



Department
of Health

From the Rt Hon the Earl Howe P.C.
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Quality (Lords)

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Dear Dr. Rake

Thank you for your letter of 6 October about updating the mandate to NHS England for 2015/16.

I was very pleased to read of your support for our proposal for a stable mandate for 2015/16 whilst asking NHS England to take further steps towards parity of esteem between physical and mental health services. I believe that upholding all of the existing objectives in the current mandate will enable the NHS to build on its achievements, and make further progress on the already ambitious expectations.

I appreciate your concerns about public and patient involvement in decisions about service change and commissioning, at both the local and national level. I am glad that Healthwatch England is continuing to engage in discussion with NHS England to address these concerns. In particular I am aware that you are working with NHS England to consider whether any additional resources could be developed to strengthen local and national approaches to transforming public participation in health and care.

Work to refresh the mandate for 2016/17 is expected to begin in the spring, with consultation over the summer ahead of publication in the autumn. I am pleased to hear that early engagement and conversations on the NHS Mandate with the Department were constructive, and I am keen for these

discussions with Gareth Arthur and his team to continue to ensure we capture your views on future mandates.

With every good wish.

Yours sincerely,

Frederick Howe

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