

Direct Line: 01438 284049  
Our Ref: SN/NC  
Email: sharon.nahal@nhs.net

Lister Hospital  
Coreys Mill Lane  
Stevenage  
Herts SG1 4AB

Tel: 01438 314333

16 July 2018

Nick Hurd MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Nick

### **Michael Sobell House**

Further to our telephone conversation on Friday, I am writing to provide you with a short written briefing on the Trust's understanding of the position with Michael Sobell House.

Michael Sobell House was built approximately 40 years ago by the Charity and the facility is owned by Hillingdon Trust, to whom East & North Hertfordshire NHS Trust pay capital charges for the use of the facility.

There are significant issues with the Michael Sobell House building including a leaking roof and problems related to subsidence. Remedial works are complicated due to the presence of asbestos in the walls of the building.

The Michael Sobell House Charity has supported the hospital not only through providing Michael Sobell House as a building, but also by financial contributions to the payroll costs. In 2017/18 the contribution was approximately £825k i.e 33% of the total pay cost of £2.48m. Without this contribution, the Trust would make a substantial loss on the provision of this service.

On 13 June 2018 the Michael Sobell House Hospice Charity wrote to the Trust advising us that the Charity would be posting a deficit for 2017/18, confirming that they would continue funding for the day care centre but informing us that funding for the in patient service would cease at the end of September.

Informally there have been suggestions that there may be some greater flexibility regarding future funding although no further formal update has been received from the Charity.

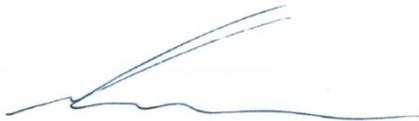
At present the Trust is providing the in-patient hospice service of up to 10 beds in the cancer ward at Mount Vernon. Michael Sobell House had 16 beds which ran an occupancy of 71% (i.e – 10 beds). The cancer ward is unable to accept non cancer patients who might previously have gone to Michael Sobell House, although averages fewer than one patient per month.

As discussed the Trust intends to undertake a number of actions as follows:

1. Obtain an estimate regarding the costs of remedial works to Michael Sobell House.
2. I will meet with Judy Bryne the CEO of Michael Sobell House and Rosalind Williams the Chair in order to be updated on the position of the Charity.
3. Either myself or a member of the team will meet with Terry Dean an active volunteer and organiser of the recent petition.
4. We will meet with NHS Commissioners to discuss the current position.
5. We will liaise with the neighbouring hospitals, including the Peace Hospice in Watford to understand their future plans and potential capacity.

Upon completion of these actions I will provide you with a further update, if however I can be of any further assistance before then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nick Carver', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nick Carver  
**Chief Executive**