

**Our ref:** GF076/SF

20 June 2016

Cllr Colin Belsey  
Chair East Sussex HOSC

Tel: 01273 664902

Dear Cllr Belsey,

I am writing to let you know that, following a full inspection of the Trust from 4-8 April 2016, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) have issued the Trust with a Warning Notice under Section 29A of the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

The Notice sets out a lack of systems and processes to ensure the safe and effective care of both inpatients and outpatients in a number of key areas. It also highlights issues around privacy and dignity and a failure to provide treatment and care that is in line with national timescales and standards. The Trust is required to make significant improvements by 30 August 2016.

It is clear from the Warning Notice that, in the areas identified, we have failed our patients and for that I have offered a public apology. For the Trust Board and our executive leadership the priority now is to do everything we can to put matters right.

The Trust is already working on an improvement plan designed to address the issues raised by the CQC and has taken action on the most immediate concerns since their April visit. These actions include amongst others:

- Escalation processes being changed to better manage patients at the Royal Sussex County Hospital during periods of high demand in the Emergency Department.
- A redesign of the Royal Sussex County Hospital Emergency Department, which will provide more cubicles for patient assessment and treatment from the beginning of July.
- Implementing patient quality and safety checklists incorporating 'comfort rounds' into the Emergency Department for patients awaiting a cubicle who have been brought in by ambulance.
- The opening of a 24/7 surgical assessment unit for patients referred by GPs.
- Redesigning the corporate Trust-wide governance structure
- Changes have been made to the Trust Board.

The CQC's full report will be published later in the summer and when it is I will ensure you are fully aware of its details and the progress we have made. In the meantime, we will continue to give our unrelenting focus to the necessary improvements to ensure our patients get the best possible care.

With our partner

I have attached the CQC press release and the Trust's media statement for your information.

I would like to thank you for your continued support. It is clear that in order to bring about the improvements necessary it is vital that we work together as system partners to ensure that we provide the healthcare to our patients and communities that they deserve and have a right to expect.

Should you want to discuss this further with me personally I would be happy to meet with you as soon as possible at your convenience.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Fairfield', written in a cursive style.

Dr Gillian Fairfield  
Chief Executive

Enc.