

## **Representation sent by James Bentley, 16 February 2024**

“I trust this message finds you well. Following our recent Unite to Via consultations, I would like to highlight the key points for your consideration:

Points Raised by Muric (Stroud Team):

Muric will promptly share detailed concerns related to workforce protections in their current roles, though I understand most those questions were answered in the consultation.

Points Raised by Local Leadership and Unite Members:

### **Deputy Manager Position:**

- Concerns about the absence of a deputy manager position in the service structure.
- Apprehension regarding the potential deficit in staffing levels due to the advertised locality leads without a corresponding deputy manager position.
- Positive outlook on Via's intent to employ more staff, with reservations about the transfer of current staff.
- Service Structure for Stroud, Cotswolds, and the Forest of Dean:
- Scepticism about the effectiveness of covering a large area with sparse hub provisions.
- Proposal to maintain the Forest of Dean under the Gloucester Locality due to past success.
- Noting the proximity of Cinderford hub to the Gloucester hub and suggesting further outreach provisions.

### **Concerns About Women's Only Practitioners:**

- Specific concerns about the integration of women's only practitioners with existing teams.
- Worries about the staffing shortage under the safeguarding team, including the FDAC provision.
- Discrepancies noted in the staffing structure proposed by Via.

### **Mandatory Qualification:**

- Opposition to the mandatory nature of the level 3 qualification in tackling substance misuse.
- Consensus that qualification requirements should align with the CQC brief (Copied above)
- Request for flexibility, especially for staff with relevant existing qualifications (Level 3 and above)

### **Industrial Action Considerations:**

- Consultative ballot results in favour of industrial action if redundancies occur or if Via refuses to disclose their intent before TUPE.
- Request for Via's commitment to transparency before April 1st regarding intentions on redundancies.
- Acknowledgment of past redundancies during takeovers and commitment to collaboration with Unison if industrial action becomes necessary.

**Concerns with Nursing Staff:**

- Concerns about the significant reduction in nursing staff.
- Request for Via to review and assess the possibility of increasing the provision of nursing staff.
- Highlighting the existing backlog of Nurse Alcohol assessments.

**Upcoming Survey Design:**

- We Plan to design a survey on Monday to gather workforce feedback on current challenges and proposed changes.

I appreciate your attention to these matters and look forward to your response.

Best regards

**James Bentley**

**Gloucestershire Unite Steward**

**Complex Homelessness Partnership Support Services (CHPPs)"**