



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1558
Ein cyf/Our ref JMHSC/03183/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair
Petitions committee
petitions@senedd.wales

05 January 2026

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 5 December about Petition P-06-1558: Simplify and standardise the process for booking an appointment with a GP in Wales.

We know that there is very high demand for GP services in Wales, with around 1.6m appointments attended in Wales each month, which is equivalent to around half of the Welsh population being seen every month.

In April 2022, the Welsh Government launched the Access Commitment, setting out steps to address the 8am bottleneck. This is a pledge that people would have their needs responded to the first time they contacted their practice, without being told to call back another time.

To achieve this, practices are required to:

- Offer a mix of remote, face-to-face, urgent, on-the-day and pre-bookable appointments.
- Maintain a planned and forward-looking approach to scheduling appointments throughout the day, or for future dates, meaning it is no longer acceptable for all appointments for that day to be released at 8am.
- Collect patient feedback and use this to develop an access improvement plan, taking account of how they have engaged with patients.

These access standards were launched alongside £12m investment between 2022 and 2025 to help GP practices build capacity through additional staff to support these improvements to access.

This month, I announced the conclusion of [GMS contract negotiations 2025-26](#). This sees a total investment of £41.9m in general practice, comprising £37.9m of new investment and the continuation of £4m additional capacity funding.

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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.

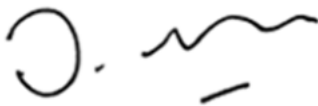
Steps are being taken to strengthen the access standards to help people secure appointments when they need them. A dedicated working group will review and enhance these standards, with improvements to take effect from April 2026.

We have strengthened compliance around the 8am bottleneck and pre-bookable appointments and updated guidance has been issued to practices. As part of their management of GP contracts, we expect health boards to check these standards are being maintained.

The NHS Wales App provides a digital option for people to view and manage certain GP appointments. Further updates will be coming. More information is available on the NHS Wales App website: [Home - NHS Wales App](#)

As independent contractors, GP practices are responsible for ensuring their appointment booking processes meet the needs of their patients. Anyone who feels their practice is not meeting the access standards should provide this feedback to the practice manager in the first instance, and with the health board primary care team. Further information on how people can raise a concern can be found [HERE](#)

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