

**Chief Executive's Office**

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Our Ref: FD/tb

17<sup>th</sup> June 2015

Joanna Smith,  
Healthwatch Locality Manager,  
Healthwatch Isle of Wight,  
The Riverside Centre, The Quay,  
Newport, Isle of Wight.  
PO30 2QR

Dear Joanna,

**re: Healthwatch Isle of Wight – NHS Outpatient Appointments**

Thank you very much for sharing your report with us and giving us the opportunity to comment.

We absolutely appreciate the impact on patients of short notice cancellations and at UHS we seek to minimise these. Where they are unavoidable we try to communicate with patients and their families as promptly as possible.

UHS runs clinics in Clinical Oncology, Vascular Surgery & Neurology on the Isle of Wight, and the administration of these clinics is done at UHS. We note that these clinics are not those where you have identified a specific problem however we recognise that we need to continue to improve.

We have invested in an automated telephone system which reminds patients of forthcoming appointments and also text messages too. Our policy on consultant annual leave/cancellation/reduction of clinics is that 6 weeks notice is required unless there are exceptional circumstances. If a cancellation is under 7 days, we will endeavour to always phone the patient, explaining reasons for cancellation and then send out a letter by first class mail – with a view to arranging a new appointment.

We acknowledge that there will always be occasional very short notice cancellations on the day (mainly due to sickness) and in these scenarios we will always try to telephone the patients directly.

We are currently formalising our system to a recording mechanism for any cancellations of outpatient clinics, to include all UHS outpatient services (not only St Mary's). This can then include any requests for changes to OP clinics and look to feed this regularly to each of the divisions and analyse any particular trends or consultants.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



**Fiona Dalton,  
Chief Executive.**