

EXAMPLE LETTER TO COUNCILLORS

Chief Executive  
NHS [INSERT PCT]  
[INSERT ADDRESS]  
Tel: [INSERT]  
Fax: [INSERT]  
[INSERT EMAIL]

[DATE]

**RE: Arterial vascular surgery provision in North Central London**

Dear [insert councillor],

As you may already know, the NHS has recently published a “Cardiovascular Strategy for London<sup>1</sup>”. This follows the completion of a public consultation on the clinical case for change, in which the strategy received a significant level of support with 83% of respondents in agreement with the proposals.

London NHS sectors, including ours in North Central London, are now in the process of examining how the strategy pertaining to Vascular Surgery can be implemented. The intention is that there should be five specialist vascular centres in London.

Within North Central London there are currently three significant providers of arterial vascular surgery, based at Barnet Hospital, the Royal Free Hospital and University College Hospital. However, none of these centres is delivering the volume of work needed to establish a critical mass of patients or clinical expertise considered necessary to further improve patient outcomes. Indeed, given current activity levels, only one centre in North Central London is required to meet the needs of our population.

We have no doubt that moving forward to one specialist vascular centre, working in conjunction with a vascular network across North Central London, will present significant challenges and will require a high degree of co-operative working between service providers.

The absolute procedural numbers are small and the benefits to patients of establishing a single service are significant. These benefits should mirror what has already been achieved in other specialities, for example stroke and coronary heart disease.

Therefore, it is our intention to commission a service for North Central London residents as closely aligned to the consulted cardiovascular strategy as possible, and this service development is a high priority within our QIPP<sup>2</sup> plan for the coming year.

We have proposed a co-operative solution be developed by the three service providers in the first instance. Such an approach would remove the need for an independent designation process to be run.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.csl.nhs.uk/Publications/Pages/ProjectPublications.aspx?tags=8&tagDisplayName=Cardiovascular>

<sup>2</sup> QIPP – Quality, Innovation Performance and Prevention

We propose that a co-operative solution would need to be agreed by the providers by 14 January 2011. At the same time, we will be developing a designation process through which we could fairly establish which provider could lead the vascular service of the future, should a co-operative proposal not be forthcoming.

We are aware that, at a clinical level, a group of North Central London vascular surgeons already meets to discuss provision, and we have offered to host further talks with the view of establishing a co-operative solution if this is required.

At the same time we recognise that it is important to keep you, our partners in local authorities, fully briefed on service developments like this. We enclose a summary document<sup>3</sup> detailing the essential components of the proposed network and vascular service in London. Implementation of the change in our sector will be supported by the North Central Cardiac and Stroke Network.

If you would like to know more please do not hesitate in contacting me or Sylvia Kennedy, Director of Clinical Strategy at NHS North Central London on 0203 317 2794 or [sylvia.kennedy@islingtonpct.nhs.uk](mailto:sylvia.kennedy@islingtonpct.nhs.uk)

Yours sincerely,  
[SIGNATURE]

**[NAME]**  
**Chief Executive**

Enc: NHS Commissioning Support for London, London cardiovascular services: Proposed model of care

Copies emailed to:  
[INSERT RELEVANT COUNCILLORS, SCRUTINY MANGER, PCT AND COUNCIL DIRECTOR/S]

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.csl.nhs.uk/Publications/Documents/LondoncardiovascularservicessummaryofProposedmodelofcare.pdf>