

Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol/
Prif Weithredwr GIG Cymru
Grŵp Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol

Director General Health and Social Services/
NHS Wales Chief Executive
Health and Social Services Group



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Darren Millar AM
Chair
Public Accounts Committee
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Our Ref: AG/KH
01 September 2015

Dear Mr Millar

Further to my letter of 30 June 2015, you asked for further clarification about the accuracy of my response to Aled Roberts' concerns and the statement in the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Review of GP Out of Hours Medical Services, specifically:

"This potential for a long wait is recognised by ED staff who will often treat a patient who would be suitable for the OOH service as the ED wait would be less. Conversely, patient can be kept waiting in the ED and when the 4-hour target approaches, referred to OOH, putting added pressure on the OOH service. The interviewers found during interviews with ED and OOH clinicians, there was a willingness to work together but that this lacked the leadership necessary to be effective."

As the review was conducted mainly through interviews with staff, who were assured of their anonymity, the health board has not been able to further explore the basis of the contention. The health board has accepted and is acting on all of the report's recommendations. However, the health board has also confirmed that their own local analysis has not identified any pattern of inappropriate activity relating to transfers of patients between the Emergency Department (ED) and GP out of hours services.

Due to the nature of the different services provided by Emergency Departments which are open 24/7, and out of hours services which open weekdays at 6:30pm and throughout the weekend, there is quite rightly a transfer of patients between the two when they are both open. It should be noted that there was no suggestion in the report or the recommendations that patients were being referred to the out of hours service when it would be more appropriate for them to stay in the Emergency Department.

You are aware that GP out of hours services forms part of the Special Measures instigated in Betsi Cadwaladr UHB. Dr CDV Jones, Chair of Cwm Taf UHB, is working closely with the

health board to support them in delivering the necessary improvements to their GP out of hours services. Dr Jones will be providing a report to Welsh Government in September which will address any issues of concern and I will ask that this specific issue is addressed in his report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Goodall', written in a cursive style.

Dr Andrew Goodall