

NEP/SEPT/BW/206  
23 September 2015

Dear Colleague,

### **Outcome of NEP / SEPT Board meetings – 23 September 2015**

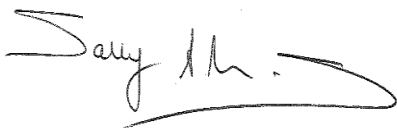
You will be aware that the national NHS Five Year Forward View requires Trusts and commissioners to collaborate in order to help alleviate the current pressures on services. During the past year, South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (SEPT) has been working closely with North Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (NEP) on specific projects and, earlier this year, we were successful in our joint bid to provide a new Essex-wide substance misuse service.

As a first step to exploring whether there should be closer collaboration between SEPT and NEP, various options were discussed at our separate public Board meetings today. Both Trusts agreed to take forward the option of exploring a potential future merger of our organisations to form an Essex-wide mental health and community services Trust.

We will begin by assessing whether a potential merger is likely to increase the benefits for our patients, staff and the wider community. No final decisions will be made about the future until next year and both Trusts remain firmly committed to acting only in the best interests of our patients. This commitment will be the deciding factor in our discussions and in any decisions we make.

We will continue to keep you updated with progress. In the meantime, if you have any questions or you wish to discuss this issue further, please do contact us directly.

Yours sincerely,



**Sally Morris**  
Chief Executive  
SEPT



**Andrew Geldard**  
Chief Executive  
NEP