

# Equality Of Opportunity Committee

## EOC(3)-14-09 : Paper 4 : 3 November 2009

**Inquiry into Discrimination against People Living with HIV by Healthcare Professionals and Providers - Written evidence from North Wales NHS Trust**

**Author : Dr Olwen Williams Chief of Staff Community and Specialist Medicine, Consultant Genitourinary Physician**

1.1 Introduction.

North Wales NHS Trust, Sexual Health Service currently cares for over 100 HIV positive adults , providing both in-patient and out-patient services. Paediatric HIV patients are cared for in Alderhey Hospital, Liverpool.

SOPHID data accessed via [www.hpa.co.uk](http://www.hpa.co.uk) gives a detailed breakdown of individuals accessing HIV care in North Wales by their area of residence, epidemiology, stage of disease and whether current on anti-retroviral (ARV) therapy.

1.2 I am the lead clinician involved in HIV care at the Trust since 1992.

2. Examples of discrimination experienced by people living with HIV in healthcare settings.

2.1 Historically there has been evidence that HIV positive individuals have experienced discrimination by Health Care Workers with in the Trust, but these date back over 5 years and were addressed by the Trust at the time.

However recent examples include:

2.2 A HIV positive woman whose confidentiality was breached at an out patients appointment for Colposcopy. The doctor informed her that because her HIV status was unknown to Colposcopy service at time of referral, she could not have her Colposcopy on the day she presented as 'they had not put her at the end of the list'. There is no such requirements for this. The patient put in a written complaint.

2.3 Patients requiring oral hygiene at dental practice having procedure delayed as dentist 'checks' with HIV service that this is a safe practise.

2.4 HIV positive patients frequently complain that their GP /Practise nurse discriminate against them. However, when we have investigated their concerns it comes to light that it is the health care professional's lack of knowledge re HIV that is manifesting it's self and subtly makes them appear as if they are being discriminatory.

3. Policies and procedures employed by healthcare organisations and healthcare professionals in relation to the HIV virus and / or people living with HIV.

The Trust has adopted the WAG **Providing for the needs of people with HIV/AIDS in Wales**. National Care Pathways and Service Specification for testing, diagnosis, treatment and supportive care 2009

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dhss/publications/090827hivaidsen.pdf>

The Trust in line with the draft Single Equality and Human Rights Scheme for North Wales has adopted an Equality Impact Assessment Tool. Policy decision makers are required to undertake equality impact assessment to identify potential adverse impact of a policy on some groups and mitigate accordingly. An awareness raising programme is ongoing.

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/Documents/115/des%5F1106.pdf>

Many of the current policies originate for the previous organisation Conway And Denbighshire NHS Trust and North East Wales NHS Trust and are being updated and developed for the Betsi Cadwalader Local Health Board .

The majority of policies are infection control policies.

4. Training, education and awareness raising for healthcare professionals and people who work in healthcare settings regarding HIV and disability discrimination

There is no formal training schedule

4.1 The Equality Department at the Trust has been running a series of workshops for staff to raise awareness of the Equality Duties and the social model of disability. This includes sessions raising awareness regarding HIV

I have run one workshop this year.

4.2 Medical Students

One tutorial and one clinical session in Sexual Health whilst at North Wales NHS Trust during their MOSS attachment.

#### 4.3 Doctors in Training

Ad hoc tutorials and clinical sessions

#### 4.4 Pharmacy HCW

Annual update on Antiretroviral therapy -one lecture

#### 4.5 Consultants

Updates on biannual basis at Royal College of Physicians North Wales Meeting

#### 4.6 Multidisciplinary Team Meeting

These meetings are set up to discuss the management of pregnant HIV positive women. Any change in guidelines discussed - British HIV Association guidelines followed. [www.bhiva.org.uk](http://www.bhiva.org.uk)

#### 4.7 HCW in Sexual Health and HIV service

Monthly case note discussion forum at which new guidelines are discussed.

Links in with Merseyside, Cheshire and North Wales HIV network [www.liv.ac.uk/hiv/](http://www.liv.ac.uk/hiv/)

North Wales HIV Forum meets on monthly basis for educational event.

Doctors have opportunity to attend HIV meetings in Liverpool to discuss complex patients. All medical staff attend appropriate conferences /meetings to achieve their competencies and maintain their CPD. The British Association for HIV guidelines are adopted by the Genitourinary Medicine/HIV service.

These include guidelines on HIV testing, Sexual Health, Management of HIV in pregnancy. Guidelines available via [www.bhiva.org.uk](http://www.bhiva.org.uk)

4.8 All Wales HIV Network - hosted by Terence Higgins Trust (THT) meetings for HIV positive persons and service providers usually annually in North Wales. It provides a forum for views to be exchanged and public patient involvement.

#### 4.8 Primary Care

Ad hoc teaching sessions for GPs, doctors on GP vocational training schemes.

Within the Sexual Health/HIV service there is a zero tolerance to discrimination. The staff have adopted an advocacial role for HIV positive individuals and supported them when there has been any issues.

Dr Olwen Williams

Chief of Staff community and specialist medicine

North Wales NHS Trust

Wrexham

LL13 7TD