

*Choice and Choose & Book
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19th November 2007

Mrs Elizabeth Manero
Health Link
62 Beechwood Road
Dalston
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E8 3DY

Dear Elizabeth,

I write to thank you and the Health Link team for all your work in developing the role of public libraries to support patients to choose their provider when referred by their GP for a first consultant led out patient appointment. As you are aware, we will shortly be recommending that Primary Care Trusts throughout England adopt this model of support for patients. We would not have been in a position to make this recommendation without the significant contribution of either yourself or Health Link.

We first worked together in the autumn of 2005 when the Department of Health commissioned Health Link to conduct a feasibility study of the role of public libraries in supporting patients to access information about healthcare providers. The study concluded, 'That libraries have a crucial part to play in turning the opportunity of choice into the reality of choice, for all patients.'

Commissioned by the Department of Health, the Department for Rural Affairs, the Museums and Libraries Archives Council and the London Libraries Development Agency Health Link has more recently progressed to piloting the support role of public libraries in Patient's Choice.

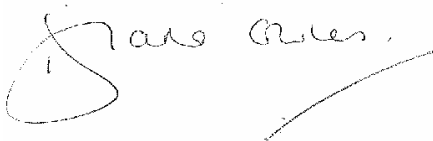
This has involved the development of a partnership across government and the public sector: the Partnership for Patients, led by you and Health Link and I particularly want to commend you for successfully bringing together people from many different organisations to form a strong steering group, which managed the pilot through its six-month period.

The pilot necessitated planning and running multiple events up and down the country in the ten pilot areas, and we were impressed with how these were well thought out and well executed. The ongoing day-to-day management and liaison with PCT and Library teams to make sure that focus on the project was retained was conducted thoughtfully and with understanding of the pressures and priorities facing staff during this time.

The Partnership for Patients pilot was an important piece of work for the Department. Access to information, help and non-clinical support to enable patients to make a choice at the start of their care pathway is at the heart of the NHS reform agenda.

I would be more than happy to recommend you and Health Link to other organisations wanting to work with you in the future.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diana Cowles". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Diana Cowles