**Community Hospitals in the Forest of Dean: Questions submitted by members of the public for the attention of the NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body Meeting, held on 25 January 2018 at Forest Hills Golf Club, Coleford.**

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| **Question**  As a retired professional statistician, I was appalled by the comments made by the individual who "analysed" the survey results for the Forest Hospitals consultation at the meeting in Shire Hall last Tuesday.  Firstly, she failed to point out that the difference between the responses to the "easy read" and "full" versions of the questionnaire were so large that either they were asking different questions, or they were answered by different populations. It ought to be possible to test whether the "full" versions were disproportionately completed by health professionals, which would point to the second option.  Next, she claimed that "less than 400 responses would have been adequate" to get a representative cross section of the Forest population.  This would be true, if (a) a 10% confidence interval was adequate (but the difference between pro/anti response was much less than 10%) and (b) the sample used was truly random. However the "analyst" clearly did not have the necessary skills or training to understand either point, which suggests that her statistical knowledge is completely inadequate to the task she had been given.  Thirdly, and much more seriously, she said that "obviously anyone who agreed with the proposal wouldn't have bothered to fill in the questionnaire". This indicates a significant bias in her thinking, as well as proving that she does not believe that the sample completing the questionnaires was in any way random.  I suspect that the problems illustrated here provide sufficient evidence to justify a judicial review of the validity of the consultation, if the proposal to sell off both hospital sites is accepted. | **Answers**  **Main Survey and Easy Read Survey**  The questions asked in the Main Survey and Easy Read Survey are similar, but not exactly the same. Advice was sought from 2gether NHS Foundation Trust in the development of the Easy Read Survey.  Easy read, as a format, was created to help people with learning disabilities understand information easily.  Easy read uses pictures to support the meaning of text.  Easy read is often also preferred by readers without learning disabilities, as it gives the essential information on a topic without a lot of background information. It can be especially helpful for people who are not fluent in English.  During this consultation we also targeted the Easy Read Survey to the younger population.  In this case, 56% of respondents who answered the question in the Easy Read survey which asked whether they considered themselves to have a disability, indicated that they did not have a disability.  **Responses to the Main Survey by health or care professionals.**  There were 3344 responses to the combined surveys.  There were 2990 responses to the main survey.  1753 people responded to the question in the main survey, which asked whether they were health or care professionals or a community partner or a member of the public (1237 people did not answer this question).  279 (16%) respondents indicated that they were health or care professionals.  1474 (84%) indicated that they were community partner/members of the public (84%)  Of the 279 health or care staff, 204 (73%) supported the proposal, 55 (20%) did not support the proposal and 20 (7%) did not know.  **Sample Size**  The consultation team used a sample size calculator, which asks the following questions:  What margin of error can you accept? 5% is a common choice for a margin of error. 5% was selected in this case.  What confidence level do you need? Typical choices are 90%, 95%, or 99%. 95% was selected in this case.  Response distribution or Percentage = 50% (always select 50%)  Population size: 85,385 in this case .  The sample size calculator recommended a sample size of: 383 - This is the minimum recommended size for this activity.  The figures quoted at the meeting of HCOSC used the 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level on a population size of 85,385.  As an example to test the sample size calculator we selected 3% for margin of error and a confidence level of 99%, which gave a recommended sample size of 1804. This consultation achieved almost twice this amount of responses.  **Confidence interval**  Our sample size with a confidence level of 95% gives us a confidence interval between 1 and 2%. (1.66%)  Our sample size with a confidence level of 99% gives us a confidence interval of just over 2% (2.19%).  Our sample size with confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 10% tells us we need a sample size of 96.  **Respondents**  Previous feedback to consultations locally and nationally suggests that the most motivated individuals participate in consultations.  We are grateful to the many people who took the time to provide their feedback during this consultation. |
| **Question**  Firstly, thanks to all concerned for an excellent consultation with lots of opportunities for people to have their say. Disappointing response.  My question, Can we be assured that GCC and GCS will act in the best interests of the whole community and take this proposal forward and not be swayed, as happened in 2002 by a group of people who were not representative of anyone but themselves.  Secondly, if the decision is to proceed then the location is announced as soon as possible | **Answer**  Thank you for your positive feedback about the consultation approach. We did work hard to provide a wide range of opportunities for people to have their say and have welcomed the many aspects of feedback.  During the discussion today, if the preferred option is approved, the Governing Body’s will confirm decisions regarding next steps, and it would be our intention to commission an independent panel as soon possible to propose the location. |