

WHAT CAN SPH DO FOR US?

Hello All

The purpose of this letter is to formally introduce you to the new Board of SPH. It is also intended to clarify how the Company – which is your company as shareholders – can help Practices, particularly in the quicksand of changes that we find ourselves in at the moment.

The point is that SPH has changed. Originally set up as a Limited Company in light of the threats to the Enhanced Services being contracted outside of General Practice we are now in a position where the national picture has moved on quite dramatically. It was felt both by SPH and the LMC that SPH needed to change its direction to respond to this. We are also aware that some Practices have felt disappointed by what SPH has achieved so far. I suspect that this may partly have been due to unintentional confusion surrounding expectations of what SPH can achieve and I want to clarify the current proposals for SPH working so that we can avoid misunderstanding in the future.

1. SO WHAT CAN SPH DO FOR US?

Below is a list of some of the things that SPH may be able to help with. There may be some external restrictions to SPH being able to assist in all activities and when we discuss your initial outline proposal for a project with you then we can clarify this.

- **Hold and manage some aspects of contracts for Practices, Federations or groups of Practices.**
Most of the money that you as shareholders gave at the start of the company has been used to set up the legal and financial framework so that SPH can act as an individual limited company. This means that if Practices do not need to do this for themselves for new projects where this may be necessary but already have a structure that they can use. Using SPH can thus free up some resources to concentrate on the meat of the project. Why 'reinvent the wheel'?
- **Employ Staff for Practices.** This has been one of the problems that groups of Practices have come across in that as part of pilot programs a single Practice has had to take responsibility for employment of staff for the whole project thus putting themselves at extra liability and cost. SPH could hold this role for the group and reduce these risks.
- **Continue to manage current SPH initiatives.** SPH is still providing the DERMIS and spirometry services that have produced both a useful service for Practices and also a return on your investment in money back into Practices. The amounts vary between Practices but your Practice Managers will have the details. We are also involved in the Dermatology re-configuration with the CCG.
- **Negotiation with other organisations together with the LMC.** SPH have been approached by organisations outside Primary Care who are involved in the re-organisation of the NHS. Both SPH and LMC felt that, in the re-stating of SPH roles that the links between the two organisations should be strengthened so that united, we can provide a strong Primary Care voice on Contract negotiations with other bodies. It is hoped that instituting the role of Non-Exec Chair and it being held by an

LMC member (I represent Bridgwater area currently) will emphasise the new approach of SPH unity with the LMC in these developments both to Practices and other organisations.

- **Be involved in development of new Projects across the County.**

As a consequence of these changes, SPH has already been invited to several meetings of potential new developments which we have attended, together with the LMC, in the role as the joint 'voice' but also to ensure that SPH is considered as the organisation that can provide contract and administration support in these developments in the future. To make things clearer I will list these projects that we have are currently being consulted on:

- Pharmacist in General Practices Pilot
- Indemnity Cover
- GP portfolio career scheme
- The LMC proposal for a support and development practice team
- Improved access
- Attends the ACO/Vanguard meetings representing, with the LMC, the Primary Care interests

2. YOU ASKED US FOR FUNDING FOR A PROJECT MANAGER 18 MONTHS AGO – IS THIS WHAT THIS LETTER IS ABOUT?

I suppose 'yes' and 'no'. I will explain further.

I stated at the beginning of this letter that most of the money that Practices provided at the setting up of SPH has been used in just that – setting up the company. The work that SPH has done so far has been by a small number of GPs and Practice Managers, often in their own time and at their own expense. This model is not sustainable if SPH is to continue in the proposed role outlined above. The current attendance at meetings that SPH need to go to is funded from the residual pot from start-up funds. We have had no additional funding otherwise so far.

As part of our re-organisation we have now a larger board of GPs and PMs representing all areas of Somerset. Whilst this does provide some extra manpower this is only to a limited extent and what SPH really needs is a dedicated Project Manager. As a consequence of our role in the ACO discussions we have secured a small amount of outside funding to help support the appointment of a dedicated Project Manger at least in the short term. This will give us some extra capacity to help support Practices. SPH feel that the need for such a position is clearer now than perhaps it was some months back.

Initially we hope that the Project Manager will work two days a week .How much we can expand this depends on what extra funding we can get through the activity SPH can provide. As a Board representing its shareholders – that's you! – we have to be seen to be fair to ALL those we represent. Hence if SPH undertakes some work for a Federation or group of Practices then there must be some benefit (or at least no cost) for the other shareholders.

3. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN PRACTICE THEN?

If a Practice, group of Practices or Federation want SPH to help out with any of the ways listed under item 1. above then they should contact SPH. There should be a clear outline of what the Practice(s) want from SPH and what they are doing themselves. This will then be costed by SPH and the Practice(s) and SPH come to an agreement on this (hopefully!). The aim is not for SPH to make a profit out of this work but to plough the funds back into supporting the duties of the Project Manger eventually to expand the role. In the long term we would like to see a wide team established to do more of the admin and management of a project and take on more of the burden from Practices but this is some way off at the moment. In some instances the SPH work will be charged to an external agency commissioning the work.

I hope this clarifies where SPH is in the scheme of things at the moment. SPH representatives have been visiting Federations over the last few weeks to explain some of this so I hope it does not come as a complete surprise.

For completeness I add below the current Directors list and their respective roles. As first point of contact for business matters please contact me at sue.roberts@eastquaymc.nhs.uk and I will pass on to the appropriate person as needed. Equally if you have any queries about this letter please use the same email address. The team and I will endeavour to answer them.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Yours sincerely

Dr Sue Roberts
Non-Executive Chair SPH

SPH Directors and Contact details

Non-Executive Chairperson	Somerset LMC	Dr Sue Roberts	GP Partner in SPH 'A' shareholding practice
Managing Director	South Somerset	Karen Lashly	Managing Partner in SPH 'A' shareholding practice
Medical Director	Bridgwater	Dr Jon Upton	GP Partner in SPH 'A' shareholding practice
Joint Deputy Medical Director	Taunton	Dr Nick Chapman	GP Partner in SPH 'A' shareholding practice
Joint Deputy Medical Director	Chard, Langport, Ilminster, Crewkerne	Dr Emeline Dean	GP Partner in SPH 'A' shareholding practice
Clinical Governance Director	West Somerset	Dr Ben Fawden	GP Partner in SPH 'A' shareholding practice
Clinical Operations Director	Mendip	Dr Robert Taylor	GP Partner in SPH 'A' shareholding practice
Finance Director	Bridgwater	Tracey Pike	Practice Manager in SPH 'A' shareholding practice
Operations Director	Bridgwater	Rachel Stark	Practice Manager in SPH 'A' shareholding practice
Governance Director	North Sedgemoor	Debbie Hale	Managing Partner in SPH 'A' shareholding practice
Information Technology Director	Mendip	Sharon Morgan	Practice Manager in SPH 'A' shareholding practice
Human Resources Director	Chard, Langport, Ilminster, Crewkerne	Martin Daly	Practice Manager in SPH 'A' shareholding practice