

**Consultation on the proposed creation of the UK's first  
Academic Health Science Centre  
1 May – 31 July**

**Responses to union issues  
August 2007**

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<i>Stakeholder comment</i>	<i>Response from the AHSC</i>
<p><b>1. The new trust must stay customer focused</b></p>	
<p>The concentration of specialities, whilst reducing costs, should engender further benefits for patients, in the form of new treatments. Staff should benefit from the increased motivation of working for the UK's leading NHS facility. Most patients and visitors are prepared to travel to obtain the best treatments. The mix of the leading individuals in education, research and service will hopefully encourage the "cv-itis" ridden individuals to seek work at the far off fields that look greener! <b>(HHNT UNISON)</b></p>	<p>The proposal to merge the trusts and integrate with the Faculty of Medicine at Imperial College is based on the premise that it will improve patient satisfaction, patient care and clinical outcomes.</p> <p>We are proud of the achievements of staff throughout the organisation who have enabled the two trusts to become 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the UK for quality of care (<i>Dr Foster Good Hospital Guide 2006</i>, three-year average) and believe that the proposed merger will allow staff to realise their true potential.</p>
<p><b>2. We should aim to keep the best of both Trusts</b></p>	
<p>We should be aiming to retain and enhance all the good points, rights and benefits of both the existing Trusts, instead of trying to arrive at the lowest common denominator - as both HR Depts are trying to do at the moment. <b>(HHNT UNISON)</b></p>	<p>We agree. We believe that each trust can bring a wealth of experience to the new organisation. As a start we wish to raise the clinical performance level of the worse performing trust of the two to that of the better, then to build upon that performance to become world-class.</p> <p>The assertion that there is an attempt to reduce the rights and benefits of staff is not accepted. In fact, the HR Departments in both Trusts have been working hard</p>

	<p>to include trade union partners in all discussions regarding the many issues that affect staff and the indications are that these discussions have been generally productive.</p>
<p><b>3. Staff are key in developing a world-class organisation</b></p>	
<p>The new Management Team needs to reassure Staff that any "divestment" of services will include the fact that the workers will follow the work. This will ensure that the AHSC NHS FT maintains a "good name" with other NHS Trusts (including PCTs), with our own Staff, with Patients and the general public. Such a statement (and acting upon it) will ensure that the future FT will maintain the "moral high ground". <b>(HHNT UNISON)</b></p>	<p>Assurances have been given that TUPE will apply in all cases where there is a transfer of services. This is consistent with the practice adopted by both Trusts in the past. This of course does not guarantee employment in the future but it does guarantee that those transferred will have their entire contract rights preserved.</p>
<p>We must not forget those Workers of the Trust, not employed by the Trust, but by Compass Group plc (Medirest) and ISS Mediclean Ltd; especially those currently denied the benefits of Agenda for Change. These human beings need to be more incorporated into the life of our future centre of excellence. <b>(HHNT UNISON)</b></p>	<p>We agree and we have already been in touch with those companies concerning the forthcoming transition to the new Trust. For the future we must look to form new partnerships with all of the stakeholders in the new organisation so that they can share in the achievements of the future.</p>

#### 4. The new trust will need to adopt a consultative approach with unions and staff

We recognise that relatively free dialogue which has existed at St. Mary's between staffside and management (senior and junior) and the important role of the Human Resources Department, although the active participation of staffside representatives continues to be limited in practice by the difficulty in obtaining facility time.

We also recognise that in the new organisation now being proposed, it will be even harder to maintain a genuine effective dialogue, not just because the new organisation would contain many more people than any of its constituent parts but also because, to facilitate active discussion and decision-making, travelling from one site to another. **(StM UNISON)**

We have to say that we are quite concerned by the undemocratic manner in which a name for the new organisation has been unilaterally announced – and not just because it appears to give pre-eminence to just one of the potential partners.

We recognise, however, that despite this inauspicious beginning the proposed merger could provide some benefits to some patients and to some staff-members. To ensure that such benefits are available to all our local patients and to all staff-members (including those currently contracted out to private companies), we believe that the following minimum standards must be met:-

1. A genuine commitment on the part of the new organisation to engage in meaningful and genuinely open consultation with our local populations and staff-members through their organisations;
2. Meeting between senior management and staffside (along the lines of our own Trust Joint Staff Committee) to be held at least once a month;
3. Proposals for changes in services to be open to genuine consultations, concerning not just the details but also the whole principle of any such

Relationships with Trades Unions and other representatives of staff are extremely important in ensuring the success of the new organisation. We are committed to genuine and meaningful partnership arrangements in the future and are keen to commence discussions as soon as possible. At the moment trade union partners are leading this part of the HR Integration Workstream and no doubt the five standards will be addressed in this process.

<p>changes;</p> <p>4. Insistence that the same approach is also adopted by the Trust's main sub-contractors;</p> <p>5. Active support for recognised staff-organisations, including the increased facility-time and backfill which would be needed to convert what are sometimes just paper rights into regular and active participation in the Trust affairs, the well-being of our members and the welfare of the populations whom we seek to serve. <b>(StM UNISON)</b></p>	
<p><b>5. Good management and financial stability will provide a sound footing for progress</b></p>	
<p>The AHSC Management Team, working in partnership with other Health Care Providers, other Educational Institutions, its own Staff and Trades Unions, Patients and their Representatives, need to move away from personal self-enhancement, towards the good of the organisation, which must be aimed at optimal care for all of us - as we are Patients as well.</p> <p>The relative independence of FT status will hopefully address future underfunding. <b>(HHNT UNISON)</b></p>	<p>We intend to apply for FT status as soon as practicable (Strategic Objective 9)</p> <p>We wish to develop world class leadership in support of a world class workforce (Business Objective 3.1) and ensure the highest standards of people management (Business Objective 3.2)</p> <p>We intend to introduce a programme of leadership development for the new top team and a positive performance framework that provides for continuous people development (Business Objective 3.1)</p>