

Sister Veronica Hagen
Sister Provincial and Chairman of Trustees
The Congregation of the Daughters of the Cross
29 Tite Street
London
SW3 4JX

3rd June 2013

Dear Sister Veronica,

I am writing to express my profound concern at the proposal to sell St Anthony's Hospital to a commercial organisation, and the effects that decision will have on St Raphael's Hospice.

It has been my privilege to have been both a patient at St Anthony's Hospital and a regular supporter of St Raphael's Hospice over the years, and the ethos and care provided by both is second to none. It is this catholic/Christian ethos that makes them different, which would be lost if St Anthony's is sold to a commercial provider, and it were to become just another private hospital run for profit alone.

And because St Anthony's Hospital, as a part of the Charity The Daughters of the Cross, is the same charity which owns and runs St Raphael's Hospice, there would be a serious "knock on" effect to the hospice, because the hospital currently provides, free of charge, all the essential services such as catering, IT, payroll, grounds maintenance, meeting facilities, etc, the cost of which I understand amounts to some £1 million a year, and which has to date been absorbed by the hospital as an unseen contribution, from one part of the charity to another on the same site at North Cheam.

But if St Anthony's is sold to a commercial concern how all those essential things continue to be provided is in grave doubt. At the very least the Hospice will need to raise another £1 million a year just to "stand still" and that will be a big ask of the local community through extra charity donations and fundraising.

But is the sale of St Anthony's Hospital actually necessary at all?

I think you need to answer two questions that are at the core of this.

1. I know that the average age of the nuns who are the Trustees is now over 80, and they cannot go on forever. But other religious organisations and charities have not sold up and closed down at that point in their history. They have handed the reigns onto other new Trustees to carry on the good work of the charity.

So why have you rejected the proposal of everyone based at St Anthony's and St Raphael's (the Management and staff) to form a NEW Charity, with new Trustees. I understand that at least 6 eminent and well qualified people, including leading Catholics have already offered their services as Trustees