

Llais Rhanbarth Gogledd Cymru
Uned 11 Llys Castan, Ffordd y Parc
Parc Menai, Bangor, LL57 4FH

Llais North Wales Region
Unit 11 Chestnut Court, Ffordd y Parc
Parc Menai, Bangor, LL57 4FH



Eich llais mewn iechyd | Your voice in health
a gofal cymdeithasol | and social care

23rd August 2023

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair – Petitions Committee
BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Jack

Dyfi Ward – Tywyn Hospital

The Tywyn Hospital Action Group have advised me that their petition will be considered by your committee on 11th September and I have asked that I write in support of their concerns.

I note that the Health Minister has said that Llais has been engaged with on the closure. Whilst we were notified of the closure as an urgent service change on the grounds of patient safety, it would not be accurate to say that we were engaged with. Llais does not have the powers formerly held by CHCs in relation to service change. Nevertheless, we informed Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board that we regarded this as a temporary closure only, that any plans for closure would require extensive consultation/engagement that fully meets the requirements of NHS guidance on service change and also of Gunning principles. As a CHC we would have brought the matter back to the statutory Joint Services Planning Committee for review every twelve weeks. Unfortunately this committee no longer exists following the abolition of CHCs at the end of March 2023.

We are aware that the Action Group is concerned that the hospital will not reopen to inpatients again. Experience shows that this is a reasonable

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Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg. Os byddwch yn ysgrifennu atom yn Gymraeg, byddwn yn ateb yn Gymraeg. Ni fydd hyn yn arwain at oedi wrth ymateb i'ch gohebiaeth.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English. If you write to us in Welsh, we will answer in Welsh. This will not lead to a delay in responding to your correspondence.

concern and that the longer a hospital is closed, the less likely it is to reopen. The budgetary stringency for NHS Wales recently announced by Welsh Government means that there will be considerable pressure to save money by leaving this 16-bed unit closed.

We are hearing of schemes to provide "*Hospital at Home*" for those patients who would normally go to Tywyn. The Minister describes these as proposals to "*support care closer to home and increase service capacity locally*" in her letter. You will well recall that this was part of the Flint Hospital closure plan (*similarly for Ffestiniog*). The hospitals were closed and the "*Hospital at Home*" schemes came and went. The reality is that inpatient care will inevitably be far from home.

It is certainly difficult to recruit nursing staff at this time but it is not impossible. Many rural communities have been able to attract nurses using imaginative schemes in conjunction with town councils and housing associations. The key is usually providing accommodation and early support to establish them in the community. Overseas nurses have been successfully recruited to Dolgellau Hospital.

We are planning to arrange a public meeting with local campaigners, locally elected representatives and key BCUHB managers in late September and we would like to present the findings and discussions to the Petitions Committee.

Regards



Geoff Ryall-Harvey

Regional Director – Llais North Wales

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