



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1538
Ein cyf/Our ref JMHSC/02212/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair
Petitions committee

petitions@senedd.wales

23 September 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter about **Petition P-06-1538 Protect full stroke services at Bronglais Hospital; prevent downgrade to Treat and Transfer**.

I understand how strongly people feel about their health services. No decision has been made by Hywel Dda University Health Board about the future of stroke services; the proposed changes are being considered as part of the health board's [clinical services plan](#).

The Welsh Government sets the strategic direction for the NHS in Wales. Health boards and NHS trusts are responsible for the planning and delivery of health service – in this instance, stroke services – for their population in line with professional standards and clinical guidance. They are supported to deliver improved stroke services by the NHS Wales Performance and Improvement Unit (previously the NHS Executive).

I have been clear in my expectation that health boards must provide safe and sustainable services which meets the needs of their population. Anyone experiencing stroke or suspected stroke, regardless of where they live, should be seen and treated as quickly as possible in the most appropriate setting which can provide the most effective treatment they require.

Unfortunately, stroke outcomes are not where we want them to be in Wales, or across the UK. The emerging expert advice is that the NHS should treat acute stroke care as a specialist service and provide it on a regional basis. The current model for the management of stroke in Wales must therefore change if we are going to realise the aims set out in the *Quality Statement for Stroke*. The changes proposed by Hywel Dda University Health Board must be aligned towards the development of comprehensive regional stroke centres. This model of care provides the NHS with an opportunity to address the fragility in some of our services, and create a sustainable workforce model, while also improving outcomes for people suffering a stroke.

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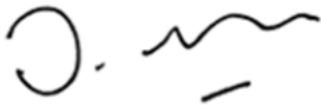
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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.

As with any change to NHS services, I expect health boards to rigorously consider the options available and understand the full impact of these options, ensuring the highest quality care is provided to ensure the best quality-of life-outcomes for people affected by stroke.

I also expect health boards to take a collaborative approach when putting forward proposals to change services, working with all relevant partners and stakeholders, including clinicians and local communities, neighbouring health boards and delivery partners such as the Stroke Association, Llais and Ceredigion Council.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke at the end.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS

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