compassion of our staff.

A significant amount of work is already underway to improve safety and effectiveness of care in our maternity unit. Our Accident and Emergency (A&E) care will also be improved through the planned centralisation of services in North West London. In addition, a new £21m A&E department will open at Northwick Park Hospital in the autumn.

As a Trust we aspire to provide the best possible care to all of our patients. We have a good understanding of the challenges that we face and were able to highlight these to the CQC at the start of their inspection. The report reflects that, in the main, the CQC didn't find anything that we hadn't reported to them. Only one issue, in relation to critical care, had not been expected.

In most areas, our staff were seen to provide compassionate care that respected the dignity of patients. Outstanding practice was observed in the Stroke Unit and STARRS service.

The overall CQC rating for the Trust was '*Requires improvement*'. The report calls for action to be taken in the following areas:

1. Ensure that there are appropriate numbers of staff to meet the needs of patients in the A&E department, surgical areas and critical care (Northwick Park Hospital and St Mark's Hospital)
2. Ensure that there are systems in place to assess and monitor the quality of the service provided in A&E, critical care, surgery and maternity, to ensure that services are safe and benchmarked against national standards (Northwick Park Hospital)

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3. Ensure that the environment is safe and suitable in the paediatric service (Northwick Park Hospital)
4. Ensure that equipment is available, safe and suitable within the paediatric service (Northwick Park)

The work, to improve our services has already started. Some changes will happen fairly quickly others will take longer to bring about. A report, detailing the Trust's response to the CQC's findings, will be presented to the Board in October 2014 and I look forward to keeping you updated on our progress.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David McVittie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**David McVittie**  
Chief Executive and Merger Transaction Director