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To:
Halton Health and Wellbeing Board
NHS Halton CCG

Copy to:
Halton Borough Council

21 January 2015

Dear colleague,

Thank you for submitting further evidence to clear the conditions on your Better Care Fund (BCF) plan. We know that the BCF is an ambitious programme and preparing the plans at pace has proved an immensely challenging task. However, your plan is now part of an ongoing process to transform local services and improve the lives of people in your community.

It is clear that your team and partners have worked very hard over the last few months, making valuable changes to your plan in order to improve people's care.

NHS England is now able to approve plans following the publication of the 2015/16 Mandate. As a result I am delighted to let you know that, following the recent assurance process, your resubmitted plan has been classified as '**Approved**'. Appended to this letter is your NCAR Outcome Report for your information. Essentially, your plan is strong and robust and we have every confidence that you will be able to deliver against it. This puts you in a strong position for delivering the change outlined above.

Your BCF funding will be made available to you subject to the following standard conditions which apply to all BCF plans:

- The Fund being used in accordance with your final approved plan and through a section 75 agreement;
- The full value of the element of the Fund linked to non-elective admissions reduction target will be paid over to CCGs at the start of the financial year. However, CCGs may only release the full value of this funding into the pool if the admissions reduction target is met as detailed in the BCF Technical Guidance¹. If the target is not met, the CCG(s) may only release into the pool a part of that funding proportionate to the partial achievement of the target. Any part of this funding that is not released into the pool due to the target not being met must be dealt with in accordance with NHS England requirements. Full details are set out in the BCF Technical Guidance

The conditions are being imposed through NHS England's powers under sections 223G and 223GA of the NHS Act 2006 (as amended by the Care Act 2014). These allow NHS England to make payment of the BCF allocation subject to conditions. If the conditions are not complied with, NHS England is able to withhold or recover funding, or direct the CCG that it be spent in a particular way.

We are confident that there are no areas of high risk in your plan and as such you should progress with your plans for implementation.

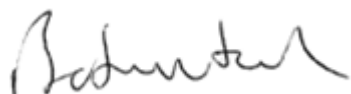
Any ongoing oversight of your BCF plan will be led by your NHS England Regional/Area Team along with your Local Government Regional peer rather than the BCF Taskforce from this point onwards.

Non-elective (general and acute) admissions reductions ambition

We recognise that some areas may want to revisit their ambitions for the level of reduction of non-elective admissions, in light of their experience of actual performance over the winter, and as they become more confident of the 2014/15 outturn, and firm-up their plans to inform the 2015/16 contracting round. Any such review should include appropriate involvement from local authorities and be approved by HWBs. NHS England will assess the extent to which any proposed change has been locally agreed in line with BCF requirements, as well as the risk to delivery of the ambition, as part of its assurance of CCGs' operational plans.

Once again, thank you for your work and we look forward to the next stage.

Yours sincerely,



Dame Barbara Hakin
National Director: Commissioning Operations
NHS England

¹ <http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/bcf-technical-guidance-v2.pdf>