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**Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care**



Dawn Bowden AS/MS

**Y Gweinidog Plant a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Minister for Children and Social Care**

**Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government**

John Griffiths MS

Chair

Local Government and Housing Committee

SeneddHousing@senedd.wales

29 May 2025

Dear John,

Following on from the Local Government and Housing Committee inquiry held on 7 May, it was agreed that I would update the Committee on the actions being undertaken by the Welsh Government in the areas outlined below, and provide a written response to the questions we were unable to answer due to time constraints.

Share the April figures data regarding the number of delayed hospital discharges once it has been published

The April 2025 data, published on 22 May, marks the beginning of the third year under the current reporting framework. The total number of discharge delays were 1,404, this is a combination of all health, social care, and joint delays.

It's encouraging to note that the April figure reflects a significant improvement with delay numbers reducing by 18% compared to April 2024.

I am also pleased to report that those delay areas which had consistently seen the highest delay numbers over the past year, achieved some sizable reductions in April. These being chiefly assessment related delays and include waits for the completion of social care assessments, joint health and social care assessments as well as waits associated with starting new home care packages on discharge.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Commit to publishing and sharing the data on the length of hospital discharge delays

As I stated during the Committee meeting, I am committed to ensuring that data on the length of hospital discharge delays is made publicly available. My officials are currently working with our Knowledge and Analytical Services team to facilitate the publishing the data on [StatsWales](#) as quickly as possible.

However, a current directive restricts the creation of new tables or modifications to existing ones on the platform. The transition to a new platform is due to commence later this summer, and it is anticipated that changes to the Pathway of Care Delays tables can be accommodated in one of the subsequent phases of this rollout.

I am pleased to share that we are seeing some very promising reductions in reducing total days delayed, with April showing a 5% decrease compared to March and, even more notably, there's been a significant reduction of just under 20% compared to April 2024, which is a very positive development

Provide details to the Committee of the timeline for replacing WCCIS with the 'Connecting Care' digital sharing programme.

The Business Case for implementing Connecting Care is currently split into three parts:

- Health element (business case received and under assessment)
- Social Care/Local Authority element (business case received and approved)
- Integrated Care Record (Business case to be developed in a later stage)

The Social Care business case includes the intention to move the 15 local authorities currently on the WCCIS system to new case management systems over a 2-4 year period (2025 - 2027/8).

The business case then extends to 2031/32, to ensure delivery of the broader ambitions for Connecting Care to all 22 local authorities in Wales. This work will include mechanisms to support integrated regional working, developing new data standards and consistent approaches for social care data, staff training etc.

Write to the Committee with information on the situation in Cwm Taf where neighbouring local authorities are not accepting referrals from the Cwm Taf Morgannwg's effective electronic referral system.

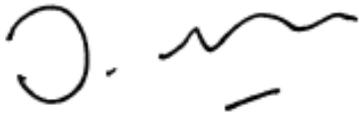
The situation relates to the 'Electronic Transfer of Care' (ETOC) assessment process, which the Health Board introduced across all their hospital sites last year.

The ETOC assessment is prepared by ward staff and quality assured in the Discharge Hub before being issued to local authorities in respect of residents' care needs. This process is well embedded and working well in the region. My officials are liaising with the Cwm Taf Morgannwg regional team to understand any barriers or challenges that may exist with neighbouring local authorities, which are impacting on the acceptance of the ETOC assessments in other areas.

The new ETOC process is unfamiliar to local authorities outside of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area, and so further work will need to be undertaken to support them in embedding this effective system.

I trust that these updates, along with the written responses to the questions not reached, as set out in Annex A, provide the Committee with the necessary information to address the points raised during the meeting, whilst also reaffirming our ongoing commitment to working collaboratively with Local Government to ensure safe, timely, and efficient discharges from hospitals.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Miles', with a stylized flourish.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS

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Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social
Care

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Minister for Children and Social Care

Written response by the Welsh Government to the Local Government and Housing Committee on social care challenges that were not reached during the meeting.

Social care data - *There are frustrations about the current lack of social care data. There were comments that a lot of social care data is collected but not available in the public domain. For example, regular data is collected on the length of hospital discharge delays and on waiting times for assessments and care services and staff vacancies, but none of this is published and some stakeholders feel “there is a gap in transparency” – Is the Welsh Government willing to rectify this? And if so, can you give an indication of when more data will be publicly available?*

Welsh Government collects a large amount of data from local authorities on an annual and monthly basis. All the data which is collected annually is published via StatsWales unless there is a concern with the quality or completeness of the data. Annual workforce data is also published by Social Care Wales.

However, we know there is clearly further work required, and we are working alongside local authorities to improve the levels of data available during 2025/26. Local authorities have been provided with additional funding in 2025/26 to continue working with Welsh Government to further deliver social care data requested by Welsh Government and sector partners. In 2025, the published data will be expanded to include all adults in receipt of care and support. This new dataset will allow for an in-depth understanding of the population of adults receiving local authority support.

There is also data collected monthly which is available to stakeholders and Welsh Government staff, but not currently published. This data covers capacity and demand for social care services in local authorities. The data collection was introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic and has changed significantly during that time. Due to the frequency of the data collection, there have been concerns about the robust validation, which is one of the reasons the data is not yet published.

The Committee will be aware that we currently publish the Pathways of Care monthly data on total delays, broken down by total numbers and by individual delay code groups and this can be viewed by health board or local authority region. We will be reviewing the publication details for this year to expand this to include the total days delayed data as well.

Real Living Wage - *Care Forum Wales says the Real Living Wage has “become aspirational” as commissioners say they have not had the funds to maintain those wages – What is the Welsh Government’s response to this?*

The Welsh Government recognises the importance of fair pay and since 2022 we have provided funding through the Local Government Settlement to support our Programme for Government commitment to pay social care workers the Real Living Wage (RLW). The Social Care Fair Work Forum focused on the implementation of the RLW during its first year, and the aspiration was that the RLW should be the minimum that our social care workers are paid.

Paying the RLW is a critical factor in sustaining a reliable workforce, though it is the responsibility of the care commissioners and providers to ensure that this funding is passed on to those it is intended for. We are aware of reports that funding is not reaching all of our social care workers, and we have written to local authorities to work with them, to understand their implementation of the RLW through the allocated funding provided within the Local Government Settlement.

We have also commissioned an independent evaluation of the implementation of the RLW, a first report on which will be published imminently. The evaluation is now focused on the outcomes for the workforce in terms of wellbeing, recruitment, and retention. Early findings from the first report suggests the policy has had a positive impact on the sector, but also recognises the funding is not reaching all of our social care workers.

We will draw on the findings and recommendations from the evaluation, along with feedback from local authorities, to gain a clearer picture of how the RLW is being implemented across Wales in 2025–26.