

Health and Social Services Committee

HSS(2)-18-06(p12)

Meeting date: Wednesday 13 December 2006

Venue: Committee Room 2, Senedd, National Assembly for Wales

Title: Review of Cancer Services – Minutes of South Wales East Regional Committee meeting 16 June 2006

Attached at Annex A are the minutes of the meeting of the South East Wales Regional Committee held on 16 June 2006.

The Committee received evidence from Velindre Hospital, Cardiff; South East Wales Cancer Network; Macmillan Cancer Support and CLIC Sargent on the subject of Cancer Care in South East Wales.

Committee Service
November 2006

South Wales East Regional Committee Minutes SWERC(2) 02-06 – Informal Meeting

Date: Friday 16 June 2006

Time: 10:00am to 12:30pm

Venue: Oasis Christian Community Centre, Cefn Forest, Blackwood

Members:

Name	Constituency
Jocelyn Davies AM	South Wales East
Irene James AM	Islwyn
Huw Lewis AM	Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney

Presenters:

Name	Representing
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Dr Mike Bourne	Velindre Hospital, Cardiff
Hywel Morgan	South East Wales Cancer Network
Susan Kent	
Simon Blackburn	Macmillan Cancer Support
Carys Thomas	
Susan George	CLIC Sargent, Caring for Children with Cancer

Committee Service:

Chris Reading	Clerk
Leanne Hatcher	Deputy Clerk
Abigail Phillips	Team Support

Item 1: Welcome, introductions and apologies

1.1 As there was not a quorum, Jocelyn Davies could not be formally elected as Chair but was appointed as temporary Chair for the meeting.

1.2 Apologies were received from Rosemary Butler, Jeff Cuthbert, David Davies, William Graham, Mike German, John Griffiths, Irene James, Laura Anne Jones and Lynne Neagle.

1.3 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Chair noted that this was the first meeting to be held since the death of Peter Law and paid tribute to his service to the Committee.

Item 2: Minutes from the meeting held on 17 February 2006

The Committee will formally ratify these minutes at the next meeting.

Item 3: Committee's Annual Report 2005/06

The Committee will formally agree the Annual Report at the next meeting.

Item 4: Health and Social Services Committee Review into Cancer Services

The Chair said that the main purpose of the meeting was to discuss cancer services in South East

Wales. These views will be passed to the Health and Social Services Committee, which is currently undertaking a policy review of this subject.

There were presentations from those listed above. Copies of these can be found on the National Assembly website www.wales.gov.uk

Members said they had found all the presentations extremely interesting and thought provoking. Members put the following points to the panel.

- The location and accessibility of services, and whether there is a need for the centralisation of diagnostics.
- The need for an end of life plan to take account of patients and families views and how the barrier between health and social care can be broken down.
- That prevention should be as much of the service as actually the treatment of cancer.

The presenters offered the following responses:

- Dr Mike Bourne said there was no need for centralisation or of imaging data any more.
- Hywel Morgan said they envisage the vast majority of patients will still visit their local GPs, [pid:8252](#) they will still be sent to their local hospital where their disease will be diagnosed, staged and assessed. All chemotherapy and palliative care should be local and centralisation should be kept to a minimum.
- In terms of end of life plan, there are a number of different strategies. All these strategies need to be linked together into a programme or end of life plan. Ideally health and social care practitioners will be able to share assessments.
- Prevention is an area that is largely ignored and we should learn from our colleagues in the cardiac department about healthy eating, exercise and cessation of smoking. These issues need to be identified so people realise they can decrease their risk of getting cancer.
- Cary Thomas said that with specialisation and centralisation of services there is a concern about the effect this will have on patients in terms of travelling and if this is to happen, patient's travel costs should be taken into consideration and exemption for parking should be made. Car parking is a major issue, there is a hospital travel cost scheme in place however it is not means tested, therefore approximately 90 per cent of cancer patients suffer financial hardship.
- Prevention was not included in The Health and Social Services Committee review's terms of reference because they felt it was too large a task to look at both prevention and cancer services.
- Susan Kent made reference to palliative care consultants and said there is a clear recognition for the need of additional consultants within Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and north Monmouthshire. It is intended that these consultants will work and interact together.
- Susan George said the Children's cancer model is very well established with approximately 95

per cent of children being treated in specialist centres but in certain areas of the country there is a very well developed model of sharing care, with the local hospital or with the local community base teams.

- Simon Blackburn said a palliative care strategy in Wales is essential and the engagement of social services in the delivery of palliative care and throughout the cancer treatment process.

Gaynor Oliver representing upper Rumney Valley Health Watch asked for statistics on the number of cancer patients within the south-east Wales area and any statistics about the incidences of cancer in percentages compared with other areas such as North and West Wales. Responding Hywel Morgan said a lot of work on collecting statistics is undertaken by the Welsh Council intelligence surveillance unit, cancer registry for Wales and they publish statistics at the individual Council areas.

Eric James representing Newport senior citizens forum made two points. Firstly that ambulances taking people to the hospital should say what time they will be collecting patients from their homes and secondly about the problems with relying on digital imaging and computer systems. Responding Carys Thomas added supplement comment, that on top of the fact that ambulances are late picking patients up but also patients have to go around various villages or towns to pick up other patients, these ambulances are often too full to allow for carers to travel therefore carers have to make their own way to the hospital incurring more costs. Responding to the comment made about digital imaging Dr Bourne said they are not proposing centralisation in the sense that all data is held on one computer in one location, and that it is safer than when x-rays were transferred in paper packets. He reassured that at least 3 copies of every image are backed up. He said that what they are proposing is that images should be accessible to anyone at any time.

Barry Taylor Community Counsellor representing Pontypool. Mr Taylor is a retired ambulance technician he said that there are serious problems with ambulance services and under-funding. At the moment the Ambulance service has to save 11 million pounds and the only way to cutback is on overtime, this will mean the service suffers and the public are going to have longer waits.

Andrew Richards Chief Executive of Hospice of the Valleys in Tredegar and Chairman of the forum for Voluntary Hospices in Wales asked the Committee if there were any plans to address the palliative care strategy that was published in 2001. Responding The Chair replied that this was a matter for the local health board.

Mike Roberts representing Abertillery Town Council asked why Wales is behind other parts of the country with regards to equipment and what the Welsh Assembly is going to do to try and bring Wales into line with England and Scotland. Mr Roberts also asked how people can be educated in cancer prevention and healthy living. Responding The Chair commented that several of the presenters had mentioned the machines and the fact that a programme had been planned since 1988 but nothing had happened. The Chair asked Dr Bourne for a brief explanation of these machines. Dr Bourne explained that they are very large machines which generate high energy beams for the treatment of cancers. He also added that we should not be so negative about the treatment in Wales and that we have some of the best equipment available. Irene James informed that the Assembly has put in initiatives such as free school breakfasts to enable children to eat healthy.

Jerome Jackson representing the Labour party in Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney asked if there was going to be a MacMillan unit at the Prince Charles Hospital. Responding Simon Blackburn said he hopes there will be a unit at the hospital and discussions have been held. There has been some recent fundraising to provide a chemotherapy unit in the hospital which is hoped in the next two years.

Item 5: Time and venue for next meeting

5.1 The Chair announced the locations and topics for the next two meetings:

- 27 October 2006; Caldicot - The Fire Service in South East Wales
- 9 March 2007; Pontypool - Epilepsy Services in South East Wales

Committee Service June 2006