

**ADULT AND COMMUNITY PDS COMMITTEE: PUBLIC QUESTIONS**  
**21<sup>st</sup> September 2010**

**Public Questions to the Chairman at Adult and Community PDS  
Committee from David Mott:**

Q1: Was outsourcing to Rapid Surgical Solutions (and the other three companies being used by SLHT) subject to competitive tendering – if not, what was the reason for not putting this contract out to competitive tendering (34)

*Reply*

*South London NHS Healthcare Trust undertook to provide a response to Mr Mott's question before the Trust's Board meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> September.*

Supplementary Question:

Is the Committee aware that some SLHT orthopaedic patients have been advised by Rapid Surgical Solutions that the treatment agreed with their SLHT surgeon should be changed, for example, instead of a partial knee replacement they are being offered a full knee replacement. Patients chose to see a particular surgeon at Princess Royal and, instead, some are being outsourced to a surgeon they have never met – how does this comply with the two agendas of patient choice and creating a patient led NHS?

*The Chairman responded that she would ask South London Healthcare Trust to respond to the points that had been raised.*

Q2: How did Rapid Surgical Solutions become aware that SLHT was looking to outsource - on what date did they submit their tender - whose decision was it to allocate the contract to them and what date was the first SLHT patient referred to them for treatment (44)

*Reply*

*South London NHS Healthcare Trust undertook to provide a response to Mr Mott's question before the Trust's Board meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> September.*

Supplementary Question:

Having personally spoken with Rapid Surgical Solutions I am informed that SLHT is their sole client/contract. Does this committee not think it is questionable that SLHT orthopaedic patients are being referred for their surgery to an orthopaedic surgeon at a private facility who co-incidentally has the same surname as as Director of Rapid Surgical Solutions?

*The Chairman reported that she was unable to respond as this matter did not fall under the remit of the Committee.*

Q3: What date did the Rapid Surgical Solutions contract commence - when does it terminate - will it be extended and who vetted them to ensure that they were a fit and proper company to treat SLHT patients, particularly as the company only came into being in February of this year (48)

*Reply*

*South London NHS Healthcare Trust undertook to provide a response to Mr Mott's question before the Trust's Board meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> September.*

Supplementary Question:

You have had in your possession papers concerning Rapid Surgical Solutions for two months now and I would hope these papers have been shared with other Members of the Committee. Can you advise what enquiries you have made about the activities of this company and the way in which SLHT provides services to their patients or is your only action to invite a Member of the Trust to update you with yet another of their subjective views? It appears to me that within SLHT there seems to be an alternative method of business practice to the norm cornering the way in which some services are being outsourced to private providers. Isn't it the duty of this committee to scrutinise on behalf of the patients and public of this borough and not to rely solely on the subjective views of the Trust representatives by way of a verbal update?

*The Chairman responded that the Committee had a role in scrutinising the Health Trust and would be receiving an update from the Trust at this meeting. The Chairman went on to say that she was unable to give a fuller response to the question as she was not in possession of all the information and therefore unable to provide an informed response.*

### **Public Question to Portfolio Holder at Adult and Community PDS Committee from Peter Moore**

Q1: An early August Newsshopper article suggested Bromley was proposing cuts of 25% to their budgets. At a more recent meeting of providers and 'dragons' and to the apprehension of most present, a figure of £45 per day allowance was slipped in to the discussions. I understand the current figure for the provision of a day service is £60; this is 25% less.

Can you advise how this difference will be made up or do you expect the service provider to reduce its rates?

*Reply*

*"The discussion that the questioner refers to was about the calculation of a notional personal budget for the purposes of two specific day activities projects which are under way with people who meet the Council's eligibility criteria. There is no single standard cost of day activities– it will vary by client*

*group, the dependency or needs of the individual as well as by the activity offered.”*

Supplementary Question:

This will leave less personal choice as larger bidders would be able to meet the reduced costs which smaller more local providers may struggle to meet. Will this jeopardise care and lead to the bankruptcy of local providers?

*The Portfolio Holder responded that the costs involved related to a notional figure. There had been two separate stories in the press regarding two separate issues and there was no link between the 25% cut in budget and the reduction in the cost of day services.*