

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb i ymgynghoriad y [Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol](#) ar [Effaith yr ôl-groniad o ran amseroedd aros ar bobl yng Nghymru sy'n aros am ddiagnosis neu driniaeth](#)

This response was submitted to the [Health and Social Care Committee](#) consultation on the [impact of the waiting times backlog on people in Wales who are waiting for diagnosis or treatment](#)

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Ymateb gan: | Response from: Arolygiaeth Gofal Iechyd Cymru | Healthcare Inspectorate Wales

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) - response to inquiry on: Impact of the waiting times backlog on people in Wales who are waiting for diagnosis or treatment

Head of Strategy, Policy and Engagement

Response submitted on behalf of Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW)

We confirm that this response can be published and no information needs to be treated as confidential.

Questions posed by the consultation below:

- The services in place for people who are waiting for diagnostics and treatment, particularly pain management support.
- Access to psychological therapies and emotional support for those who may be experiencing anxiety or distress as a result of long waiting times.
- The contribution the third sector can make in providing peer support and information to patients waiting on an NHS waiting list.
- The effectiveness of messaging and engagement with the public about the demands on the service and the importance of seeking care promptly.
- The extent to which inequalities exist in the elective backlog, with deprived areas facing disproportionately large waiting lists per head of population compared to least deprived areas.
- Plans to fully restore planned NHS care in Wales.

HIW Response

HIW does not have specific evidence to contribute to each specific question, however, our role in gaining assurance in relation to the quality and safety of services provided to citizens in Wales means that alongside inspection and registration activities, HIW receives and uses a range of information about healthcare services. This includes:

Listening to concerns

Examining safeguarding concerns and outcomes

Actively engaging and sharing information with healthcare providers and partner agencies.

By triangulating evidence from a number of sources HIW obtains a fuller picture of the quality of care and support provided by healthcare services in the NHS and independent sector.

Through our concerns function, which receives feedback about healthcare services directly from members of the public, stakeholders and patients who are in receipt of services, we have noted a theme emerging relating to the availability of appointments. The main theme arising from the concerns raised with us are in relation to the availability of General Practitioner appointments, availability of access to Community Mental Health Teams and appointments with dentists. The intelligence we have received via this route has involved people expressing frustration at their inability to arrange appointments for the care they need and/or conditions that they want to discuss. General Practitioners and Dentists have told us that they can feel frustrated by the impact of COVID-19 on the services they provide and a lack of patient understanding of how COVID -19 arrangements have needed to change the way they provide services. Those who are waiting for secondary care, both in the form of initial assessment or planned treatment, remain under the care of GPs or Dentists. This places increasing demand on these primary care services, who are already providing a service altered by the changes introduced to mitigate risks of COVID-19 and other infectious disease transmission.

Later in this calendar year, HIW will be undertaking a National Review to specifically explore the impact of long waiting lists on patients who are scheduled for surgery. We will be publishing our findings into this once we have completed our fieldwork which will combine an analysis of available data, assessment through off site and on site work, plus patient and staff engagement through surveys and direct contact.