



**Dr J Stoves**  
**Consultant Nephrologist**  
St Luke's Hospital  
Little Horton Lane  
Bradford  
BD5 0NA

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Dear John

**Vascular access planning in W Yorkshire – impact on kidney patients**

Thank you for bringing to our attention the planned reconfiguration of vascular access centres in your area. From experience with previous AAA reviews we understand the need to consider carefully vascular expertise and economies of scale. However we are concerned about the impact on kidney patients treated at Bradford if this part of their care were moved to Calderdale and would like to understand what analysis has been done on this, and whether there is equity in access to surgery and care for people on dialysis whether they live in Bradford or Leeds. We would like to see evidence of arrangements over weekends and in particular of the patient safety considerations for emergency vascular access problems, for example a burst or clotted fistula. We are not clear what local kidney patient involvement there has been in the long-running discussions but recommend that local kidney groups are involved.

As you know the renal commissioning specifications make it clear that “Haemodialysis patients are dependent on the maintenance of ‘vascular access’ to allow repeated connection to the HD machine. The need to maintain a satisfactory vascular access coupled with a high susceptibility to cardiovascular disease, dialysis patients present some of the most serious challenges encountered by vascular surgeons and interventional radiologists. A significant proportion of these interventions are required to be delivered urgently or as an emergency. The safety of dialysis patients while hospitalised with vascular complications of their disease requires special consideration in the commissioning of dialysis services.”

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/01/a06-serv-spec-haemodialysis-ichd.pdf>

At the moment Bradford is delivering these services and compliant with the specification so we would also ask how they can continue to be so if patients need to be moved to other off-site locations for part of their treatment. Patient experience, family travel and patient safety all need to be considered and we ask that the Senate and other bodies carrying out the review give due consideration and are able to state in writing how these concerns can be met.

Kidney Care UK is the leading national patient support charity which works to improve quality of life for kidney patients through advocacy, direct grants, educating and informing patients, counselling and funding patient-centred research, healthcare professionals and projects. The charity was established 40 years ago to address the many issues associated with kidney disease and kidney failure. Until 2017 we were known as the British Kidney Patient Association.

Yours sincerely



Fiona Loud

Policy Director, Kidney Care UK