

# Overview & Scrutiny

## Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

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Dr Rachel Black  
Chief Executive  
St Joseph's Hospice  
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Email to: [R.Black@stjh.org.uk](mailto:R.Black@stjh.org.uk)

Dear Dr Black

### **Response to St Joseph's Hospice draft Quality Account for 2025/26**

Thank you for inviting us to submit comments on the *Draft Quality Account for St Joseph's Hospice for 2025/26*. As the new Chair I am responding on behalf of the new Commission which has just been appointed.

Your report provides a comprehensive account of your activities over the past year. We greatly appreciate the re-design of the document which provides much greater clarity and detail.

The work you do in specialist palliative and end of life care for people with progressive and life-threatening illnesses, as well as supporting their families and carers, is very much valued in Hackney.

We note that in June 2025, the Religious Sisters of Charity, which ran the hospice since 1905, concluded their formal oversight of the Hospice, and we recognize that this governance has now transitioned to the Diocese of Westminster. We note too that you continue to affirm your position on assisted dying which we discussed with you at our meeting in June last year. We appreciate that you undertook to brief us if and when the legislation changes so that we can understand how any new regulations might operate locally.

We are aware that just over half of your funding comes from your NHS block contract for the principal boroughs you serve, with the rest having to come from charitable legacies, donations and other local fundraising and we commend your ongoing work to diversify those funding streams.

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We are pleased to note the steady progress on the delivery of last year's 5 priorities which were very focused but yet require long term delivery. The fact that 45% of your patients have a non-cancer diagnosis is significant and needs to be communicated more widely so that residents can appreciate the breadth of your offer to the community e.g. how you support people with Multiple Sclerosis.

The creation of your Muslim women's bereavement groups 'Yusrah' (Ease) is to be commended as an example of thoughtful outreach. The numbers are small for now but it is to be hoped that with liaison with appropriate community and faith groups and holding this in a mosque or community setting will enable it to flourish. We will welcome receiving an update on this.

We commend your *5 new improvement priorities* for the coming year which have a slightly different flavour this year with a much more practical emphasis on improving vital administration and system flow and therefore improving patient experience:

1. *Referral response times*
2. *Improving carer administration of end of life medications: a collaboration between Hospice and community nursing teams*
3. *Improving Hospital to Hospice Inpatient Unit Transfers*
4. *Introducing 'What's Important to you?' Goal Setting and Action Planning in Palliative Care*
5. *Improving Patient Feedback*

We look forward to seeing progress on these. We noted that your last CQC inspection report in Feb 2025 rated you as 'Good'.

We note you are about to launch a 5 year 'Hospice Strategy' and your ambitions for investing in your digital infrastructure and we would like to hear more on telehealth capabilities and clinical tools being used by the community team, perhaps at a future meeting.

Overall we commend the report and look forward to continuing our close working relationship over the coming year.

Yours sincerely



**Councillor Emmanuel Onapa**  
**Chair of Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission**

cc Members of Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission  
Cllr Sally Zlotowitz, Cabinet Member for Health Communities and Adult Social Care  
Dr Sandra Husbands, Director of Public Health, City and Hackney