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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board

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Mr David J Rowlands AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales

Email:
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Ein cyf / Our ref: GD/CR/7092/1520

Eich cyf / Your ref:

☎: 01745 448788 ext 6364

Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Dawn Lees

E-bost / Email: Dawn.Lees@wales.nhs.uk

Dyddiad / Date: 17th April 2018

Dear Mr Rowlands,

Re: P-04-479 Tywyn Memorial Hospital X-ray & Minor Injuries Unit Petition

Thank you for your letter dated 23rd March regarding Tywyn Hospital Minor Injury Unit opening hours in summer 2017 and requests for information made to the Health Board last year from the South Meirionnydd Older People's Forum.

I am able to respond to your queries as follows:

Why the opening hours of MIU in Tywyn Hospital were not extended in Summer 2017

You will be aware that Tywyn Hospital Minor Injury Unit (MIU) has different summer and winter opening hours. In summer (1st April to end September), the Unit is scheduled to be open from 10.00am to 6.00pm 7 days per week, whilst in the Winter (1st October to end March) it is open 10.00am to 6.00pm 5 days per week, Monday to Friday.

I wrote to the Petitions Committee on 9th February 2017 expressing the Health Board's commitment to these opening hours and nothing has changed, that is still the case. However our MIU opening hours and inpatient beds (and many other nurse led services) are wholly dependent on securing qualified nurse staffing to ensure that they run safely. Despite extensive recruitment efforts throughout late 2016 and 2017, the MIU in Tywyn was unable to recruit suitably qualified individuals or those prepared to undertake suitable courses, which meant that we were unable to operate our extended opening hours in the MIU during the 2017 summer season.

For information, in order to undertake the nursing role in MIU, individuals must be a Registered Nurse or an Institute of Healthcare and Development (IHCD) paramedic ideally with emergency care experience. Unfortunately, we face the same challenges as other health boards and trusts across the UK in recruiting qualified nurses, in particular in rural areas.

This is an ongoing issue which is also affecting our ability to open additional inpatient beds in Tywyn Hospital, however I would like to assure you that we are very mindful of the local concern this generates and we continue to explore all avenues to address the situation.



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On a positive note, we are pleased to report some recruitment success and that currently within the establishment in Tywyn we now have 4 individuals who are able to work in the MIU department at varying levels of experience and competency. This has meant that we were able to open Tywyn MIU at the beginning of April 2018 for its extended summer opening hours, as we planned.

Why the South Meirionnydd Older People's Forum have apparently not received a response from the Health Board to a number of requests for information

I am very sorry that the South Meirionnydd Older People's Forum has not received responses to two letters it sent to the Health Board last year (on 20th August and 1st November 2017) and for the inconvenience this has caused. I understand that the two letters in question were sent directly to Kathryn Cummings, the West Area Communications Officer and their receipt was therefore not formally acknowledged by our Corporate Office. Unfortunately it then appears that the letters were overlooked during the move of the Communications Officer's base from Carlton Court in St Asaph to Ysbyty Gwynedd.

To avoid this happening again, we will ensure from now on that any correspondence received directly by the Communications Department is copied to the Corporate Office to ensure responses are timely and are not overlooked.

I trust that this covers the issues raised in your letter by the petitioner.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gary Doherty'.

Gary Doherty
Prif Weithredwr
Chief Executive