

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref SF/MD/0111/15

Darren Millar AM
Chair
Public Accounts Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

29 January 2015

Dear Darren,

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE REPORT
UNSCHEDULED CARE
UPDATE – JANUARY 2015**

I agreed to provide the Public Accounts Committee with an update on the following recommendations:-

Recommendation 1 – Flu Immunisation – to review the target for immunisation if the NHS workforce at the end of the 2014/15 season

We are currently part way through the 2014/15 flu season. Finalised uptake data for the season is expected to be available in May 2015, and will be contained in the Public Health Wales report later in the year.

I will consider the data, along with other relevant information from Public Health Wales and the health boards, as soon as it is available and assess the value of raising the target for NHS staff vaccination.

Recommendation 3 – Unscheduled Care Performance Measures – an update on the findings of the pilot studies being run in Wales looking at six aspects of Unscheduled Care system

Over the last 12 months, projects have been running across Wales to investigate the key clinical processes that impact on patient outcomes across unscheduled care, at the same time seeking to provide better ways of measuring patient experience and system performance. The pilot phases for all but one of the projects have been completed and data is being analysed and reports drafted and shared with project teams.

The pilots have demonstrated the opportunities available to measure more clinically relevant processes within the unscheduled care pathway; better describe some of the key clinical interventions and the importance of measuring from 'incident' to 'treatment' or 'final outcome'. Next steps are now being considered.

Recommendation 15 – NHS 111 – to provide an update on NHS 111

A multi agency 111 project implementation board has been established, chaired by a health board chief executive with a project director from the NHS and a senior responsible officer from Welsh Government. The project is supported by a dedicated team from NHS Wales. CEOs have agreed to release resources from within their organisations to provide the breadth of support required.

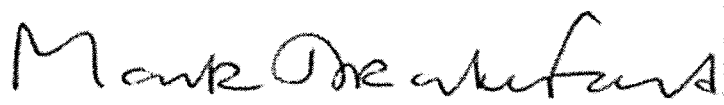
I have always been clear that implementation in Wales must draw on experience elsewhere. There have been widespread – if disputed – claims that unscheduled care pressures in England, over this winter, have been exacerbated rather than relieved by the 111 system. I have therefore asked the implementation board to give me advice on how a pilot could be taken forward to test what we need to do, while limiting any unintended consequences going into next winter. If the pilot phase stands up to scrutiny, it has been agreed that the 111 service will be introduced on a phased geographical basis. This will enable an action learning approach to take place where learning from one phase will inform the next, and allow issues and unintended consequences to be resolved in advance of further roll out, ensuring that quality, safety and patient experience are continually improved. The first phase is currently planned to commence in October 2015 in Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board area. This will be thoroughly evaluated through spring 2016 to inform decisions about the timing of the next phase. If the evaluation is positive, the intention is to complete the roll out of the 111 service across Wales during 2016/17.

All health boards are undertaking work to understand their population health needs as a part of the ongoing process of developing their integrated medium term plans. They have been asked to ensure that appropriate alternative local pathways and services are available in primary and community care for the national 111 service to link into; this link between national and local is an integral part of a successful 111 service.

Health boards are also responsible for their local communications and engagement and this will also inform their local service development. A national communications and engagement plan has been developed to ensure activities are co-ordinated and consistent and the Board of the Community Health Councils is fully engaged in the process.

I will consider which organisation will host the 111 service for Wales in the next few months and will keep you informed of future developments.

Best wishes



Mark Drakeford AC/AM

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