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Bwrdd Iechyd  
Hywel Dda  
Health Board

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Sarita Marshall  
Deputy Committee Clerk  
Health Wellbeing and Local Government Committee  
European and External Affairs Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff

Dear Ms Marshall

Further to your recent e-mail, I am now able to provide you with responses to your queries:

*Can you tell us what parent facilities, particularly accommodation facilities, are available to the families of special care babies in your area?*

Hywel Dda's units at West Wales General Hospital and Withybush Hospital each have a "parent flat" (bedroom, shower and limited kitchen facilities). These may be used to avoid travelling, or in preparation for discharge. Parents can use the staff canteen, and access hot drinks on the units. The unit at Bronlais Hospital fulfils a "stabilise and transfer role" and therefore does not have parent accommodation.

*Do you agree with the British Association of Perinatal Medicine that a systematic review of facilities for parents of babies receiving neonatal care in Wales is needed?*

Hywel Dda would agree with this, the developments in neonatal care, increasing survival rates from earlier prematurity result in longer lengths of stay. The ability to allow more parents to stay and receive support and training in the care of their child would be welcome. Additionally as the likelihood of a neonate receiving ITU or HDU care some distance from their home increases the need for parental accommodation increases.

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Cadeirydd / Chairman  
**Mr Chris Martin**  
Prif Weithredwr /Chief Executive  
**Mr Trevor Purt**



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*We heard evidence from the Neonatal Nurses Association and Royal College of Nursing of problems with staff training, including that staff were funding their own study and using their annual leave for study days. What is your response to this?*

Staff within Hywel Dda have not found themselves in this position; financed study leave is available to ensure all staff are competent and capable for their roles. However it is recognised that on occasions as in other Boards the demands of staffing a unit to provide safe care has resulted in training being rescheduled until a more favourable time.

*How might the training available to neonatal nurses be improved?*

Partnership planning with the education sector to develop training focused on the needs of the service in a more responsive manner would be welcomed, as would funding for "back filling" staff to release them to attend the more protracted courses.

A good example of this was the WO funding of Children's nurse training following the Clothier report.


*Can you tell us more about the role of Maternity Care Assistants in developing the neonatal nursing workforce?*

Hywel Dda has considered the introduction of transitional care for those babies which currently are admitted to SCBUs for nursing procedures/care rather than ITU or HDU, thus relieving pressure on the SCBUs.

Withybush hospital is developing an outreach role from SCBU to the maternity unit delivering this care.

West Wales General Hospital is developing the role of Maternity Care Assistants using a competency based framework for care delivered, in conjunction with education services.. However as SCBU and the maternity unit are not co located as in Withybush the scope of the MCA role in supporting neonates can not at present be developed.

With best wishes

  
Trevor Purt  
Chief Executive

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