



**GIG**  
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**NHS**  
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Betsi Cadwaladr  
University Health Board

Mr William Powell AC / AM  
Cadeirydd / Chair  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
CARDIFF  
CF99 1NA

**Ein cyf / Our ref:** GL/SB/9819/619

**Eich cyf / Your ref:** P-04-479

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**Dyddiad / Date:** 7 August 2013

Dear Mr Powell

### **TYWYN AND DISTRICT HEALTHCARE ACTION GROUP**

Thank you for your letter of 22 May 2013 concerning the above. May I first of all apologise for the oversight in not replying to your letter earlier.

You may be aware that over recent months the Health Board has been working with the Community Health Council to reach a local resolution to the outstanding concerns over proposals in Healthcare in North Wales is Changing (which was formally consulted upon during 2012).

On 17 July 2013, the Minister published a statement confirming that the Health Board and the CHC had reached a local resolution and agreement on a way forward. I am attaching the Minister's statement to this letter.

We have worked collaboratively with the Community Health Council to reach this position. We recognised the need to amend some of the proposals, as set out in the Minister's statement, to provide more assurance for people living in rural South Gwynedd about their access to healthcare services. This includes maintaining the X-ray services at Tywyn Hospital for two sessions a week and reviewing the usage of the Minor Injuries Unit to ensure the hours are appropriate. The hours are reduced only during winter months, with the period of opening during the summer months being moved to earlier in the day to reflect demand. We hope that this will help give local people more confidence that their health needs will be met.

Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**GEOFF LANG**  
**ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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**TITLE** Changes to Health Services in North Wales

**DATE** 17 July 2013

**BY** Mark Drakeford, Minister for Health & Social Services

When I was appointed as Minister for Health and Services earlier this year, I indicated that my three key priorities were unscheduled care, the legislative programme and bringing the three regional plans for service change in NHS Wales to a conclusion. I am pleased to announce that the first of the service change plans, for North Wales, has now been concluded successfully.

In January 2013, following extensive periods of engagement and formal public consultation, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board published its final proposals for changes to healthcare services in North Wales: *Healthcare in North Wales is Changing*.

In accordance with the *Guidance for Engagement and Consultation on Changes to Health Services*, Betsi Cadwaladr Community Health Council (CHC) had a period of six weeks to refer to Welsh Ministers any proposals that it considered were not in the best interests of the Health Service in the area.

On 4 March the CHC referred elements of the Health Board's proposals to the former Minister for Health and Social Services for determination. The proposals referred related to:

- minor injury services in South Gwynedd;
- the removal of X-Ray services from Tywyn Hospital;
- older people's mental health service for people living in Gwynedd.

I subsequently confirmed I would make final decisions on these matters once I was satisfied that I had all relevant information, having considered the issues thoroughly and carefully.

As part of this process, my officials met separately with members of both the CHC and Health Board on 11 June. Following these meetings, both parties believed there to be a way forward to resolve the matters that the CHC had referred to me for determination.

I am very pleased to report that I have now received a joint letter from the CHC and Health Board which confirms agreement has been reached on the outstanding issues.

### **Minor Injuries Service in South Gwynedd**

The CHC has agreed that the revised hours for the Minor Injury Service in Tywyn Hospital should continue, although the demand for the service will be monitored and reviewed over a longer period. Any amendments to the service which may subsequently be needed will be discussed through the Service Planning Committee. In monitoring the revised hours of the service, the Health Board will need to have plans for implementing and communicating its proposals so that people can be confident they will get the minor injuries services they need from GP surgeries, the out of hours service and their community hospitals.

### **X-Ray service**

Agreement has been reached to continue the X-Ray service at Tywyn Hospital for two sessions a week. To meet the difficulties the Health Board faces in staffing the service, it will explore with neighbouring Health Boards the potential for the service to be staffed by their radiology teams, rather than its own staff.

### **Older People's Mental Health Services in Gwynedd**

The CHC has agreed that the Service Planning Committee will monitor the action plan which has been developed to establish alternative services in the community, to mitigate the impact of the closure of beds at Uned Hafan (Pwllheli) and Uned Meirion (Dolgellau). This will provide the necessary assurances that the plans are being delivered and people's needs are being met. An update on progress, which will be shared with the local community, will also be produced following each milestone report to the Service Planning Committee.

### **Conclusion**

Alongside the elements formally referred by the CHC to the Minister, was the recurrent theme of a lack of transport provision to access health services in the rural areas of North Wales and in south Gwynedd in particular. The Welsh Government has agreed to work with partners across the public service to better understand the local transport access issues and identify joint opportunities for improvement.

The CHC is now content, subject to the outcome of the agreed monitoring and review processes it has highlighted being satisfactory, that it has reached a local resolution to the elements of the Health Board's proposals which it had previously referred to Welsh Ministers for determination.

I would like to place on record my personal thanks to all Health Board and CHC officials and members involved in drawing this matter to a conclusion.