

Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt  
**Private & Confidential**  
Secretary of State for Health  
Department of Health  
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Your ref:  
Our ref: AA/jm  
Date: 22 May 2015

Dear Mr Hunt

I am writing to express my deep concerns regarding the manner in which a whistleblowing incident within the breast cancer screening unit at the University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay is being addressed and would urge you to take immediate action to resolve the situation.

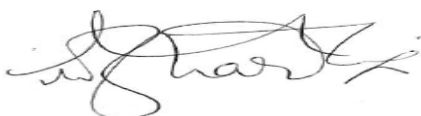
In spite of various recommendations by Public Health England to improve the quality of the screening programme, the actions to address the recommendations in a comprehensive manner appear to be far from being satisfactory. Crucially, the whistle-blowers seem to have been completely excluded from the improvement actions. It is becoming very apparent that there are some deep seated cultural and management issues within the breast cancer screening unit including a dismissive environment that could hamper patient safety. I am aware that one of the clinicians who raised concerns have nearly left the Trust due to the upheaval and other key clinicians have been excluded from what should be a multidisciplinary attempt to resolve the situation. I am also not convinced whether the Trust Board, the CQC and other agencies are fully informed and are taking enough notice of this situation.

It is already a challenge to recruit specialist staff to work in Morecambe Bay and these persisting issues, if not addressed promptly, can only make the situation worse. Ultimately, this is affecting the confidence in the Trust and more importantly the quality and safety of the services delivered to our residents.

Could I urge you to establish an independent team to ensure that the whistle-blowers' concerns are fully taken into account and necessary actions are in place to address this on-going situation?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



County Councillor Azhar Ali  
Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing

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