



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Ms Wendy Carberry  
Chief Operating Officer  
High Weald Lewes Havens CCG  
36-38 Friars Walk  
Lewes  
East Sussex  
BN7 2PB

Our Ref: HM/FM/362

26 May 2016

Dear Ms Carberry,

**Patient Transport Service**

We write to you with respect to your decision to award the contract for NHS Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (PTS) in Sussex to Coperforma.

In your web release, entitled 'Improved Patient Transport Service', you state that users will benefit from a new and improved service. You additionally state that you 'are confident the new service will ensure high quality, timely, consistent and flexible transport services for local people'.

Despite your expectations and assurances, we have received numerous complaints from constituents who have suffered as a result of their transport failing to turn up on time, or at all, and drivers who do not appear to know where to transport their patients. As a result, our constituents, many of whom are vulnerable and in pain and discomfort, have missed appointments and surgery. This has caused our constituents much distress.

We have attached a sample letter from two constituents. From across Sussex, we have many more but these two letters summarise the experience and the impact from the service falling short of that which you anticipated when delivering your web release announcement.

Could we ask for the following matters to be investigated and explained and for reassurances for future PTS performance:

1. Why were Coperforma selected as the preferred PTS contractor?



2. Why were SECAMB allowed to walk away from providing PTS (we note that SECAMB did so but would like to know why they were permitted to do so)?
3. Notwithstanding that SECAMB may have requested to walk away from providing PTS, we have been informed that SECAMB were subsequently denied the right to rebid for the contract. Could you confirm the correct position with this regard?
4. What handover procedures were put in place between Coperforma and SECAMB?
5. Why was there a failure to deliver the PTS service when Coperforma first commenced the contract?
6. Why, some weeks after the initial poor delivery, does the PTS service continue to fail our constituent patients?
7. How much time has the CCG given Coperforma to turn this position around?
8. What performance and service levels did the CCG insist upon in its contract with Coperforma?
9. Are these performance and service levels in breach and what are the sanctions, and will they be applied if so?
10. Will patients be compensated for their experiences and, if so, will the public purse pay for such compensation or will Coperforma?
11. We have been informed that volunteer drivers, used when SECAMB operated the PTS, have now been dispensed with. Is this true and, if so, how is this conducive to good community volunteering in Sussex?
12. What are your next steps for ensuring that our constituents receive a PTS service which meets the description of your web release?

We are strongly supportive of our CCGs and our local NHS providers. The performance of Coperforma is causing a detrimental effect to our constituents and we seek your urgent reassurance that this matter will be remedied. We note your statement that you will be unable to comment prior to the publication of an independent report but expect you to address the contents of this letter beforehand.

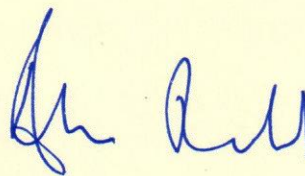
We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter in a meeting at your earliest opportunity. It may be helpful for you to bring Coperforma to this meeting albeit we are looking for you, as the commissioning party, to take responsibility for this matter and the lead in any meeting.

Should any assistance be needed to prepare for the next steps, please contact Huw Merriman.

Yours sincerely,



Huw Merriman MP  
Bexhill and Battle



Amber Rudd MP  
Hastings and Rye



And

Sir Peter Bottomley MP – Worthing West

Sir Nicholas Soames MP – Mid Sussex

Caroline Ansell MP – Eastbourne

Henry Smith MP - Crawley

Maria Caulfield MP – Lewes

Nusrat Ghani MP – Wealden

Nick Herbert MP – Arundel and South Downs

Simon Kirby MP – Brighton Kemptown

Tim Loughton MP – East Worthing and Shoreham

Jeremy Quin MP – Horsham