Could you please answer the questions below which relate to the provision of telehealth and telecare services provided by Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley CCG.

1. Who, within the CCG (or CSU), is responsible for commissioning telehealth services?

NHS Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group has responsibility for the commissioning of its own telehealth services for its local population. This responsibility was brought together under Kent and Medway Commissioning Support Unit (KMCS) from April 2013, with KMCS acting as the "host", on behalf of 8 CCGs in Kent and Medway. KMCS took on this responsibility when the Primary Care Trusts ceased to exist at the end of March 2013, via the Advanced Assistive Technology (AAT) team, under Amanda Rimington, again on behalf of the 8 Kentish CCGs.

2. Who are your current telehealth service providers and what do they provide?

The Telehealth server, kit and associated peripheral equipment has been in use in Kent since the time of the Whole Systems Demonstrator (WSD) programme. It was supplied by an American company called Viterion Telehealthcare, a subsidiary of Bayer Healthcare. In May 2013 this company was acquired by a new entity called the Viterion Corporation. The database used for the management of issues etc is called ENET, and is provided by Viterion.

The installation, de-installation, repair and maintenance of the Telehealth kit is performed by Commercial Services Kent Limited (CSK), from their warehouse base at Aylesford, Kent, using the ENET system.

3. When does the current contract with these suppliers conclude?

There is no formal contractual arrangement as such in place with either Viterion or CSK. There is an on-going arrangement in place going back to the WSD programme and the joint work across Telehealth and Telecare by the NHS and Kent County Council. This arrangement was taken on by KMCS, on behalf of the new CCGs, from April 2013. Each of the 8 CCGs has been asked to confirm its continued agreement and sign up to the Telehealth service for 2014-15. A notice period of 6 months must be given to KMCS should any CCG wish to withdraw.

4. How many users currently use the service and how much does it cost per user per month?
We currently have the capacity for up to 850 Telehealth users, although this is across the whole of Kent and Medway at any one point in time.

In respect of the costs per user, please see the budget details below, as held by the CCGs in Kent and Medway.

5. What is the CCG’s annual budget for telehealth in 2014/15 and, if known, 2015/16?

The Telehealth budget was transferred from the former Kent PCTs to the new CCGs upon their creation in April 2013. The budget shares were included in the annual planning assumptions (AOP) for 13-14, based on an agreed "fair share" mechanism. These shares remain in place for 2014-15. To date no CCGs have indicated a desire to serve notice to pull out of the Telehealth service.

The total budget across the Kent and Medway CCGs is £299,986 and NHS Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group’s share of this is £42,091 which equates to 14.03%.

6. What telehealth/telecare initiatives or programmes does the CCG currently implement, or have planned, with local authority or community services providers?

KMCS, on behalf of NHS Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group, are currently in discussion with Kent County Council, the CCGs and Kent Community Health NHS Trust about the future provision of both Telehealth and Telecare services across Kent, and how this might look with regards to the work of the Kent Integrated Pioneer programme and the Better Care Fund, and the NHS England Technology Enabled Care Services (TECS) Implementation Plan for 2014-17, which is due to be published shortly.