

We are a smoke free organisation and to improve public health, smoking is not permitted anywhere on the hospital site. Thank you for your co-operation.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

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RECEIVED
02 NOV 2009

Medway Maritime Hospital
Windmill Road
Gillingham
Kent
ME7 5NY

Our ref: AH/MJ

27 October 2009

Tel: 01634 830000

Mr Graham Hills
Operational Director
Kent & Medway Local Involvement Networks
The Kent Link
Unit 24 Folkestone Enterprise Centre
Shearway Road
Folkestone
Kent
CE19 4RH

Dear Graham

Re: Audiology Services, North Kent

Thank you for your letter dated 19th October regarding the above. I will answer the bullet points as per your letter

All Audiology Direct Referral patients are seen within the 6 week diagnostic target set by the Department of Health. This includes referrals for Pure Tone Audiometry, Bone Anchored Hearing Aid assessments, ABR testing and Vestibular testing.

All first issue hearing aid patients are fitted well within the 18 week referral to treatment target.

We began fitting new patients with digital hearing aids in 2004. In addition to this we had a waiting list backlog of over 2,500 existing patients wishing to be converted from analogue hearing aids. With extremely hard work and effort on behalf of the Audiology Team we cleared the waiting list even before the Department of Health set the deadlines for the new targets and we were able to begin the 18 week project with no legacy patients at all. It is also worth mentioning that we were an early achiever site and had met targets in March 2008, 9 months before the deadline of December.

We are well aware that hearing deteriorates in later life, hence the existence of our department. Patients, once diagnosed with a loss suitable for a hearing aid are cared for, by us, for the duration of their lives. All of our patients (at whatever stage of their journey) are invited to come to the department if they require follow ups, advice, repairs, reassessments etc. We encourage patients to return every six months for re-tubing and this gives us the opportunity to discuss with them any further treatment that may be required so that it can be given in a timely manner. Alternatively, patients may ring in and book an appointment as necessary.

The department also offers a Hearing Therapy service for more complex cases involving the rehabilitation and management of sudden hearing loss, tinnitus, hyperacusis, and Central Auditory Processing Disorders.

We are extremely proud of the service and its' achievements and give nothing less than the highest quality of care. If you would like to visit the department so that you can meet the staff and see the service I would be happy to arrange.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Horne", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew F Horne
Chief Executive

cc Marion Dinwoodie, Chief Executive, NHS Medway