

NHS Independent Scrutiny Consultation
Freepost NAT 452
Health Care & Policy Strategic Directorate
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Please Ask For: Ms Dempster
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Your Ref:
Our Ref: HLD/WW/
Date: 5 February 2008

Dear Sir/Madam

Independent Scrutiny – Major Changes, NHS

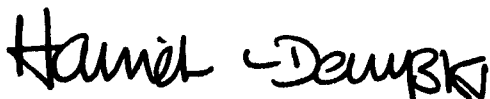
Thank you for the opportunity of commenting upon the above proposals. I must apologise for the late submission of the Highland Council response, but trust it can still be considered.

In responding to this paper, the Council is aware of the need to take account of the proposals for direct elections to NHS Boards. Notwithstanding, Highland Council would wish to see more serious consideration being given to the option that the local authority undertake this important role. These arrangements are in place in England and have been working well. Local authority Members are experienced in fulfilling a scrutiny role and represent their communities. They would also be able to call upon expert advice and reports from officers or other experts as necessary.

Should the expert panel option be the most favoured, the Highland Council suggests that consideration be given to the inclusion of elected Member representatives to ensure that there is local representation on the panel. As a large rural area, the Council is concerned that those involved are representative of and understand the communities where significant changes are being proposed.

Should there be any queries regarding this response, or you wish further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Harriet L Dempster
Director of Social Work
Social Work Service

17522